



**REGION 7
LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
SOUTHWEST ALABAMA PARTNERSHIP
FOR TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT (SWAPTE)**

**FOUR YEAR WORKFORCE PLAN
2025-2029**

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TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT

FOUR-YEAR WORKFORCE PLAN
2025-2029

I. Local Area Governance

- a. *Provide the most current organizational chart depicting the relationship of the agencies comprising the workforce system, including education, economic development, and the one-stop delivery systems partners.*

See **Attachment A** for the most current organizational chart showing the relationship that Region 7 has with the elected officials and agencies that comprise the workforce system.

- b. *Identify the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds, as determined by the chief elected official or the Governor (20 CFR 679.560(b)(14)). Identify by name, function, and organizational affiliation of the local area:*

The Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO), Local Elected Officials (LEO's) along with the Region 7 Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) has partnered with and assigned Southwest Alabama Partnership for Training and Employment, Inc. (SWAPTE) to assist in carrying out the CLEO responsibilities, Region 7 LWDB responsibilities, be the grant recipient and staff, act as the fiscal agent, oversee WIOA responsibilities and One-Stop operations for the Region 7 Workforce area.

- i. **Signatory Official** – Mr. Sydney G. Raine, President
- ii. **Grant Recipient** – Southwest Alabama Partnership for Training and Employment (SWAPTE)
- iii. **Chief Elected Official** – Merceria Ludgood
- iv. **Region 7 Workforce Board Chair** – KC Pang
- v. **Chief Financial Officer** – SWAPTE, Lisa Thomas, VP Finance
- vi. **One-Stop Delivery System Area Manager** – Susan Kozlowski

II. Local Workforce Development Board

- a. *Provide a current listing of Local Board membership, including the category of representation as outlined in WIOA sec. 107(b)(2). The board must include:*
- i. *Business Representatives*
 - ii. *Workforce Representatives*
 - iii. *Education and Training Activities Representatives*
 - iv. *Governmental & Economic and Community Development Representatives*

Region 7 LWDB is made up of 20 members with 51% being representatives from businesses throughout Region 7. It is the goal of Region 7 to keep all 9 elected officials involved in the decision making of the Region 7 LWDB. By doing this, each of the elected officials nominates individuals within their county to serve on the local board. These nominations are presented to the CLEO on a nomination form to review and approve. The CLEO along with SWAPTE ensures that all required positions of the board are filled and that the board follows the guidelines set forth in WIOA sec. 107(b)(2).

See **Attachment B** worksheet of the current board members and the categories in which each member represents.

III. **Career Centers**

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

Region 7 operates one comprehensive, five affiliate and three itinerant Career Centers within nine counties of Southwest Alabama. SWAPTE is responsible for providing WIOA services and also is the fiscal agent for WIOA funds throughout Region 7. Region 7 has an agreement with Alabama Department of Workforce (ADOW) to serve as the One-Stop Operator and provide WIOA services in all counties within Region 7 with the exception of Mobile County. SWAPTE has staff that provide those services within Mobile County. SWAPTE staff also provides WIOA programmatic services to all Career Centers within Region 7.

- i. *Identify which partners are represented in the Career Center; and*

The comprehensive and five affiliate Career Centers have partners that are co-located in the same building through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and the costs are based on the Infrastructure Cost Sharing Agreement. The Alabama Department of Workforce operates the lease, and all expenses associated with the cost sharing and invoices partners based on dedicated square footage occupied at each location. The three itinerant offices are located within the Community College, Library or a partner building and there are no building rental charges.

The Infrastructure Cost Sharing Agreement will be updated with all partners and submitted once it is complete.

The following individuals are partners and signatories to the MOU that detail the services provided through the Career Center system:

Alabama Department of Workforce - Secretary Greg Reed
Alabama Community College System / Adult Basic Education –
Chancellor Dr. Jimmy Baker
Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services – Commissioner Jane E.
Burdeshaw
Southwest Alabama Partnership for Training and Education –
Chief Elected Official – Commissioner Merceria Ludgood

- ii. *Provide the name, title, telephone number, and email address of principle Career Center contacts.*

The following lists each of the Career Centers locations, contact information and the services that are available at each of the locations:

Bay Minette Career Center

201 Faulker Drive Bay Minette, AL 36507

251-937-4161

Monday – Friday 8:00 – 4:30

Vivian Havel – Manager

Vivian.havel@alcc.alabama.gov

Serves: North Baldwin County

Services Provided: Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Programs - Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) & On-The-Job Training (OJT), Work-Based Learning Program (18-24 yrs of age), Road 2 Readiness Summer Employment (High School Junior and Seniors), Goodwill and ADRS Youth Programs, Wagner-Peyser Services (ADOW), Veteran Services, Rehabilitation Services, Adult Education.

Brewton Career Center

1023 Douglas Avenue Ste 314 Brewton, AL 36426

251-867-4376

Monday – Friday 8:00 – 5:00

Angie Kelley – Manager

Angie.kelley@alcc.alabama.gov

Serves: Escambia and Conecuh Counties

Services Provided: Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Programs - Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) & On-The-Job Training (OJT), Work-Based Learning Program (18-24 yrs of age), Road 2 Readiness Summer Employment (High School Junior and Seniors), Auburn University (Hope Place), Reid State (BeGreat) and ADRS Youth Programs, Wagner-Peyser Services (ADOW), Veteran Services, Rehabilitation Services, Adult Education.

Foley Career Center

200 West Michigan Ave Foley, AL 36535

251-943-1575

Monday – Friday 8:00 – 4:30

Jennifer Lucassen – Manager

Jennifer.lucassen@alcc.alabama.gov

Services: South Baldwin County

Services Provided: Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Programs - Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) & On-The-Job Training (OJT), Work-Based Learning Program (18-24 yrs of age), Road 2 Readiness Summer Employment (High School

Junior and Seniors), Goodwill and ADRS Youth Programs, Wagner-Peyser Services (ADOW), Veteran Services, Rehabilitation Services, Adult Education.

Jackson Career Center

205 Walker Springs Road Jackson, AL 36545

251-246-2453

Monday – Friday 7:30 – 4:30

Tonya Faith – Manager

Tonya.faith@alcc.alabama.gov

Serves: Clarke, Choctaw and Washington Counties

Gilbertown Career Center – Itinerate Office

251 College Street Gilbertown, AL 36908

251-843-5265

Wednesday Only – 9:00 – 3:00 (2 times a month)

Tonya Faith – Manager

Tonya.faith@alcc.alabama.gov

Chatom Career Center – Itinerate Office

14102 St. Stephens Avenue Chatom, AL 36518

251-847-2097

Tuesday Only 9:00 – 3:00 (2 times a month)

Tonya Faith – Manager

Tonya.faith@alcc.alabama.gov

Services Provided: Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Programs - Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) & On-The-Job Training (OJT), Work-Based Learning Program (18-24 yrs of age), Road 2 Readiness Summer Employment (High School Junior and Seniors), ADRS Youth Programs, Wagner-Peyser Services (ADOW), Veteran Services, Rehabilitation Services, Adult Education.

Mobile Career Center

515 Springhill Plaza Ct Mobile, AL 36608

251-461-4146

Monday – Friday 8:00 – 5:00

Derrick Turner – Manager

Derrick.turner@alcc.alabama.gov

Serves: Mobile County

Services Provided: Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Programs - Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) & On-The-Job Training (OJT), Work-Based Learning Program (18-24 yrs of age), Road 2 Readiness Summer Employment (High School Junior and Seniors), ADRS, Goodwill, Mobile Area Education Foundation, USA Passage, Dearborn YMCA, Independent Living Youth Programs, ReEntry 2 Work, Wagner-Peyser Services (ADOW), Veteran Services, Rehabilitation Services, Adult Education, National Farmworker Jobs Program, Senior Community Service Employment Program.

Monroeville Career Center

2119 Highway 21 Bypass Ste 100 Monroeville, AL 36461
251-575-3894

Monday – Friday 7:30 – 4:30

Shirley Salter – Manager

Shirley.salter@alcc.alabama.gov

Serves: Monroe and Wilcox Counties

Camden Career Center

223-A Claiborne Street Camden, AL 36726
334-682-6366

Tuesday Only 9:00 – 3:00

Shirley Salter – Manager

Shirley.salter@alcc.alabama.gov

Services Provided: Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Programs - Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) & On-The-Job Training (OJT), Work-Based Learning Program (18-24 yrs of age), Road 2 Readiness Summer Employment (High School Junior and Seniors), Reid State (BeGreat) and ADRS Youth Programs, Wagner-Peyser Services (ADOW), Veteran Services, Rehabilitation Services, Adult Education.

While some partners are not physically located in the career centers full-time, there are cross referrals of clients between the partner agencies to ensure clients receive the services that are needed.

IV. Analysis of Local Area Conditions and Needs

- a. *Provide analysis of local area economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations (20 CFR 679.560(a)(1)(i)). Existing current analysis may be used if available and appropriate (20 CFR 679.560(a)(1)(iii)).*
- b. *Provide analysis of local area employment needs of employers in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations (20 CFR 679.560(a)(1)(ii)). Existing current analysis may be used if available and appropriate (20 CFR 679.560(a)(1)(iii)).*
- c. *What knowledge and skills are needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the local area, including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations (20CFR 679.56.560(a)2)?*
- d. *Provide analysis of the local area's workforce, including current labor force employment and unemployment data, information on labor market trends, and educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment 20 CFR 679.560(a)(3)).*
- e. *Provide analysis of the local area's current workforce development activities, including education and training. This analysis must include the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities and capacity to provide the*

workforce development activities to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of employers (20 CFR 679.560(a)(4)).

The Region 7 LWDB represents a nine-county Workforce Development Area in the southwest region of the State of Alabama. This area consists of Baldwin, Escambia, Choctaw, Clarke, Conecuh, Mobile, Monroe, Washington and Wilcox Counties. The population based on the Office of Education Workforce Statics for these counties is 781,737. The percentage of capital income for the area according to the State of Workforce Report XVII published in September 2023 was \$48,280.00. In addition, to the most recent Census high poverty counties include two counties from Region 7 and they are Conecuh and Wilcox counties.

The top five industry sectors for Region 7 are: Aviation, Construction, Healthcare, Hospitality & Tourism, Manufacturing and Maritime.

With economic development rapidly growing within the region, there is a tremendous need to increase the workforce. Region 7 is fortunate enough to offer employment that covers many of the industry clusters. Construction, Aviation, Healthcare, Chemical Industry, Steel Industry, and Maritime are a few of the industry sectors that need 500+ new employees.

According to the Labor Market Information (LMI) published in 2023, the top five high-demand occupations within Region 7 are Customer Service Representatives; Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers; Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers; Registered Nurses; and General and Operations Managers. Along with the top five fast-growing occupations are Computer Numerically Controlled Tool Programmers, Transportation Inspectors, Nurse Practitioners, Cooks, and Occupational Therapy Assistants.

Since 2023, our State is fortunate enough to have been awarded a huge Navy contract in manufacturing submarines, with the world-class manufacturer here in Region 7. This contract will bring a vast network of more than 15,000 suppliers together who will work simultaneously to design, create, and inspect each vital submarine component. These jobs will offer career paths that lead to lifelong careers. The need for skilled ship fitters is at a high demand along with other areas including HVAC, electricians, engineers, etc. Given the anticipated developments affecting both Region 7 and the State as a whole, manufacturing has emerged as a key priority for workforce development in Region 7.

Region 7 is undergoing a major wave of industrial and infrastructure development that will bring thousands of new jobs and require a well-coordinated, skilled workforce. Expansion projects include multiple shipyards, a rapidly growing aviation sector with two completed paint shops and additional hangars underway, the construction of a new aluminum plant, and continued growth in the steel and lumber manufacturing industries. These developments are complemented by the significant Interstate 10 Bayway Bridge Project, which will further drive long-term construction demand across the region. Collectively, these initiatives will create ongoing opportunities in skilled trades, transportation, logistics, advanced manufacturing, and engineering, presenting both a challenge and a call to action for workforce partners to align training, outreach, and placement services with employer needs.

The industrial and infrastructure projects underway in Region 7 are closely aligned with critical training needs across multiple high-demand sectors. Each project type drives specific skill requirements, creating clear pathways for workforce training and credentialing:

1. Shipyard Expansions

- **Training Needs:** Welding, pipefitting, marine electrical systems, industrial maintenance, and safety certifications (e.g., OSHA, NCCER).
- **Programs to Align:** Maritime pre-apprenticeships, trade school programs, and employer-sponsored training in skilled trades.

2. Aviation Sector Growth

- **Training Needs:** Aircraft painting and coatings, avionics, airframe and powerplant (A&P) certification, quality inspection, and logistics.
- **Programs to Align:** FAA-certified technician training programs, customized training through local technical colleges, and aviation maintenance pathways.

3. Aluminum and Steel Industry Development

- **Training Needs:** Industrial machine operation, CNC machining, metallurgy basics, industrial safety, and electrical/mechanical systems.
- **Programs to Align:** Advanced manufacturing training, Mechatronics, and National Institute for Metalworking Skills (NIMS) certifications.

4. Lumber and Wood Products Manufacturing

- **Training Needs:** Millwright skills, forklift and heavy equipment operation, quality control, and safety compliance.
- **Programs to Align:** Manufacturing tech programs, safety training (OSHA-10/30), and stackable credentials in production operations.

5. Interstate 10 Bayway Bridge Project

- **Training Needs:** Highway and bridge construction, heavy equipment operation, concrete finishing, traffic control, and CDL licensing.
- **Programs to Align:** DOT-approved construction training, heavy equipment operator certifications, and transportation/logistics training.

As Region 7 undergoes substantial industrial development — including shipyard expansions, aviation growth, new aluminum and steel facilities, and the major I-10 Bayway Bridge Project — the resulting job creation is not only transforming the local labor market but also contributing to population growth as workers and their families relocate to the area. This influx, paired with the ongoing tourism appeal of Southwest Alabama, is creating a parallel surge in demand across the hospitality and healthcare sectors.

1. Hospitality and Tourism Industry

- **Drivers of Demand:** Increased population, rising tourism traffic, and growing demand for lodging, dining, and recreational services.
- **Training Needs:**

- Front desk operations, housekeeping, and food service
- Culinary arts and food safety (ServSafe certification)
- Customer service and conflict resolution
- Event coordination and tourism management
- Alignment Strategies: Partnering with hospitality employers for OJT (on-the-job training), short-term credentialing programs through community colleges, and youth work-based learning opportunities to build entry-level pipelines.

2. Healthcare Industry

- Drivers of Demand: A growing population with increased healthcare needs, expansion of long-term care and outpatient facilities, and demand for healthcare workers at all levels.
- Training Needs:
 - Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs), Medical Assistants, and Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs), Registered Nurses (RNs)
 - Patient care technicians, home health aides, and phlebotomists
 - Administrative and clinical healthcare support roles
- Alignment Strategies: Supporting healthcare pathway programs in high schools, expanding local CNA/LPN training capacity, and developing clinical partnerships with healthcare providers for hands-on training.

As Region 7 continues to grow economically and demographically, a comprehensive workforce strategy must not only support industrial and infrastructure projects but also address the service industries, especially hospitality and healthcare, that sustain community wellbeing and economic vitality. Investment in training, credentialing, and career pathway development in these sectors is essential to maintaining regional competitiveness and quality of life.

By aligning training programs with these emerging job demands, Region 7 can ensure that local residents are prepared to access high-wage, high-skill opportunities, and that employers have a steady pipeline of qualified workers.

Based on information from the State of Workforce Report XVII Report, high-earning occupations in Southwest Alabama require more active learning, active listening, critical thinking, learning strategies, mathematics, reading comprehension, science, speaking, writing, complex problem solving, management of financial and personnel resources, persuasion, judgment and decision making, system analysis, system evaluation, and operations analysis skills than are required for most of the high-demand or fast-growing occupations.

Improving education is important because (i) a highly educated and productive workforce is a critical economic development asset; (ii) productivity rises with education; (iii) educated people are more likely to work; and (iv) it yields high private and social rates of return on investment. Workforce development must view all types

of education and related programs (e.g., adult education, career technical training, worker retraining, career readiness, etc.) as one system.

Funding to support workforce development may require tax reform at state and local levels and should provide flexibility as workforce needs and priorities change over time. Publicizing both private and public returns to education can encourage individuals to raise their own educational attainment levels while also promoting public and legislative support for education.

The Alabama Department of Workforce preliminary estimates for Region 7 report that in February 2025 the Civilian Labor Force and Participation Rate is 353,332 at 55.7 percent. They also report that the Unemployed and Unemployment Rate is 13,748 at 3.9 percent. This information shows that Region 7 has the highest unemployment rate than any other region within the State of Alabama.

Reflecting on these numbers the LWDB realizes that business and industries have challenges that they will continue to face to build their workforce. These challenges consist of clients' lack of transportation, lack of childcare and financial blockades for participation training.

Transportation is very difficult in our rural communities, which is why it is very important to have Career Centers located in these areas, so that services offered are closely available. SWAPTE has also been a part of a pilot program for transportation within Mobile County called MoGo. This service works with a group of employers assisting employees that have transportation issues a way to and from their place of employment and home. It is with hopes that this service will expand their area into other surrounding counties, to help with the workforce shortage within other counties in Region 7.

SWAPTE staff are also involved with other committees that include partner agencies and employers discussing other transportation options to include employers offering ride share opportunities and employers providing bus services within certain areas to transport employees in need back and forth to work.

Because Region 7 encompasses many rural areas, limited internet connectivity remains a significant barrier for individuals seeking and applying for employment. This makes it especially important to have career centers strategically located within these communities to provide direct access to job search resources and support.

The LWDB and SWAPTE address sector strategies by meeting with, key businesses, and local community colleges in the region to discuss their needs and identify what training resources are needed to build a well-trained workforce for their industry. Staff are involved with different committees and boards within the region so that not only can services be shared but also the challenges that clients face when applying for employment.

Employers are engaged in discussions about the variety of workforce programs available and how funding can be braided to better meet their workforce needs. These programs include:

- Apprenticeships
- Incumbent Worker
- On-the-Job Training
- Individual Training Accounts
- Youth Programs
- Out of School Work Base Learning (WBL)
- Road 2 Readiness Program (In School Summer Program) (R2R)
- Ready 2 Work (ReEntry Program)

There are three Community Colleges that provide training to eligible participants within Region 7, and they are:

- Bishop State Community College
- Coastal Community College and
- Reid State Technical College

In addition, there are multiple training providers that are listed on the State's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) with Region 7 having a limited selection. A few of these that are used within the Region are for Certified Nursing Training (CNA) and Truck Driving. Medical Billing and Coding, etc. There is a need for training to be offered for pipe fitters to help build the maritime workforce.

Region 7 also works with the University of South Alabama in offering assistance to participants enrolled in the healthcare industry. These programs are also listed on the ETPL.

Region 7 only allocates WIOA funds to providers that are approved through the State's Eligible Training Provider List. The State caps training costs at \$20,000.00 for all approved training. The State also measures performance, which determines if the programs are approved to continue. However, SWAPTE evaluates these programs as well, to ensure that participants are completing and securing employment. Should discrepancies be found, they are reported to the LWDB and to the State office.

Training is offered to those participants that are eligible through WIOA by providing tuition assistance. This assistance is broken down into four categories depending on the length of the training with the maximum assistance for 24 months being \$15,000.00.

Region 7 staff continue to partner with local businesses to offer OJT as a resource to help area industries expand and build their workforce while providing opportunities for eligible Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth to move into the workforce, gain new skills, and earn an income. This program is growing rapidly as more employers become familiar with the program and begin to see positive performance from their employees.

Employers within Region 7 are also becoming more familiar with the Incumbent Worker Program, in where they are able to offer more training to their unskilled employees. This helps employees retain and receive promotional opportunities, which leads to retention and higher wages.

Region 7 employers are becoming more familiar with apprenticeships and by establishing these programs their workforce is trained to the needs of the company. In addition, employers within industry realize that clients can't afford to be unemployed and attend training for a particular industry. Region 7 works closely with the Office of Apprenticeship to ensure that the programs are State approved and with the employers on how funds can be used to assist in the cost of the training.

The Board sees the opportunity for positive growth with the workforce through apprenticeships and has the staff working closely with employers encouraging them to partner with the Office of Apprenticeship so that the programs are approved through the State and are successful.

With building the workforce within Region 7, employers are realizing the importance of our younger adults and their role in building the future. Region 7 staff are on several committees that address the younger workforce and the barriers that these individuals are facing.

Region 7 is committed to supporting youth with barriers to employment by providing meaningful work-based learning opportunities that foster long-term career development. Through targeted initiatives, the region addresses the distinct needs of both in-school and out-of-school youth:

- Out-of-School Youth are offered work-based learning experiences, such as internships, job shadowing, and on-the-job training, that connect them with local employers and industries. These experiences are designed to build practical skills, boost confidence, and place youth on a clear path toward stable employment and further education or training.
- In-School Youth benefit from summer employment programs that introduce them to the workforce early, helping them explore career interests, develop soft skills, and earn income in a structured, supportive environment.

By focusing on career exposure and hands-on experience, Region 7 ensures that youth who may otherwise lack access to professional opportunities are given the tools to succeed in the region's growing industries. These initiatives help bridge the gap between education and employment and contribute to a stronger, more inclusive regional workforce.

In addition, Region 7 works with Youth Providers by providing financial support for their programs in helping the youth overcome barriers to employment. Region 7 LWDB will focus on the need within the communities and solicit providers that can contribute to the youth overcoming their barriers and not only receiving employment but cultivating a career.

As the workforce in Region 7 rapidly increases, the community realizes how ReEntry individuals can contribute to building the workforce. Region 7 is working in Mobile County with reentry individuals through a Pathway Home 5 grant. The goal is to show positive outcomes and reduce the recidivism, so that this opportunity can be shared with other counties within Region 7.

Staff within Region 7 identify participant barriers and what can be done to overcome those barriers. Staff also refer participants to Adult Education, who don't have a high school diploma or GED, or those that who need remediation, so that they can have a better chance of becoming employed.

The Region 7 LWDB and SWAPTE are very active within the region and work with not only the employers and training providers, but also the Local Elected Officials on the needs within their community. These needs vary from one county to another. However, all efforts are made with partners to address and create a plan of action to overcome those needs to make for a stronger workforce in Region 7.

The LWDB will work with SWAPTE so that staff case manages participants to ensure that the training that is provided leads to employment. The board realizes the importance of providing training that leads to high-wage, high-demand employment.

V. Vision

- a. *What is the local board's strategic vision to support the area's economic growth and economic self-sufficiency? This vision should be supported by analysis of the local area (Section I) and align with Alabama's Combined State Plan (20 CFR 679.560(a) (5)).*
- b. *Identify the local area's goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment) (20 CFR 679.560(a) (5)).*

The Region 7 LWDB is a regional partnership of business, education, labor, and community leaders that achieves excellence by providing high-quality services that meet the labor market needs of employers and residents within the nine counties.

The Region 7 LWDB and SWAPTE envision providing the structure and leadership needed in our region to bring together leaders in business, industry, education, economic development and community services to continually analyze, evaluate and address the challenges and barrier to economic growth.

Working in partnership with the many entities that are focused on workforce development and the growth of business and industry the local board believes that there is great potential for Southwest Alabama to achieve consistent growth and provide employment opportunities for a diverse and growing workforce.

The board is focused on several specific goals related to better preparing and educating a skilled workforce. Continue efforts will be made to better identify and develop strategies to address key barriers to employment. The Career Center system will continue to focus on the following services:

- Reaching out into the communities to promote the importance of the services that are provided in the Career Centers.
- Building a stronger relationship with the High Schools to better support our youth.

- Giving job seekers access to job readiness, financial literacy, basic computer skills, basic adult education for literacy and GED preparation and use of our Resource Rooms with access to the fax machines, copiers, phones, and printed materials related to job seeking along with access to computers for on-line job search.
- Continuing to develop and support training between the business/industry and colleges so that the business/industry may increase their workforce with skilled employees.

The board understands the importance of staff being involved within their communities in order for individuals to understand what services are available for them and their families.

The board also understands that credentialing options need to be expanded for jobseekers, which would include expanding the number of options available through the eligible training provider list. As training needs arise within the community and the program isn't listed on the ETPL, then SWAPTE staff work with staff at the State level to support the program through Occupational Training. This allows WIOA funds to assist those eligible participants and gives the training program a chance to earn the performance needed to apply for the ETPL.

VI. Local Area Strategy

- Based on the analysis in Section IV, what is the local area's overall strategy to work with the entities that carry out the core programs and required partners to align resources available to the local area, to achieve the strategic vision and goals described in Section II (20 CFR 679.560(a)(6))?*
- What programs are included in the local area's workforce development system (20 CFR 679.560(b) (1) (I))? Provide a listing and brief description of each program.*
- How will the local board support the strategies identified in Alabama's Combined State Plan and work with the entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs, including programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.) to support service alignment (20 CFR 679.560(b)(1)(ii))? Provide information concerning how the local board will work with entities carrying out core programs to:*
 - Expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly those with barriers to employment (20 CFR 679.560(b)(2)(i));*
 - Facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs (20 CFR 679.560(b)(2)(ii)); and*
 - Improve access to activities leading to a recognized post-secondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable) (20 CFR 679.560(b) (2)(iii)).*

The overall strategy to work with Region 7 partners that carry out the core programs includes the alignment of available resources. This will include working with

secondary schools to identify career paths for high school students that link effectively with post-secondary education in areas where job creation and demand are high. This also includes linking local apprenticeship opportunities to career tech curriculum to allow students to achieve a journeyman's status more quickly.

Identifying industries with aligned labor forces, emerging skills needs or growing demand and partnering with area community colleges to develop skills training for these industries will also be important to achieve the strategic vision and goals for the Southwest Alabama Region.

Collaboration with partners who are charged with providing direct services to jobseekers will allow assurance that all jobseekers receive the most holistic assessment and are provided with effective support and follow-up to prepare them for and link them to key career building resources. The LWDB will work with SWAPTE to provide staff development to allow for cross training of case management staff. This will improve communication among partners. It will also improve the ability to assure that individuals are referred to appropriate providers who are positioned to address each participants' needs as identified in the Individual Employment Plan (IEP).

The list below are programs and a brief synopsis of each that are included in the local area's workforce development system:

Southwest Alabama Partnership for Training and Employment, Inc. (SWAPTE)

SWAPTE serves as the administrative agent to assist in carrying out the CLEO responsibilities, Region 7 LWDB responsibilities, be the grant recipient and staff, act as the fiscal agent, oversee WIOA responsibilities and One-Stop operations for the Region 7 Workforce area. SWAPTE will also maintain and operate all Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Programs, work with area business and industry and collaborate with other partners to build a better workforce for the region.

Alabama Department of Workforce

As of now this Department acts as the One-Stop Operator for the Career Centers within Region 7. The staff are the initial point of interaction for clients seeking employment services, veteran services, and job readiness information. The staff also work with employers in assisting with employment needs of the industry. Staff also refer clients to other system partners once a determination is made to best serve the client.

This partner also provides services for Unemployment Insurance, Trade Act, Veteran Services and Rapid Response. The partner also provides the State data system to track all participants that receive services.

Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS)

Individuals with physical, learning or mental disabilities are referred to ADRS for expert assessment and customized assistance aimed at identifying and resolving barriers to employment.

Adult Basic Education (ABE)

These services are provided through the Alabama Community College System and allows individuals who need academic assistance or who need help with English as a

second language to improve their current skills. Participants receive tutoring and access to practice tests for the GED so that they can prepare to take the exam and receive their GED or High School diploma credential.

Alabama Department of Human Resources

The Alabama TANF Program operated by the Alabama Department of Human Resources. TANF aids low income one-parent families needing support to provide basic needs for dependents. The JOBS program is the welfare to work component of family assistance. The JOBS Unit provides assessment services to all program clients for an evaluation of their skills, prior work experience and employability. Individuals on family assistance determined to be ready to engage in work activities will be placed in a work-related activity such as subsidized/unsubsidized employment, job search, job readiness classes, skills training or GED classes. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) also operates a work-based program with the Alabama Department of Workforce.

Alabama Department of Senior Services-Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

The Senior Community Service Employment program provides work-based job training for older Americans aged 55 and up.

Alabama Technology Network (ATN)

Provides training to industry and business.

The local workforce development board plays a critical leadership and coordination role. The Region 7 LWDB will work with all entities in carrying out core programs to find strategies that will expand access to employment, training, education and supportive services for eligible individuals including those with barriers to employment. It supports strategies to work with entities (like employers, education providers, nonprofits, and government agencies) through several key actions:

- **Strategic Planning and Alignment**
The board ensures that all partners align their services with the region's workforce needs. It uses labor market data and employer feedback to shape strategies that address skills gaps, target in-demand industries, and support priority populations (like youth, veterans, and individuals with barriers to employment).
- **Partnership Building and Collaboration**
The board facilitates partnerships among core program entities — such as WIOA Title I (Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth programs), Title II (Adult Education), Title III (Wagner-Peyser Employment Services), and Title IV (Vocational Rehabilitation). It also strengthens collaboration with economic development agencies, community colleges, apprenticeships, and sector-based partnerships.
- **Resource Coordination and Leveraging**
The board helps coordinate funding streams and resources across different programs to avoid duplication and maximize impact. It often supports braiding

funds (combining different funding sources) to expand services and invest in innovation.

- **Monitoring, Technical Assistance, and Capacity Building**
The board monitors program performance to ensure entities meet standards and achieve outcomes. It provides technical assistance, shares best practices, and offers professional development to help partners deliver high-quality workforce services.
- **Employer Engagement and Sector Strategies**
The board will directly engage with employers to inform training and service design, develop career pathways, and expand work-based learning opportunities like internships, apprenticeships, and on-the-job training.
- **Performance Measurement and Continuous Improvement**
The board sets local performance goals, tracks outcomes (such as employment rates, credential attainment, and median earnings), and uses data to drive continuous improvement across all partners.
- **Policy and Operational Support**
The board develops policies (like priority of service for certain populations) and operational strategies (like co-location of services at American Job Centers) that make it easier for entities to work together and deliver integrated services.

The LWDB and SWAPTE will collaborate with core program providers, workforce development programs and programs of technical education to support service alignment and will implement strategies that reflect the statewide approach to improving the continuity of these efforts.

The board will work with entities carrying out core programs to find strategies that will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals including those with barriers to employment. Examples of these strategies include meeting with partners to identify and prioritize barriers that can be addressed through supportive services resources. Once this list has been reviewed, the board will develop policies and procedures that expand our ability to address the most common barrier more effectively. These barriers may include access to transportation, personal identification and appropriate attire. The board will also continue to identify and facilitate applications for eligible training providers who offer training for skills needed in local high growth, high wage industries. Numerous actions will take place in order to achieve our goals.

The board will support the development of career pathways and co-enrollment in core programs when such strategies improve outcomes for the participant. The board will implement policies where needed to facilitate the use of dual enrollment and career pathways strategies among core program providers.

In order to improve access to recognized post-secondary credentials and/or a portable or stackable certificate, the board will identify courses of study offered by both post-secondary and through apprenticeship programs that are able to increase

the number of students who can secure these credentials. The board will assist in promoting these programs and will work to have them included on the Eligible Training Provider List.

- d. *What strategies and services will the local area use to:*
- i. *Facilitate engagement of employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations (20 CFR 679.560(b)(3)(i));*
 - ii. *Support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area (20 CFR 679.560(b)(3)(ii));*
 - iii. *Better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development (20 CFR 679.560(b)(3)(iii));*
 - iv. *Strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs (20 CFR 679.560(b)(3)(iv)); and*
 - v. *Implement initiatives such as incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies designed to meet the needs of local area employers. Any of the above initiatives the local area chooses to implement should be in support of the other strategies to serve employers outlined above in Section III.d. (20 CFR 679.560(b)(3)(v)).*

In order to facilitate engagement of employers in workforce development programs, the board will utilize community outreach strategies such as the SWAPTE monthly e-newsletter, speaking to business groups and associations, attending community functions and developing opportunities to interact with representatives of in-demand industry as well as with small businesses.

Region 7's LWDB is deeply committed to maintaining strong connections with local businesses and training providers. Each quarterly board meeting is intentionally hosted at a different training facility or business site within the region. This practice provides board members with direct insight into current operations, workforce needs, and innovations occurring across key industries.

By rotating meeting locations, host organizations are given the opportunity to showcase their programs, share updates, and discuss challenges or opportunities for collaboration. This hands-on approach strengthens partnerships, promotes transparency, and ensures the board remains closely aligned with the real-time needs of the regional economy.

Utilizing outreach such as this, our goal will be to increase the number of businesses that are aware of the resources that are available within the region.

The region's linkages with employers, training providers, and workforce development intermediaries are particularly strong. Over the last two years, these partnerships have trained more than 700 skilled workers for the shipbuilding industry, yet there are still more than 1,300 job vacancies to be filled. Partners for Growth proposes to dramatically scale these partnerships, including expanding training programs in welding at its community colleges, growing on-the-job training for smaller

manufacturers, creating mobile training labs, and offering pathway programs to help individuals build job-ready skills. In addition, the region is piloting the first ever standardized shipfitter curriculum and national credentials and has proposed expanding its apprenticeship programs by an additional 400 apprentices over the next three years.

Region 7 maintains strong, collaborative relationships with K–12 educators, community colleges, and industry leaders to ensure that workforce training remains aligned with current and emerging employer needs. Regular meetings and ongoing dialogue with industry partners allow for real-time feedback on curriculum, certifications, and skill development priorities.

This collaborative approach ensures that training programs offered through educational institutions are industry-informed and outcomes-driven, with a focus on making participants job-ready upon completion. By maintaining close alignment between education, training, and employer expectations, Region 7 is building a responsive talent pipeline that supports both individual success and regional economic growth.

Region 7 is focused on enhancing coordination between the one-stop delivery system and Unemployment Insurance (UI) programs to ensure that job seekers receive seamless, timely, and effective support. By strengthening these linkages, the region aims to improve service integration, reduce duplication, and increase reemployment outcomes.

Key strategies include:

- **Integrated Technology Systems:** Leveraging shared case management systems or referral platforms to streamline access to both UI and workforce services, ensuring claimants are actively engaged in job search and training options.
- **Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) Integration:** Embedding RESEA activities within one-stop centers to proactively connect UI recipients with personalized career counseling, job matching, and training pathways.
- **Early Engagement and Outreach:** Identifying UI claimants early in the claims process and connecting them to workshops, hiring events, and skills assessments to shorten periods of unemployment and improve job match quality.

By aligning UI services with workforce development programs, Region 7 is better positioned to support individuals through periods of job loss while accelerating their transition into meaningful, in-demand employment.

While Region 7 is committed to delivering integrated workforce services through its one-stop delivery system, a key challenge remains in the coordination with Unemployment Insurance (UI) services. Currently, there are no expert UI staff

physically located within the Career Centers, which creates a service gap for individuals seeking assistance with their claims.

Although Career Center staff make every effort to support UI claimants, including providing general guidance and referral information, they are not authorized or equipped to resolve specific claim issues. As a result, many claimants experience frustration when they are unable to reach a UI specialist through the state's phone system and leave Career Centers without the help they need. This issue often reflects negatively on the one-stop system, despite being outside its direct control.

Region 7 recognizes this as a significant weakness in service delivery and is actively seeking solutions, including increased collaboration with UI program leadership, virtual access to UI specialists, or potential co-location strategies, to ensure UI claimants receive the timely, informed support they need while maintaining the integrity of the one-stop experience.

Region 7 actively implements a range of workforce development initiatives designed to support local employers and strengthen the regional talent pipeline. These initiatives are tailored to meet specific industry demands and promote long-term economic growth. Key strategies include:

- **Incumbent Worker Training (IWT):** Supports skill upgrades for existing employees, helping businesses stay competitive and retain their workforce while reducing turnover.
- **On-the-Job Training (OJT):** Provides wage reimbursement to employers who hire and train job seekers, creating immediate employment opportunities while addressing skill gaps.
- **Customized Training Programs:** Developed in partnership with employers and training providers to meet specific skill requirements for new or expanding operations.
- **Industry and Sector Strategies:** Focused efforts to align training and workforce services with high-growth sectors such as shipbuilding, aviation, advanced manufacturing, construction, healthcare, hospitality, and logistics.
- **Career Pathways Initiatives:** Structured programs that connect education, training, and support services to guide individuals into high-demand careers, with clear steps for advancement.
- **Utilization of Business Intermediaries:** Collaborations with chambers of commerce, economic development agencies, and industry associations to improve employer engagement and streamline access to workforce services.
- **Comprehensive Business Services:** Including hiring events, labor market data support, rapid response for layoffs, and assistance with accessing work-based learning programs.

Through these targeted initiatives, Region 7 ensures workforce solutions are responsive to employer needs, promote quality job creation, and support the development of a skilled and adaptable labor force.

The board will also work to develop programs patterned on best practices that make career pathways and other strategies as effective as possible for meeting the needs of the business community.

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

The board along with staff will continue to work with all regional economic development activities. They will provide awareness and information on such activities to the community as well as offering logistical support. When appropriate staff will be provided to implement activities related to workforce and economic development initiatives targeting within the region.

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

The board along with staff will also continue to work with the Chambers of Commerce, local school systems, community projects, as well as local Universities to support and promote initiatives aimed at providing training and support for the skills needed to design and start businesses in the region. When possible, these initiatives will be promoted via the E-news, social media and within the Career Center System.

- g. Provide a description of the one-stop delivery system in the local area, including:*

- i. How the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and that such providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and jobseekers (20 CFR 679.560(b)(5)(i));*
- ii. How the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and other means (20 CFR 679.560(b)(5)(ii));*
- iii. How entities within the one-stop delivery system, including career center operators and the career center partners, will comply with WIOA sec. 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities (20 CFR 679.560(b)(5)(iii)); and*
- iv. What the roles and resource contributions of each career center partner (20 CFR 679.560(b)(5)(iv))?*

Although the Alabama Department of Workforce oversees the ETPL, the Region 7 Local Workforce Development Board along with SWAPTE staff is committed to ensuring that all eligible providers of workforce services deliver high-quality, outcome

driven training and support that align with the needs of local employers, workers, and jobseekers.

There are three Community Colleges and a variety of training providers that provide training in Region 7. The board only supports those providers listed on the ETPL that are located within the region. SWAPTE staff meet and discuss any concerns that they may have related to accountability, performance, and responsiveness of these providers by:

1. **Data-Driven Performance Monitoring**

Providers are regularly evaluated against key performance indicators such as credential attainment, job placement rates, wage gains, and retention. This data is used to assess effectiveness and guide continuous improvement efforts.

2. **Ongoing Communication and Collaboration**

SWAPTE staff maintains frequent communication with training providers and engages in routine meetings with industry partners to ensure programs remain aligned with changing workforce demands and employer expectations. Staff also share any concerns that may arise out of the performance monitoring or when staff notice that participants are not securing employment.

3. **Feedback from Employers and Jobseekers**

Input from employers and participants is collected and analyzed to identify gaps, strengths, and opportunities for refinement in service delivery and training content.

Should issues continue after staff have met with the provider information is shared with the staff that oversee the ETPL at the State level. Information is also shared with the LWDB and a decision will be made on continued funding.

Through these strategies, Region 7 ensures a culture of accountability, continuous quality improvement, and employer responsiveness across all workforce services. This approach supports a skilled workforce that meets the evolving demands of the regional economy.

The LWDB prioritizes providing services that demonstrate the ability to meet the needs of employers and job seekers. In order to ensure that all Career Centers meet or exceed our criteria for quality, accessibility, and performance, the One-Stop Committee of the board will schedule and carry out initial assessment for each center and issue a determination regarding Certification. **(Updated Career Center Certifications will be updated and submitted as required)** Steps to improve any deficiencies will be taken as needed and each center will be reviewed no less than every three years per Section 101(d)(6) and 121 (g)(1).

To ensure equitable access to workforce services across all communities, including rural and remote areas, the Region 7 Local Workforce Development Board employs

a combination of technology solutions, mobile outreach, and strategic partnerships. These efforts are designed to overcome geographic, transportation, and digital access barriers while maintaining high service quality across the one-stop delivery system.

The board promotes use of the state's online job portal, AlabamaWorks!, which offers 24/7 access to job listings, labor market information, and career planning tools.

Region 7 has three itinerant offices located in the rural counties that are staffed once per week two times a month. These offices are located in libraries, on community college campuses, or in City buildings, with no rental costs. Although the traffic count at many times is low, the community knows the schedule and when services are offered. The board does realize that more awareness needs to be brought to these centers so that they are better used by the community. Staff also organize locations in the rural areas to conduct job fairs, training orientations, and workshops.

Staff also collaborate with partners so that all efforts are made to the underserved populations.

Region 7 is committed to ensuring that all services provided through the one-stop system are accessible to individuals with disabilities and those with other barriers to employment. To support this commitment, the board includes representation from the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS), which serves as a key partner in advising on Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance and inclusive service delivery.

ADRS is regularly consulted on matters related to physical and digital accessibility, assistive technology, reasonable accommodations, and service modifications. This collaboration ensures that the one-stop centers and all remote or virtual services meet ADA standards and reflect best practices in serving individuals with disabilities. Language access and culturally appropriate services are also prioritized to meet the needs of diverse populations across the region.

The Career Centers in Region 7 operate under a collaborative model, where each core partner agency plays a distinct and essential role in delivering integrated services to jobseekers and employers. The following outlines the roles and responsibilities of each major partner:

1. Southwest Alabama Partnership for Training and Employment (SWAPTE)

- Assist in carrying out the CLEO responsibilities
- Region 7 LWDB responsibilities
- Grant recipient
- Staff for the region
- Fiscal agent
- Provide WIOA programs and services

- Oversee WIOA responsibilities
- Produce policies and procedures to align with State
- Oversee performance
- One-Stop operations for the Region
- Operate other federally funded grants

2. Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS)

- Support individuals with disabilities in achieving competitive, integrated employment.
- Provide vocational rehabilitation services, including assessment, counseling, job readiness, and placement assistance.
- Consult on ADA compliance and assistive technology for Career Centers and partner programs.
- Participate in joint case management and co-enrollment strategies for shared customers.
- Deliver staff training on disability awareness and accommodations.

3. Adult Education (through local community colleges)

- Improve foundational skills for adults to enhance employability and educational attainment.
- Offer instruction in basic literacy, numeracy, English language acquisition, and high school equivalency preparation.
- Support Integrated Education and Training (IET) programs tied to career pathways.
- Provide transition services to postsecondary training or employment.
- Collaborate with other partners to co-enroll participants and align training with workforce demands.

4. Alabama Department of Workforce (Wagner-Peyser/Employment Services)

- Connect jobseekers with employment opportunities and labor market information.
- Deliver job search assistance, résumé support, and labor exchange services.
- Facilitate re-employment services, particularly for unemployment insurance claimants.
- Host employer hiring events and recruitment activities.
- Support veterans through specialized employment services (DVOP/LVER).
- Attend and assist with rapid response meetings.

- Deliver Trade Act Assistance services.

5. Alabama Department of Human Resources (DHR)

- Provide employment and training services for individuals receiving public assistance.
- Administer TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) work programs.
- Help participants overcome employment barriers such as transportation, childcare, and work readiness.
- Coordinate referrals to training and job placement programs.
- Participate in case conferencing and integrated service planning for shared clients.

These partners work collaboratively to ensure that Career Center services are comprehensive, client-centered, and aligned with local labor market needs. Their coordinated efforts help maximize resources, avoid duplication, and improve outcomes for both jobseekers and employers in Region 7.

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

Region 7 offers a full range of employment and training services to eligible adults and dislocated workers through its Career Centers, with services designed to meet individuals at various points in their career journey—from unemployment to career advancement. Activities are tailored to align with in-demand occupations and high-growth industries in the region.

Key services include:

- **Basic Career Services:**
 - Job search assistance and job referrals
 - Labor market information
 - Resume and interview workshops
 - Initial skill assessments
 - Access to computers, phones, and job banks
- **Individualized Career Services** (eligibility required):
 - Comprehensive assessments and Individualized Employment Plans (IEPs)
 - Career counseling and planning
 - Case management and barrier mitigation
 - Supportive services (e.g., transportation, childcare, work gear)
- **Training Services:**
 - **Individual Training Accounts (ITAs)** for short-term and long-term occupational skills training

- **On-the-Job Training (OJT)** for hands-on learning with wage reimbursement to employers
- **Customized Training** in partnership with employers for new hires or specific workforce needs
- **Incumbent Worker Training** to upskill existing workers and prevent layoffs
- **Apprenticeship and Pre-apprenticeship programs**, particularly in construction, shipbuilding, and manufacturing
- **Supportive Services:**
 - Provided to remove barriers to participation in training, such as transportation, uniforms, or testing fees. Outreach to partner agencies for referrals and assistance is also given for supportive services.

Region 7 has a robust network of training providers through its Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), offering industry-aligned programs in fields such as:

- Shipbuilding and maritime trades
- Aviation and aerospace maintenance
- Advanced manufacturing
- Construction
- Healthcare
- Information technology and business services

The region leverages strong partnerships with community colleges, employers, and community-based organizations to ensure training is aligned with workforce demands.

Adults and Dislocated Workers that are WIOA eligible can seek assistance at any of the local Career Centers or online via the AlabamaWorks! system. Individuals can register online from any internet accessible site and have their profile made available to employers seeking workers to hire. They can also come to the Career Center that is most convenient to them and receive assistance to any services offered.

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

The board will identify appropriate staff representatives to support rapid response activities and will assure that those staff are trained and aware of all available resources in Southwest Alabama that may be needed to support individuals impacted by a WARN notice. These staff will attend, along with the State staff, all rapid response activities affecting the region and will facilitate the provision of services to individuals who are facing dislocation.

- j. Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local area including activities for youth who*

are individuals with disabilities, which must include an identification of successful models of such activities (20 CFR 679.560(b)(8)).

Region 7 offers a wide range of comprehensive, career-focused services for in-school youth (ISY) and out-of-school youth (OSY), ages 16–24, through the WIOA Youth Program. These services are delivered in partnership with community-based organizations, educational institutions, and employers to help youth overcome barriers and achieve meaningful employment or post-secondary success.

The region places a strong emphasis on work-based learning, credential attainment, and wraparound support to ensure youth can succeed both academically and professionally.

Core youth activities include:

- Tutoring and dropout prevention
- Work readiness training and soft skills development
- Occupational skills training aligned with in-demand industries
- Work-based learning opportunities, including internships, job shadowing, and on-the-job training
- Paid and unpaid work experience, including summer youth employment
- Leadership development and mentoring
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling, including substance abuse and mental health support
- Supportive services such as transportation, uniforms, and exam fees
- Financial literacy education
- Entrepreneurial skills training
- Postsecondary preparation and transition assistance

Youth with disabilities are served through inclusive programming and strong collaboration with the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS). ADRS provides additional support through individualized service plans, assistive technology, and accommodations to ensure meaningful access to education, training, and employment.

The local board ensures:

- Co-enrollment opportunities between WIOA Youth and Vocational Rehabilitation programs.
- Integrated resource teams that include ADRS counselors, case managers, and career center staff.
- Career pathways designed with accessibility in mind and aligned with youth interests and abilities.

Region 7 has implemented several effective models that have shown measurable success in serving youth, including:

- **Summer Youth Employment Programs (SYEP):** These programs give in-school youth their first job experiences while teaching responsibility, workplace behavior, and financial literacy. Many participants transition into year-round employment or postsecondary education.
- **Work-Based Learning for Out-of-School Youth:** OSY participants are placed with local employers in sectors such as healthcare, hospitality, manufacturing, and skilled trades. These experiences often lead directly to employment offers with an OJT contract or apprenticeships.
- **Youth Career Pathway Initiatives:** Through partnerships with local school systems, community colleges, and industry leaders, youth can engage in training that leads to certifications in welding, CNA, logistics, and other high-demand fields.
- **Supportive Case Management:** Individualized case management ensures that each youth has a success plan tailored to their goals and barriers, supported by ongoing guidance and access to wraparound services.

Youth workforce services are widely available throughout Region 7, with delivery supported by:

- Career Centers
- Partnering non-profit organizations and youth agencies
- Local school systems and career tech centers
- Community colleges offering dual enrollment and industry credential programs

These partners respond to a request for proposal issued by the board proposing a specialized program to assist mostly those out of school youth that do not have a high school education. The provider covers the 14 youth elements and prepares the youth for a better future.

Region 7 also sponsors two work experience programs one with ADRS and one with USA Passage. The ADRS program provides a work experience and skills training program for youth who are severely disabled due to loss of hearing or vision. The USA Passage program offers work experience opportunities to young adults who have intellectual disabilities. Both of these programs result in many youth with disabilities gaining meaningful employment.

Special attention is given to outreach in rural and high-poverty areas to ensure equitable access.

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

The LWDB will prioritize the goal of coordinating secondary and post-secondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities. They will provide regular opportunities for leaders from each system to offer reports on their ongoing efforts to develop strategies, enhance services and avoid duplication in their programs. The board members will be able to learn about education system goals and outcomes and will be able to bring their ideas and input to the discussion in the ongoing effort to streamline partnerships and communication across the platform.

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

The Region 7 Local Workforce Development Board recognizes that access to transportation and other supportive services is essential to helping adults, dislocated workers, and youth successfully participate in workforce development programs.

The board along with the staff works with partners in collaborating with local transportation agencies and community action groups to expand access to transit routes where available and they advocate for improved services in underserved areas.

Staff often refer clients to local partners that have programs that offer transportation support. In addition, staff continue to be a part of conversations where employers realize the importance of needed transportation. Employers are now realizing that they may need to start offering their own transportation through ride share or bus pick up for their particular business. This comes from many transportation organizations don't necessarily accommodate shift hours and potential employees have no other options for transportation.

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

The Region 7 Workforce Development Board, in alignment with the Alabama Department of Workforce, is committed to a streamlined, collaborative workforce system. The following strategies are employed to ensure efficient service delivery, reduce duplication, and maximize coordination of Wagner-Peyser Act services with other WIOA and partner programs in the one-stop delivery system.

1. Integrated Service Delivery Across One-Stop Centers

Region 7 operates under Alabama's Integrated Service Delivery (ISD) model, where WIOA Title I and Wagner-Peyser (WP) staff work as one

functional team. Job center staff are aligned into functional areas such as reception/intake, skills development, and job placement, ensuring services are delivered based on customer needs rather than program silos.

2. Co-Location of Partners and Shared Infrastructure

All comprehensive Career Centers in Region 7 include physically co-located WP staff and other WIOA core partners. Through MOUs and Infrastructure Funding Agreements (IFAs), partners equitably share space and costs, reducing administrative overhead and service fragmentation.

3. Unified Intake, Assessment, and Referral System

Region 7 uses a standardized customer intake and assessment process that is consistent across all partner programs. Staff use AlabamaWorks! data entry system to ensure customer information, assessments, and service plans are shared among partners to reduce repetitive steps and improve service alignment.

4. Cross-Training and Professional Development

Staff receive ongoing cross-training facilitated by the Alabama Department of Workforce and SWAPTE. Training focuses on:

- Program eligibility and service options across Wagner-Peyser Title III, WIOA Titles I and III, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Adult Education.
- Use of labor market information for career counseling.
- Technology platforms for service delivery and case management.

This empowers staff to deliver services more holistically and make better referrals.

5. Regional Business Services Coordination

Region 7 Business Services Representatives from WIOA, WP, and partner agencies operate as a coordinated team. They meet regularly to:

- Align outreach efforts to employers
- Share leads and job openings
- Promote on-the-job training (OJT), customized training, and incumbent worker training opportunities without redundancy

Employers receive a single point of contact whenever possible to simplify communication.

6. Performance Monitoring and Accountability

Managers of each of the Career Centers have a process in where they monitor the data entry of their staff and have reports to review each month to ensure that data is entered properly.

SWAPTE management issues directions and changes to all WIOA staff when changes occur at the State level. In addition, the LWDB has contracts with businesses that monitor the program and finances of WIOA and SWAPTE.

The Alabama Department of Workforce monitors share performance metrics across programs using AlabamaWorks! and Federal Reporting measures with SWAPTE giving quarterly performance updates that indicate:

- Common WIOA performance indicators
- Customer and employer satisfaction
- Timely delivery of services and employment outcomes.

Corrective actions and technical assistance are provided when gaps are identified.

In addition, the Alabama Department of Workforce has program monitors that conduct data validation and when issues are identified, they are shared with SWAPTE so that corrections can be made.

The Alabama Department of Workforce also provides technical assistance and training when areas of need are identified by SWAPTE.

These strategies ensure that Region 7 provides unified, efficient, and high-quality workforce services to both jobseekers and employers across the region.

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

The Region 7 Workforce Development Board is committed to ensuring strong collaboration between WIOA Title I programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) and WIOA Title II Adult Education and literacy activities to create a comprehensive and effective workforce system. The WDB implements the following strategies to support coordination and compliance:

- **Joint Planning and Collaboration**
 - ❖ The Region 7 WDB maintains close coordination with the Alabama Community College System (ACCS) institution's Adult Education department along with Goodwill Industries who administer Adult Education in Region 7.

- ❖ Inclusion of Title II providers in board committees and planning meetings.
- ❖ Regular information-sharing sessions on program offerings, performance, and best practices.
- **Promoting Concurrent Enrollment and Career Pathways**
 - ❖ The Region 7 WDB actively promotes co-enrollment of eligible individuals in WIOA Title I and Title II programs. This is supported through:
 - ✓ Shared intake and referral processes.
 - ✓ Joint development of Individual Employment Plans (IEPs) that integrate basic education with skills training.
 - ✓ Programs that combine literacy, numeracy, and English language acquisition with workforce preparation and occupational training.
- **Co-Location and Service Integration**
 - ❖ Where feasible, adult education services are co-located in or near the Career Centers to facilitate referrals and joint case management. Even when not physically co-located, Region 7 ensures:
 - ✓ Clear referral protocols.
 - ✓ Regular cross-agency staff meetings.
 - ✓ Shared use of tools such as labor market data and career exploration resources.
 - ✓ Adult Ed also administers TABE testing for WIOA youth as part of an assessment.

This collaboration ensures that adult education and literacy services are aligned with local labor market needs and WIOA Title I career pathways.

- o. *Attach current copies of Memorandums of Understanding or other executed cooperative agreements which define how all local service providers, including additional providers, will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the local one-stop delivery system (20 CFR 679.560(b)(13)).*

Memorandum of Understandings is being developed and updated and will be submitted when completed.

- p. *Identify the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in WIOA sec. 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III), as determined by the chief elected official or the Governor under sec. 107(d)(12)(B)(i).*

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Sydney G. Raine, President (Signatory)

- q. *Provide a statement indicating that the local area will negotiate local levels of performance consistent with WIOA sec. 166(c) with the Workforce Development Division (WDD) and that these performance levels will be included in each year's Grant Agreement. These levels will be negotiated when the U.S. Department of Labor and other applicable federal agencies finalize performance levels for the State (20 CFR 679.560(b)(16)).*

The LWDB allows SWAPTE to negotiate levels of performance, however they are consistent with the performance levels of the State. These performance levels will be included in each year's Grant Agreement. These levels will be negotiated when USDOL and other applicable federal agencies finalize performance levels for the State.

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

The Region 7 LWDB is committed to achieving and maintaining high-performance status as defined by the Alabama State Workforce Development Board. To meet and exceed these standards, the Region 7 WDB will continue the following actions:

- ✓ Align with State and Regional Workforce Priorities
- ✓ Provide strong Business-Led Governance
- ✓ Develop strategic Partnerships and Collaboration
- ✓ Utilize Performance Accountability and Data-Driven Decision Making
- ✓ Promote Employer Engagement and Demand-Driven Solutions
- ✓ Support Compliance and Fiscal Integrity

In addition, staying engaged at both the local and state levels, including SWAPTE staff's attendance at state board meetings, ensures it remains responsive, innovative, and aligned with Alabama's broader workforce development goals.

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

The Region 7 LWDB uses Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) as the primary mechanism for providing training services to eligible adults and dislocated workers under WIOA Title I. The ITA system is designed to promote informed customer

choice, flexibility, and alignment with in-demand occupations identified in the Region 7 labor market.

1. Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) as the Primary Training Mechanism

- Eligible participants receive an ITA to attend training services from an approved provider on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) maintained by the Alabama Department of Workforce.
- Participants select from eligible programs aligned with in-demand occupations and career pathways in Region 7.
- ITA funding caps, limits, and policies are established by the LWDB to ensure consistency, fiscal accountability, and equitable access.
- WIOA staff work with participants to develop an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) that includes career goals, training objectives, and justification for the selected training.

2. Use of Contracts for Training Services

While ITAs are the primary method of delivering training, Region 7 WDB may use contracts for training services in limited circumstances allowed under WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(G)(ii), including:

- Training for special populations with multiple barriers (e.g., individuals with disabilities or ex-offenders).
- When community-based or specialized providers are the only available sources of training.
- For incumbent worker training or customized training provided directly to employers.
- When conducting a cohort-based training model (e.g., pre-apprenticeship programs, integrated education and training).

When contracts are used, they are developed in coordination with the ITA system to ensure no duplication of services and to maintain customer choice.

3. Coordination Between ITAs and Contracts

- Participants are first assessed for suitability for ITA-funded training through the regular Career Center intake and eligibility process.
- If the participant's needs or goals align with a contracted training program, they are informed of this option and provided details to make an informed choice.
- Both ITA and contract options are communicated clearly to participants; no participant is required to enroll in a contracted program if an ITA-funded option is available and meets their needs.

4. Ensuring Informed Customer Choice

- Maintaining up-to-date information on the ETPL, including provider performance, completion rates, costs, and employment outcomes, accessible through AlabamaWorks, and the Career Centers.
- Career Center staff provide personalized guidance to help participants review training options, understand labor market demand, and assess provider quality.
- Participants are not steered to any specific provider or program; decisions are based on participant preference and alignment with their career goals.
- Participants sign an acknowledgment confirming that they have reviewed their options and made an informed decision.

5. Continuous Improvement and Monitoring

- SWAPTE staff regularly reviews training provider performance and participant outcomes to ensure that training investments lead to employment in in-demand occupations.
- Contracted training programs are monitored for quality, participant satisfaction, and compliance with performance standards.
- Feedback from participants is requested to improve training services and enhance the informed choice process.

This approach ensures that Region 7 maintains a flexible, responsive, and customer-centered training system that meets both participant needs and regional employer demand while complying with WIOA requirements.

t. Describe the one-stop delivery system's current intake and case management information system(s). Are all WIOA and career center partners using the same system? How do WIOA and career center partners plan to implement and transition to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system (20 CFR 679.560(b)(20))?

The Region 7 Workforce Development Board currently utilizes AlabamaWorks', an integrated workforce case management system powered by GeoSolutions, as the primary intake and case management platform across the one-stop delivery system.

AlabamaWorks' is used by WIOA Title I (Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth) and Title III (Wagner-Peyser) partners for intake, eligibility determination, enrollment, case management, performance tracking, and reporting. This system allows shared access to participant records by authorized staff from WIOA core programs within the Career Centers, promoting coordination and reducing duplication of effort.

Currently, Title II (Adult Education and Literacy) and Title IV (Vocational Rehabilitation) partners do not fully utilize AlabamaWorks', for case management but

may interface with the system for referrals and data-sharing through informal processes or state-level reporting.

Through ongoing coordination with state leadership, the Region 7 WDB will work to achieve a fully integrated, customer-centered, technology-enabled intake and case management system that supports seamless service delivery across all WIOA partners.

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

Region 7 WDB policy for staff is to evaluate each individual seeking service for eligibility, per the guidelines set forth by the Alabama Department of Workforce for each subsidized training program. In the event that allocation of enrollment resources limits the number of enrollees for any training program, staff assures that adults seeking services who are identified as recipients of public assistance, who are low income or who are basic skills deficient are provided with access to the service prior to services being provided to other individuals who may not have these barriers and who are seeking the same service.

To ensure compliance with WIOA priority of service requirements, staff regularly review participant eligibility reports provided by the Alabama Department of Workforce through AlabamaWorks'. These reports identify participants eligible for priority of service (e.g., veterans, low-income individuals, recipients of public assistance, basic skills deficient) and staff verify those individuals are receiving services first, making adjustments as necessary to align with policy.

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

The Region 7 WDB and the Career Centers are fully committed to complying with the provisions of the Jobs for Veterans Act (JVA) and ensuring that veterans and eligible spouses receive the highest level of priority in accessing workforce services.

1. Priority of Service Implementation

- Veterans and eligible spouses are identified at the point of entry, whether in person, online, or by telephone, and informed of their eligibility for priority of service.
- Participants are flagged in the AlabamaWorks! case management system to ensure their eligibility for priority of service is tracked and applied throughout their engagement with services.

2. Dedicated Veterans Staff and Services

- Region 7 Career Centers include Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVERs) assigned by the Alabama Department of Workforce.
- DVOP specialists provide intensive, individualized career services to veterans with significant barriers to employment.
- LVERs focus on employer outreach, job development, and advocacy for veterans' employment opportunities within the business community.

3. Staff Training and Awareness

- All Career Center staff receive regular training on the Jobs for Veterans Act, priority of service requirements, and veterans' eligibility criteria, including annual refresher sessions.
- Staff use AlabamaWorks! generated priority of service reports to monitor and ensure that eligible veterans and spouses are receiving services ahead of or instead of non-covered individuals when resources are limited.

4. Outreach and Partnerships

- Region 7 Career Centers actively partner with veterans' service organizations, military transition assistance programs, community-based organizations, and employers to connect veterans to career and training opportunities.
- Outreach efforts include participation in veterans job fairs, hiring events, and transition summits to increase awareness of AJC services.

5. Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

- Staff monitors priority of service implementation through case file reviews, performance data analysis, and staff feedback to ensure compliance with JVA requirements.
- Corrective action plans are developed if deficiencies are identified during monitoring.

By integrating priority of service policies, dedicated veterans' staff, and proactive monitoring into its service delivery model, the Region 7 WDB ensures full compliance with the Jobs for Veterans Act and remains committed to providing veterans and eligible spouses with meaningful access to employment, training, and career advancement opportunities.

VII. Service Provider Selection Policies

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

The Competitive Proposals method is used to secure vendors who will provide ongoing services over a specific period of time and with a specific scope of work.

SWAPTE issues a Request for Proposal (RFP) to solicit offers from entities qualified to provide the services at a reasonable price, in accordance with specifications.

The RFP process is preferred because it allows proposers flexibility in their responses and allows SWAPTE to fully evaluate both the technical and cost aspects of any proposal. It also allows for a close evaluation of proposer responsibility. In competitive procurement actions, SWAPTE takes steps to assure full and open competition to the extent practicable.

All RFP's that are released are publicized through advertisements in local papers, where available and published on SWAPTE's website. They are also shared with agency partners, social media and newsletters. In most circumstances, the time period between the release of the RFP and the response deadline will be no less than three weeks.

SWAPTE may also elect to conduct a proposers or bidders conference during the process to assist interested bidders with information on what is being asked within the RFP. All RFP's released by SWAPTE contain, as a matter of routine, disclaimers to note that the WDB may cancel and/or amend a procurement action and may reject any or all responses. Furthermore, disclaimers also note that the WDB is not obligated to award any contract or to pay any costs incurred by an offeror in undertaking a response to the RFP.

At the time of the deadline SWAPTE forms a committee to review the responses and score them based on questions from experience, services that will be offered and the cost. This information is shared with the WDB and a decision is made on who will receive the offer for a contract.

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

The Region WDB's criteria for awarding grants for youth activities are established based on the target population to be served. Grants are procured based on a competitive process. Proposers must demonstrate their ability to recruit eligible participants and provide the required service elements to those they enroll.

Grants are awarded to organizations or businesses that provide evidence that they have the capacity and experience to manage federal funding, provide accurate reporting and achieve success in meeting the performance goals that have been negotiated with the State.

Not only are grants based on a target population, but also the need within the community. SWAPTE monitors these grants to ensure that youth are not only meeting performance but are meeting their goals and becoming employable.

c. If a local area has set additional criteria for approved State level providers already on the Eligible Training Providers List (ETPL), how will the local area determine service provider suitability for inclusion as a provider in their area:

Training providers that are interested in offering services to WIOA eligible participants in Region 7 will be provided with information regarding the application process outlined by the Alabama Department of Workforce. Once a provider has been approved and placed on the ETPL, SWAPTE communicates with the provider offering information regarding eligibility of participants and funding allocation information.

Although the ETPL is monitored for performance by the Alabama Department of Workforce, SWAPTE staff also holds the providers accountable for performance not only for clients completing the training but assuring that the clients are receiving training related employment.

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

The Alabama Department of Workforce operates the ETPL and communicates directly with the providers. However, there are times that SWAPTE staff become aware of what is needed and offers assistance to the providers by reminding them the importance of submitting the information.

SWAPTE staff also will request the staff from the Alabama Department of Workforce to come to the Region and conduct technical assistance training for those providers within Region 7.

VIII. **Monitoring & Oversight Policy**

- a. *Provide a copy of the local area's monitoring and oversight policies and procedures.*

See Attachment C

IX. **Grievance Procedures and Policies**

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

See Attachment D

X. **Comment Period**

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

The 4 Year Plan for Region 7 has been developed under a very short timeline that has limited public input prior to the submission date. However, once approved by the

Alabama Workforce Board, the plan will be made available for a period of public input. Any modifications needed will be integrated into the plan as the modified plan and will be reviewed by the Region 7 WDB and submitted to the State board for approval.

- b. Provide a copy of the request for comments and any comments received that express disagreement with the plan (20 CFR 679.550(b)4). Please provide a response to comments expressing disagreement.*

N/A

ATTACHMENT

A

ORGANIZATIONAL CHARTS

Governor of Alabama

Alabama Department of
Workforce

Alabama Workforce Board
and
Executive Committee

Region 7
Chief Elected Official
Merceria Ludgood
Mobile County

Local
Elected
Official
Baldwin
County

Local
Elected
Official
Choctaw
County

Local
Elected
Official
Clarke
County

Local
Elected
Official
Conecuh
County

Local
Elected
Official
Escambia
County

Local
Elected
Official
Monroe
County

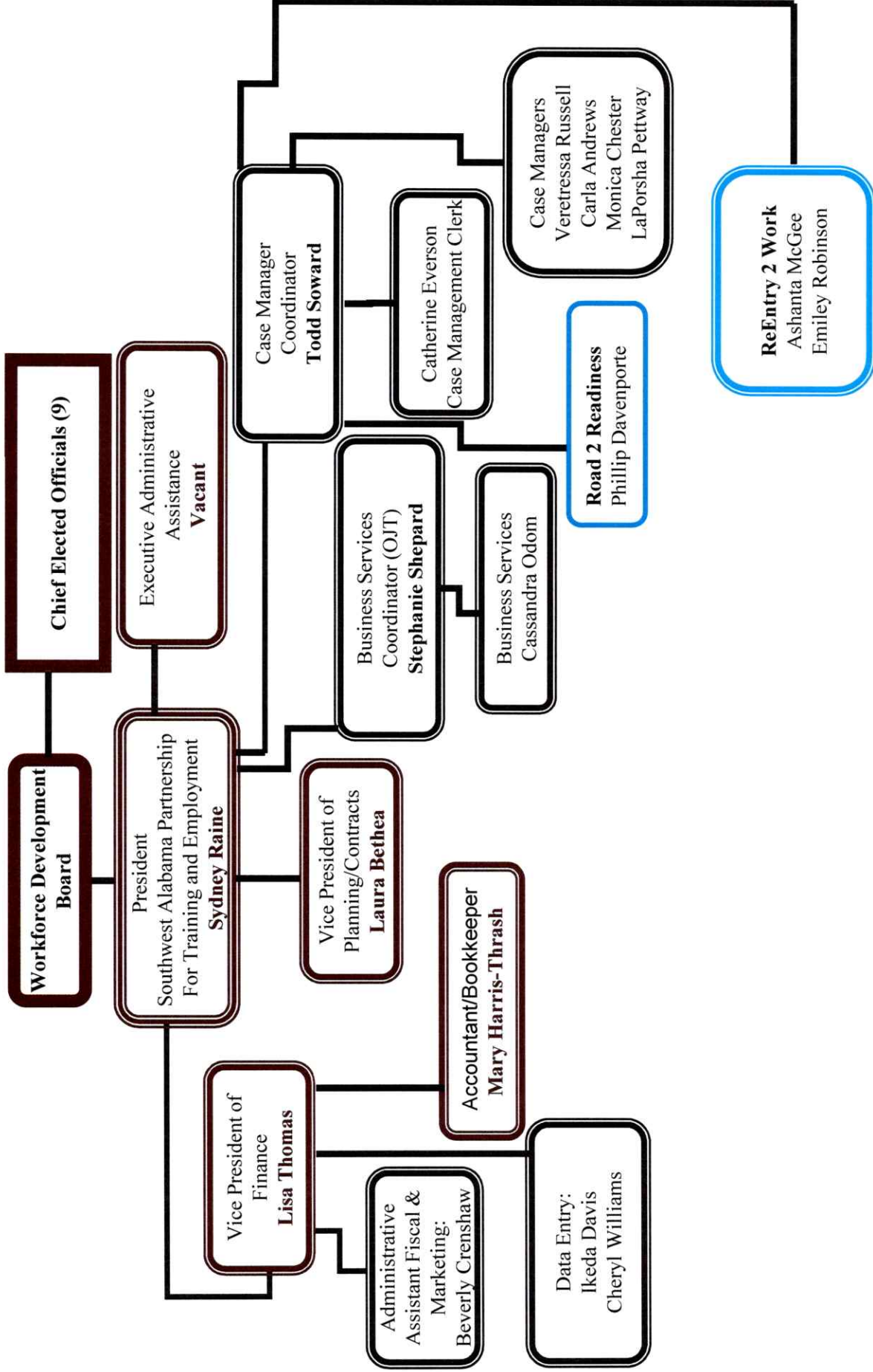
Local
Elected
Official
Washington
County

Local
Elected
Official
Wilcox
County

Region 7 Workforce Board

SWAPTE, Inc.
Grant Recipient, Fiscal
Agent, Staff

One Stop
Operator



Full Time Staff - 15

Contract Staff - 3

May 2025

Administrative
Staff

Program
Staff

Contract
Staff

ATTACHMENT

B

REGION 7

WORKFORCE BOARD MEMBERS

LOCAL WORKFORCE BOARD REGION 7

6/4/2025

Number of Board Members, adjusted to account for Members in multiple sectors: 20					
Quorum Requirement (40%): 8					
WIOA Section 107(b)(1) - The LWDB shall include:					
For each local area in the State, the members of Local WDB must be selected by the chief elected official consistent with criteria established under WIOA sec. 107(b)(1) and criteria established by the Governor, and must meet the requirements of WIOA sec. 107(b)(2).					
Representatives of Business in the Local Area - WIOA Section 107(b)(2)(b)					
A majority of the members of the Local WDB must be representatives of business in the local area. At a minimum, two members must represent small business as defined by the U.S. Small Business Administration. Business representatives serving on Local WDBs also may serve on the State WDB. Each business representative must meet the following criteria:					
(1) Be an owner, chief executive officer, chief operating officer, or other individual with optimum policy-making or hiring authority; and (2) Provide employment opportunities in in-demand industry sectors or occupations, as those terms are defined in WIOA sec. 3(23).					
Section Count: 11			Board Percentage: 55.00%		
<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Appointment Date</u>	<u>Term End Date</u>	<u>Main/Add Sector?</u>
Lesleigh	Smith	Baldwin - The Wharf	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Main
Chip	Harrigan	Clarke -Fulton Logging	7/1/2025	6/30/2028	Main
Odessa	Wallace	Conecuh - ZZ's Kozy RV	7/1/2025	6/30/2028	Main
Stan	Chavis	Mobile - Franklin Primary Health/State Farm	7/1/2025	6/30/2028	Main
		Escambia	7/1/2025		Main
Dan	Barber	Mobile - Barnett Millworks	7/1/2025	6/30/2029	Main
Ola	Anise	Mobile - Azalea City Credit Union	7/1/2025	6/30/2027	Main
Clinton	Johnson	Mobile - Alabama Power	7/1/2025	6/30/2027	Main
Patrick	Harrigan	Monroe - Harrigan Lumber	7/1/2025	6/30/2027	Main
Stevie	Anderson	Washington - PowerSouth McIntosh Plant	7/1/2025	6/30/2029	Main
KC	Pang	Wilcox - Golden Dragon Copper Tubing Plant	7/1/2025	6/30/2028	Main
Representatives of Workforce - WIOA Section 107(b)(2)(c)					
At least 20 percent of the members of the Local WDB must be workforce representatives. These representatives:					
(1) Must include two or more representatives of labor organizations, where such organizations exist in the local area. Where labor organizations do not exist, representatives must be selected from other employee representatives; (2) Must include one or more representatives of a joint labor-management, or union affiliated, registered apprenticeship program within the area who must be a training director or a member of a labor organization. If no union affiliated registered apprenticeship programs exist in the area, a representative of a registered apprenticeship program with no union affiliation must be appointed, if one exists; (3) May include one or more representatives of community-based organizations that have demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing the employment, training or education needs of individuals with barriers to employment, including organizations that serve veterans or provide or support competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities; and (4) May include one or more representatives of organizations that have demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing the employment, training, or education needs of eligible youth, including representatives of organizations that serve out-of-school youth.					
Section Count: 4			Board Percentage: 20.00%		
<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Appointment Date</u>	<u>Term End Date</u>	<u>Main/Add Sector?</u>
Colin	O'Shea	UA Plumbers Local 119	7/1/2025	6/30/2029	Main
Shelly	Chavira	Poarch Band Creek Indians Workforce	7/1/2025	6/30/2028	Main
Nick	Harrell	Choctaw - County Extension	7/1/2025	6/30/2029	Main
John	Moses	Angel Investors	7/1/2025	6/30/2027	Main

Other Required Representation - WIOA Section 107(b)(2)(d)

The Local WDB also must include:

- (1) At least one eligible training provider administering adult education and literacy activities under WIOA title II;
- (2) At least one representative from an institution of higher education providing workforce investment activities, including community colleges; and
- (3) At least one representative from each of the following governmental and economic and community development entities:
 - (i) Economic and community development entities;

Section Count: 5

Board Percentage: N/A

Eligible Training Provider Administering Adult Ed and Literacy/Title II:

<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Appointment Date</u>	<u>Term End Date</u>	<u>Main/Add Sector?</u>
Marlo	Young	Alabama Community College System	7/1/2025	6/30/2027	Main

Insitution of Higher Learning:

<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Appointment Date</u>	<u>Term End Date</u>	<u>Main/Add Sector?</u>
Aaron	Milner	Coastal Community College	7/1/2025	6/30/2029	Main

Economic and Community Development Entities:

<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Appointment Date</u>	<u>Term End Date</u>	<u>Main/Add Sector?</u>
Roslyn	Sales	Washington/Clarke Co Economic	7/1/2025	6/30/2026	Main

State Employment Service Office:

<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Appointment Date</u>	<u>Term End Date</u>	<u>Main/Add Sector?</u>
Shirley	Salter	Alabama Career Center System	7/1/2025	6/20/2029	Main

Title I of Rehabilitation Act of 1973:

<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Appointment Date</u>	<u>Term End Date</u>	<u>Main/Add Sector?</u>
Nick	Conway	Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services	7/1/2025	6/30/2028	Main

Other Appropriate Representatives - WIOA Section 107(b)(2)(e)

The membership of Local WDBs may include individuals or representatives of other appropriate entities in the local area, including:

- (1) Entities administering education and training activities who represent local educational agencies or community-based organizations with demonstrated expertise in addressing the education or training needs for individuals with barriers to employment;
- (2) Governmental and economic and community development entities who represent transportation, housing, and public assistance programs;
- (3) Philanthropic organizations serving the local area; and
- (4) Other appropriate individuals as determined by the chief elected official.

Section Count: 0

Board Percentage: N/A

<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Appointment Date</u>	<u>Term End Date</u>	<u>Main/Add Sector?</u>

ATTACHMENT

C

MONITORING AND OVERSIGHT POLICY

WIOA Monitoring and Oversight Policy

Effective Date: May, 2025

Applies to: Subrecipients, contractors, and program operators funded by WIOA Titles I and III

1. Purpose

To establish a policy and procedures for the monitoring and oversight of WIOA-funded programs and financial activities to ensure compliance with federal, state, and local requirements, promote continuous improvement, and prevent fraud, waste, and abuse.

2. Authority

This policy is based on requirements found in:

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014
- 2 CFR Part 200 (Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements)
- 20 CFR Parts 676–681 (WIOA Final Rules)
- State and local guidance as applicable

3. Definitions

- **Monitoring:** Regular and systematic review of program and fiscal operations to ensure compliance and performance.
- **Oversight:** The broader function of governance, guidance, and enforcement of standards and policies.
- **Subrecipient:** An entity that receives WIOA funds to carry out a program or project.
- **Contractor:** An entity that provides goods or services under a procurement contract.

4. Policy Statement

Southwest Alabama Partnership for Training and Employment (SWAPTE) is committed to the proper administration of WIOA funds and will implement an ongoing system of oversight and monitoring to:

- Ensure compliance with WIOA, federal regulations, and grant agreements
- Safeguard program integrity
- Ensure that financial management systems are in place and adequate
- Evaluate program performance and achievement of outcomes
- Promote continuous improvement

5. Responsibilities

- **Program Operators and Subrecipients:**
 - Maintain compliance with WIOA requirements
 - Cooperate fully with monitoring activities
 - Address and resolve any findings or issues in a timely manner

6. Monitoring Schedule and Scope

Monitoring will be conducted **at least annually** and will include:

A. Program Monitoring

- Participant eligibility and intake processes
- Case management and Individual Employment Plans (IEPs)
- Service delivery (including training and supportive services)
- Performance metrics (e.g., credential attainment, employment)
- Equal opportunity and non-discrimination compliance

B. Fiscal Monitoring

- Internal controls
- Cost allowability, allocability, and reasonableness
- Budget and expenditure analysis
- Procurement and contracting procedures
- Asset management and inventory control
- Financial reporting accuracy

7. Monitoring Process

1. **Notification:** Subrecipients are notified of the monitoring visit in advance.
2. **Desk Review:** Pre-monitoring review of relevant documents and data.
3. **On-site Visit:** Interviews, file reviews, fiscal record inspections, and observations.
4. **Exit Conference:** Summary of preliminary findings and discussion of next steps.
5. **Monitoring Report:** Issued within 30 days of the exit conference, detailing findings, concerns, and required corrective actions.
6. **Corrective Action Plan (CAP):** Subrecipient must respond with a CAP within 30 days.
7. **Follow-up:** The monitoring team will verify CAP implementation and close findings as appropriate.

8. Documentation and Recordkeeping

All monitoring documentation, including reports, CAPs, and correspondence, will be retained for **at least three years** from the final expenditure report date or until all audit and litigation issues are resolved.

9. Technical Assistance

Technical assistance will be provided as needed to assist subrecipients in achieving compliance and improving performance.

10. Sanctions and Remedies

Failure to comply with WIOA requirements or to adequately respond to monitoring findings may result in:

- Withholding of funds
- Disallowance of costs
- Suspension or termination of contracts
- Referral for investigation in cases of suspected fraud or abuse

ATTACHMENT

D

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

**Southwest Alabama Partnership for Training and Employment
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

SCOPE and PURPOSE.....

These procedures are established for resolving complaints and grievances arising in connection with programs operated by the Southwest Alabama Partnership for Training and Employment (SWAPTE) and its sub-contractors. Any SWAPTE applicant, participant, applicant for employment, subcontractor or other interested person may utilize these procedures.

These procedures are not applicable to criminal complaints or to WIOA staff complaints related to terms and conditions of employment. All information and complaints of fraud, abuse, or criminal activity (criminal complaints) shall be reported in accordance with the Governor's Incident Report Procedures. Sub-contractor staff complaints related to terms and conditions of employment shall be resolved in accordance with the sub-contractor's personnel grievance procedures.

GENERAL PROVISIONS.....

I. WHERE TO FILE

Complaints, except those alleging discrimination, must be filed with SWAPTE within one year of the alleged act at the following address:

Southwest Alabama Partnership for Training and Employment
515 Springhill Plaza Court
Mobile, AL 36608

Discrimination complaints must be filed with either the Department of Labor Civil Rights Center or the Workforce Development Division EO Officer, at the address in Section V, within 180 days of the alleged violation.

Complaints by SWAPTE participants, which relate to terms and conditions of employment, shall be filed initially with the employer. SWAPTE upon request shall review decisions rendered by the employer regarding the SWAPTE participant. In the absence of an employer's grievance procedures, the SWAPTE participant may file the complaint with SWAPTE at the address in Section I.

Complaints alleging labor standards violations may be filed with SWAPTE at the address in Section I, or as an alternative, may be submitted to a binding arbitration procedure, if a collective bargaining agreement covering the parties to the grievance so provides. If an election is made to have labor standards violations processed under binding arbitration provisions, the complainant shall choose binding arbitration before, and in lieu, of filing the complaint with SWAPTE. Binding arbitration may not be elected for a complaint that has been processed or is currently being processed under SWAPTE grievance procedures. Binding arbitration decisions are not review-able.

II. COMPLAINT FORM

Any person wishing to utilize the SWAPTE grievance procedures may do so by contacting SWAPTE President at 432-0909 Extension 148.

A complaint form will be made available for completion. SWAPTE will accept written complaints which shall include the complainant's (1) name, address and telephone number; (2)

name and address of the person/agency against whom/which the complaint is filed; (3) brief statement of the complaint including specific violations of WIOA if known; and (4) signature and date.

III. REVIEW PROCESS

Upon receipt by SWAPTE of a written complaint, the complaint will be reviewed, ascertain the facts and attempt informal resolution. If informal resolution fails, the complainant will be provided:

- A. A hearing within sixty (60) days of the complaint;
- B. Written notice of the date, time and place of the hearing;
- C. An opportunity to present evidence;
- D. A written decision within sixty (60) days of filing the complaint; and
- E. Notice of appeal rights.

IV. APPEALS

If either party to this complaint receives an unsatisfactory decision or no decision is issued by SWAPTE within sixty (60) days of filing the complaint either party may appeal to the Director, Workforce Development Division, Alabama Department of Workforce, 401 Adams Avenue, P. O. Box 5690, Montgomery, Alabama 36103-5690.

The appeal for review shall be in writing and shall be filed within ten (10) days of an unsatisfactory decision or fifteen (15) days from the date a decision should have been rendered.

FOR COMPLAINTS OF DISCRIMINATION BASED ON RACE, COLOR, NATIONAL ORIGIN, DISABILITY, SEX, AGE, RELIGION, POLITICAL BELIEFS, AND FOR BENEFICIARIES ONLY, CITIZENSHIP, OR SWAPTE PARTICIPATION

Complainant may obtain a Complaint Form from SWAPTE and submit it within 180days of the alleged violation or submit a letter to either of the following addresses:

Director
U.S. Department of Labor
Civil Rights Center
200 Constitution Avenue N.W.,
Room N-4123
Washington, D.C. 20210

Or

EO Officer
Alabama Department of Workforce
Workforce Development Division
401 Adams Avenue
P.O. Box 304103
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-4106

VI. RECORD KEEPING

A complaint log and files shall be maintained by the Southwest Alabama Partnership for Training and Employment, which will include:

- A. The name and address of the aggrieved or complainant.
- B. A brief statement of the alleged violation.
- C. Date filed
- D. Brief statement of the decision
- E. Date of the final decision

The log and file shall be maintained for a period of not less than three (3) years. Information regarding complaints and all actions taken shall be kept confidential except as is necessary to ensure a fair determination.

VII. PROHIBITION AGAINST RETALIATION

It shall be the policy of SWAPTE that no person who files a complaint, institutes or causes to be instituted any proceeding, or testifies in any investigation under or related to WIOA shall be discharged, discriminated against, or denied any benefits because of such complaint. This policy is applicable to all SWAPTE sub-contractors.

VIII. CORRECTIVE ACTIONS AND SANCTIONS

Where a monitoring review or complaint investigation results in a finding of non-compliance with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of WIOA, SWAPTE shall require the sub-recipient to take appropriate corrective actions within a specified time frame to secure compliance. Such actions will include, but not be limited to:

- A. Actions to end and/or redress the violation;
- B. Actions to provide those benefits and/or services that were determined to be discriminatorily denied including, but not limited to, enrollment, reinstatement and/or monetary relief, as appropriate; and
- C. Actions to take any other remedial or affirmative action deemed appropriate to ensure equal opportunity.

If a sub-recipient fails to take corrective actions as directed, a hearing will be scheduled for the sub-recipient to show cause why funding should not be terminated. The hearing will be conducted in accordance with established WIOA Grievance Procedures.

Monetary relief may not be paid from federal funds.

Grievance and complaint procedures were explained to me

By: _____
Employee's Name

Date: _____

Title

Agency

Participant's Signature

Revised 5/2025