



STATE OF GEORGIA FOUR YEAR WIOA UNIFIED STATE PLAN

DRAFT



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ACRONYM GUIDE

ACS	American Community Survey	CSPD	Comprehensive System for Personal Development
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act		
AEFLA	Adult Education & Family Literacy Act	CSPM	Client Services Policy Manual
AO	Accelerating Opportunity	CSU	Constituent Services Unit
AOP	Agricultural Outreach Plan	DBHDD	Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities
ASL	American Sign Language		
AWT	Assistive Work Technology	DCA	Georgia Department of Community Affairs
BER	Benefits Eligibility Review	DCH	Georgia Department of Community Health
BGLI	Burning Glass Labor Insight		
BLS	Bureau of Labor Statistics	DCS	Georgia Department of Community Supervision
BSU	Business Services Unit (GDOL)		
CAD	Computer Aided Design	DFCS	Division of Family & Children Services (DHS)
CAP	Client Assistance Programs		
CAP	Corrective Action Plan	DHS	Georgia Department of Human Services
CAPI	Customized Apprenticeships & Paid Internships	DJJ	Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice
CCRS	College & Career Readiness Standards	DOAS	Georgia Department of Administrative Services
CCSS	Common Core State Standards		
CE	Customized Employment	DOC	Georgia Department of Corrections
CIE	Competitive Integrated Employment	DoDD	Division of Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD)
CIL	Centers for Independent Living		
CJCC	Georgia Criminal Justice Coordinating Council	DSU	Designated State Unit
		DVOP	Disabled Veteran Outreach Program
CLCP	Certified Literate Community Program	EG	Employ Georgia (GDOL)
CLEO	Chief Local Elected Official	ELPS	English Language Proficiency Standards
CNC	Computer Numerical Control Operator	EMSI	Economic Modeling Specialists Intl
CR	Customized Recruitment	ERP	Eligibility Review Process
CRC	Certified Rehabilitation Counselors	ES	Employment Services
CRCC	Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification	ESP	Extended Services Plan
		ETA	Employment & Training Administration (USDOL)
CRP	Community Rehabilitation Programs		
CSB	Community Service Boards	ETP	Eligible Training Provider
CSC	Cave Spring Center	ETPL	Eligible Training Provider List
CSNA	Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment	EXCEL	Executive Commitment to Excellence in Leadership

FB	Federal Bonding	IELCE	Integrated English Literacy & Civics Education
FY	Fiscal Year		
GaDOE	Georgia Department of Education	IEP	Individualized Education Plan
GALIS	Georgia Adult Learners Information System	IET	Integrated Education and Training
GA-PRI	Georgia Prisoner Reentry Initiative	IPE	Individualized Plan for Employment
GCDD	Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities	IPS	Individualized Placement & Support
GDEcD	Georgia Department of Economic Development	ISY	In-School Youth
GDOL	Georgia Department of Labor	ITA	Individual Training Account
GED®	General Educational Development test ¹	ITP	Individualized Transition Plan
GEPS	Georgia Enterprises for Products & Services	IWT	Incumbent Worker Training
GLME	Georgia Labor Market Explorer	ITW	Internet Tax and Wage
GLRS	Georgia Learning Resource System	JFF	Jobs for the Future
GOTSR	Governor's Office of Transition, Support & Reentry	LEA	Local Education Agency
GPSC	Grant Program Support Coordinator	LEOs	Local Elected Officials
GSE	Georgia Standards of Excellence	LVERs	Local Veteran Employment Representatives
GVRA	Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency	LWDA	Local Workforce Development Area
GVRs	Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Services	LWDB	Local Workforce Development Board
GWROPP	Georgia Work Ready Online Participant Portal	LWIA	Local Workforce Investment Area
GWS	Georgia Workforce System	MHS	Migrant Head Start
HDCI	High Demand Career Initiative	MIS	Management Information System
HSE	High School Equivalency	MOA	Methods of Administration
IATSE	International Association of Theatrical & Screen Employees	MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
IAWP	International Association of Workforce Professionals	MSFW	Migrant & Seasonal Farmworkers
ICR	Information Collection Request	NAICS	North American Industry Classification System
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act	NASWA	National Association for State Workforce Agencies
		NDI	Non-Destructive Inspectors
		NDT	Non-Destructive Testers
		NDWG	National Dislocated Worker Grants
		NEG	National Emergency Grant
		NFJP	National Farmworker Jobs Program
		NPRM	Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

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NRS	National Reporting System	SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
O*Net	Occupational Information Network		
O.C.G.A.	Official Code of Georgia Annotated	SPC	Statistical Process Control
OA	Office of Apprenticeship (USDOL)	SPMI	Serious & Persistent Mental Illness
OAE	Office of Adult Education (TCSG)	SRC	State Rehabilitation Council
OCTAE	Office of Career, Technical & Agricultural Education (USDOE)	SSDI	Social Security Disability Insurance
		SSDR	State Service Delivery Regions
OJT	On-the-Job	SSI	Supplemental Security Income
OOS	Order of Selection	SSLO	Single Set of Learning Objectives
OSY	Out-of-School Youth	STAR	Staff Technical Assistance & Review
OWD	Office of Workforce Development (TCSG)	STAR	Student Achievement in Reading
		STEM	Science, Technology, engineering and Math
PDTR	Professional Development & Transition Resources	SUP	State Unified Plan
PIP	Performance Improvement Plan	SWAT	Special Workforce Assistance Team
PLC	Programmable Logic Controller	SWDB	State Workforce Development Board
Pre-ETS	Pre-Employment Transition Services	SWIS	Statewide Workforce Investment System
PWP	Personal Work Plan		
PY	Program Year	TAA	Trade Adjustment Assistance
REA	Reemployment Assistance Program	TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
RESEA	Georgia's Reemployment Services & Eligibility Assessment		
		TCC	Technical College Credit
RFA	Request for Application	TCSG	Technical College System of Georgia
RSA	USDOE Rehabilitation Services Administration	TEGL	Training Employment Guidance Letter
		TFSP	TANF Family Service Plan
SCSEP	Senior Community Service & Employment Program	UCX	Unemployment Compensation for Ex-service members program
SDVS	Georgia Department of Veteran's Services	UGA	University of Georgia
		UI	Unemployment Insurance
SE	Supported Employment	UI and RO	Unemployment Insurance & Regional Operations
SEA	State Education Agency		
SES	Supported Employment Services	UIREA	UI Employment Assistance
SETA	Southeastern Employment & Training Association	USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
SILC	Statewide Independent Living Council	USDOE	United States Department of Education
SIWDG	Strategic Industries Workforce Development Grant	USDOL	United State Department of Labor
		USG	University System of Georgia
SMA	State Monitor Advocate		

VR	Vocational Rehabilitation	WIOA	Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act
VRP	Vocational Rehabilitation Program		
WARN	Worker Adjustment & Retraining Notification	WOTC	Work Opportunity Tax Credit
WEx	Work Experience	WP	Wagner-Peyser Act/programs
WIA	Workforce Investment Act	WSP	TANF Work Support Program
WIG	Workforce Implementation Guidance Letter	YDC	Youth Detention Center

I. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

(a) Unified or Combined State Plan

The State of Georgia is submitting a Unified State Plan. Although Georgia has chosen a Unified State Plan, partnerships with non-core partners are included in the State's four-year strategy. In fact, throughout this plan there are references to many other agencies and organizations with which the workforce system is engaging that are outside of the core required partners. For example, OWD is in the early stages of discussions with TANF and SNAP regarding integration of services and strategies to help Georgians across the state. OWD is currently partnering with GaDOE on evaluating and improving their credentials of value in their CTAE programs. Furthermore, the office plans to pursue additional opportunities to partner with Perkins in the coming years. However, the State chose not to include these partners in the drafting of this Plan as inclusion would require them to be subject to the common planning elements. As these discussions are still in the early planning phases, including descriptions of specific strategies and progress in data collection and reporting systems is premature. Ultimately, based on timing of plan submission deadlines and the lead time necessary for establishing true alignment with non-core partners, the State chose a Unified Plan. In future planning periods, Georgia plans to submit a Combined Plan and strives to increase integration.

The State created a working group to plan and coordinate the writing of the State Plan. The working group was comprised of different members of the workforce system, including GDOL, TCSG, and GVRA. Additionally, the group sought feedback from the state's local workforce development areas and business representatives through members of the SWDB.

Upon release of the Unified and Combined State Plan Requirements, the working group met to discuss which type of plan to submit. A Unified State Plan was decided upon and recommended to the Governor. The group was then tasked with writing and developing various sections of the plan. During the writing process, TCSG staff assisted each agency partner with writing, formatting, and editing support. Once complete, each group submitted their sections, which were then combined to create the first version of the Unified State Plan. This version went before the State Workforce Development Board Executive Committee, and the committee approved it on January 17, 2020.

Upon approval, the plan went out for public comment on January 17, 2020, on the TCSG site for 30 consecutive days. During the public comment period, the SWDB met and reviewed the plan extensively during a State Planning Retreat. The retreat was facilitated by an independent entity and was open to the public, and feedback was gathered and considered. The retreat included the SWDB being divided into committees to closely analyze the different aspects of the plan that are related to the roles and responsibilities of their respective committees. During these committee breakouts, the existing content of the plan was scrutinized and additional content created based on the feedback of SWDB members.

After the 30-day period, the plan was taken down from public view, and the submitted comments were organized into sections and taken to the working group for review. Each working group discussed their relevant comments and determined whether the comments warranted a change in the State Plan, or if they should be responded to individually. Once the group made changes, the responses were compiled and re-written into a new version of the State Plan. These changes, along with all of the comments, were submitted to the State Workforce Development Board Executive Committee for final approval on February 21, 2020.

The committee approved the final plan, and the document was sent to OWD staff for submittal to the U.S. Department of Labor.

II. STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

(a) Economic, Workforce, and Workforce Development Activities Analysis

(1) Economic and Workforce Analysis

(A) *Economic Analysis*

Through 2019, Georgia has been ranked as the best state in the nation in which to do business for the seventh consecutive year by Site Selection magazine² and the sixth consecutive year by Area Development magazine³. Through limited regulation and taxation, low cost of living, a strong workforce, and high quality of life, Georgia has established a strong business climate that is attracting jobs and investment. The Global Commerce division at the Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD) experienced a record-breaking year during fiscal year 2019 (FY19). Georgia's economic development team supported the creation of 28,960 new jobs - generating more than \$7.4 billion in investment through the location of 332 projects, which included new locations and existing industry expansions⁴. Seventy-four percent of the total economic development announcements were outside of the Atlanta area.

In the coming years, the State's economic development strategy will continue to be a shared focus on recruiting new investments and jobs into Georgia in strategic industries, while also working to sustain and grow the existing businesses in the state.

(i) Existing Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations

Georgia continues to experience strong economic conditions, with sustained success and expansion across a range of industries expected in the coming years. As depicted in Figure 1 below, the top in-demand industry sectors in Georgia's economy currently (based solely on the overall number of job postings in each industry) are Health Care, Retail, Administrative and Support Services, Professional Services, Manufacturing, Finance and Insurance, Transportation and Warehousing, Educational Services, Information Technology, and Public Administration.

² <https://siterelection.com/press/releases/191106.html>

³ <https://www.areadevelopment.com/Top-States-for-Doing-Business/Q3-2019/overall-results-georgia-ranked-top-state-by-site-selection-c.shtml>

⁴ <https://www.georgia.org/newsroom/press-releases/gov-kemp-announces-record-year-global-commerce-and-film>

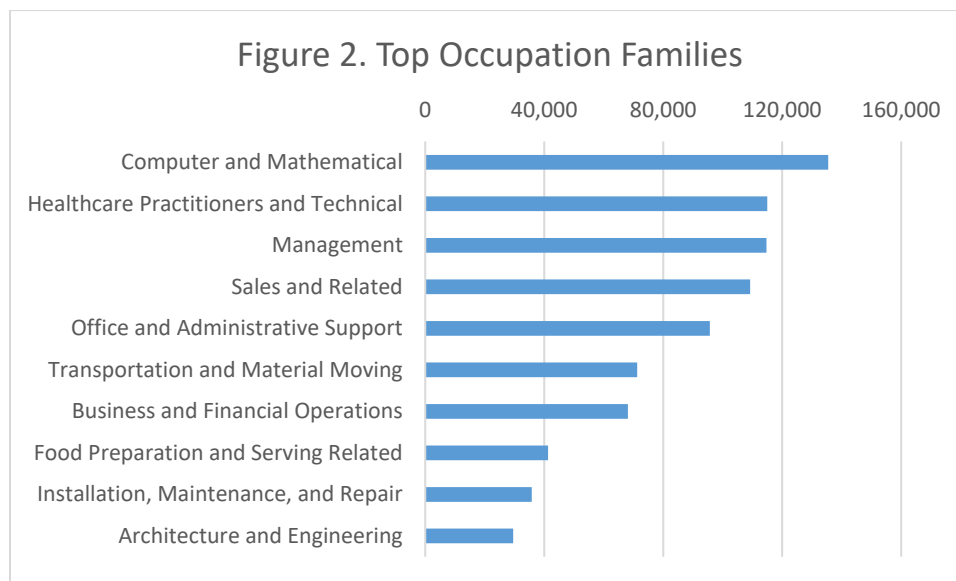
Figure 1. TOP INDUSTRY SECTORS Based on 848,967 Job Postings Jan 01, 2019 – Dec 04, 2019		
Industry Sector	# of Job Postings	Percent of Total
Health Care and Social Assistance	175,277	20.6%
Retail Trade	93,403	11.0%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	86,218	10.2%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	80,672	9.5%
Accommodation and Food Services	68,100	8.0%
Manufacturing	66,832	7.9%
Finance and Insurance	63,050	7.4%
Transportation and Warehousing	54,949	6.5%
Educational Services	37,212	4.4%
Information	28,186	3.3%
Public Administration	26,273	3.1%

Source: BGLI

Georgia’s services industries have continued to show strong growth. Healthcare in Georgia continues to mirror national trends. Of the three healthcare subsectors, ambulatory healthcare exhibits the strongest employment growth, driven primarily by outpatient care centers. Employment in hospitals is growing slightly faster than the national average. This has continued to place a strain on the existing healthcare workforce, and exacerbated the need for more workers in the healthcare industries. These talent-related issues are even more severe in the rural parts of the state as compared to the urban.

While retail services remain a large portion of Georgia’s economy, it is an industry that typically provides jobs with wages below the standard living wage. Therefore, it is not an industry that will take priority for placement with the State’s public workforce system.

Continued demand for Professional, Scientific & Technical Services indicates the state’s success in attracting corporate headquarters and corporate support offices. Several recent relocation and expansion announcements suggest that this demand will continue in the coming years. The dramatic increase in job postings from the Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services was the most intriguing insight. When Georgia’s last State plan was submitted in 2018 this industry had 23,325 postings. In one short year, that number has grown to 86,218 postings, primarily in the subsector of employment services or temp agencies. This may underscore a change in the labor market in how employers are finding new workers.



Source: BGLI – 1,020,571 postings Jan 1 2019 – Dec 4, 2019

As seen in Figure 2 above, the Top Occupation Families in Georgia are computer and mathematical, healthcare practitioners, management, sales and office support. Within these families, the top individual occupations are Software Developers, Registered Nurses, Truck Drivers, Managers, Sales Representatives and Retail Salespersons, and Customer Service Representatives. Figure 3 below gives a detailed view of the most in-demand occupations within the larger occupation families, while Figure 4 provides the top occupations in-demand overall statewide.

Occupation Family	Job Postings
Computer and Mathematical	135,494
Software Developers, Applications	42,243
Computer Systems Engineers/Architects	9,998
Computer User Support Specialists	9,776

Computer Systems Analysts	8,783
Information Technology Project Managers	8,173
Web Developers	8,128
Business Intelligence Analysts	6,032
Information Security Analysts	5,835
Database Administrators	5,757
Network and Computer Systems Administrators	4,962
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	115,008
Registered Nurses	41,050
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	7,561
Critical Care Nurses	5,642
Medical Records and Health Information Technicians	4,262
Physical Therapists	4,232
Health Technologists and Technicians, All Other	3,930
Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technicians	3,047
Pharmacy Technicians	3,012
Physicians and Surgeons, All Other	2,860
Speech-Language Pathologists	2,725
Management	114,719
Managers, All Other	22,597
Sales Managers	11,903
Medical and Health Services Managers	11,370
General and Operations Managers	10,168
Food Service Managers	8,991
Marketing Managers	7,823

Financial Managers, Branch or Department	6,172
Construction Managers	3,873
Human Resources Managers	2,796
Architectural and Engineering Managers	2,691
Sales and Related	109,210
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	32,888
Retail Salespersons	28,252
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	19,049
Insurance Sales Agents	4,767
Cashiers	4,728
Real Estate Sales Agents	3,374
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Technical and Scientific Products	2,772
Sales Representatives, Services, All Other	2,711
Sales Agents, Financial Services	2,328
First-Line Supervisors of Non-Retail Sales Workers	1,775
Office and Administrative Support	95,657
Customer Service Representatives	20,419
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	10,496
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	7,512
First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	5,966
Medical Secretaries	4,660
Hotel, Motel, and Resort Desk Clerks	4,252
Office Clerks, General	4,207

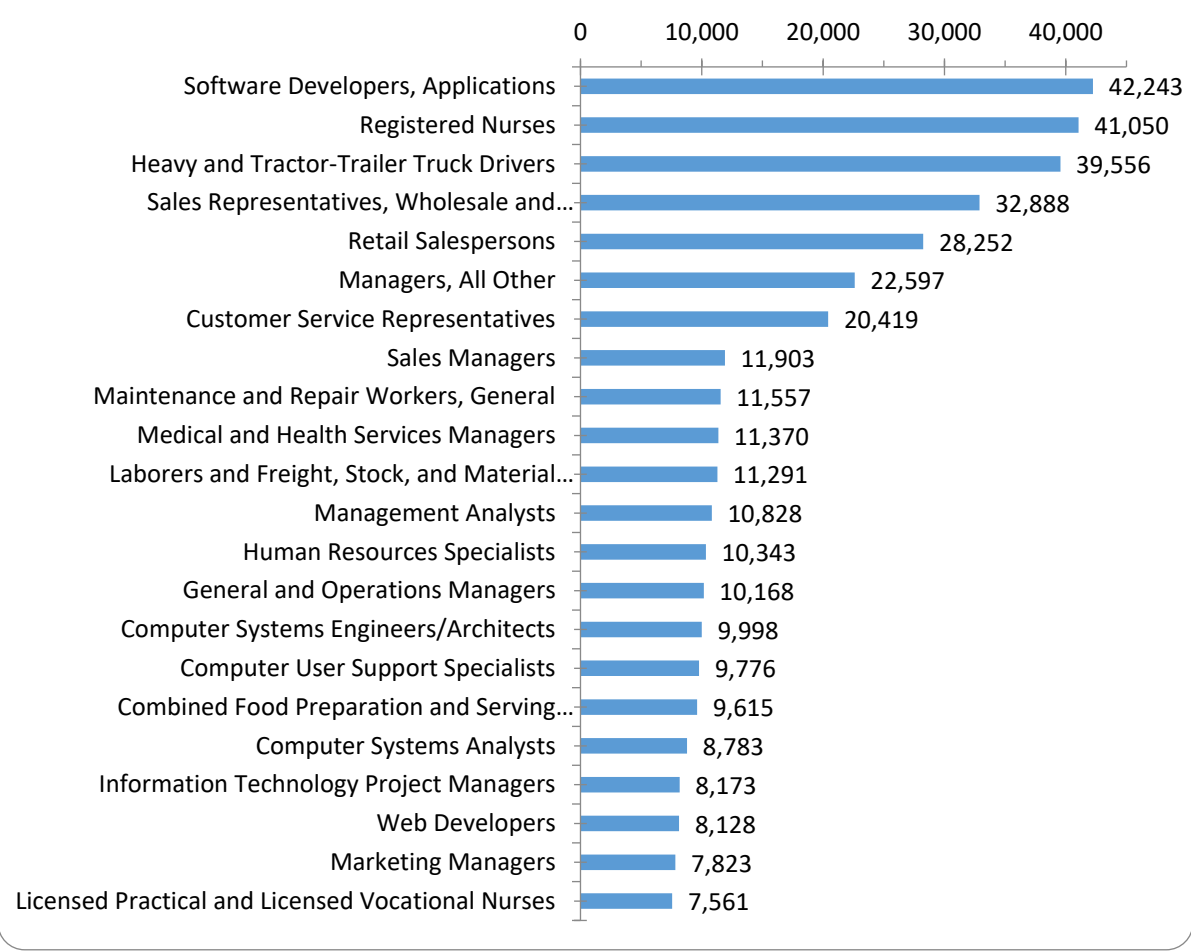
Stock Clerks, Sales Floor	3,387
Patient Representatives	3,297
Receptionists and Information Clerks	2,822
Transportation and Material Moving	71,226
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	39,556
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	11,291
Driver/Sales Workers	4,937
Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	3,510
Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators	3,406
Cleaners of Vehicles and Equipment	1,107
Packers and Packers, Hand	1,039
Parking Lot Attendants	1,023
Business and Financial Operations	68,152
Management Analysts	10,828
Human Resources Specialists	10,343
Accountants	7,543
Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	5,523
Financial Analysts	5,014
Auditors	2,870
Purchasing Agents, Except Wholesale, Retail, and Farm Products	2,548
Training and Development Specialists	2,132
Personal Financial Advisors	2,031
Loan Officers	1,828
Food Preparation and Serving Related	41,269
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	9,615

Waiters and Waitresses	6,280
Cooks, Restaurant	5,700
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	5,680
Dishwashers	2,785
Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop	2,224
Bartenders	1,911
Chefs and Head Cooks	1,807
Dining Room and Cafeteria Attendants and Bartender Helpers	1,717
Baristas	1,280
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	35,791
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	11,557
Automotive Specialty Technicians	5,541
First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers	3,997
Heating and Air Conditioning Mechanics and Installers	2,161
Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	1,834
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	1,193
Architecture and Engineering	29,587
Civil Engineers	3,247
Industrial Engineering Technicians	3,023
Electrical Engineers	2,790
Mechanical Engineers	2,787
Engineers, All Other	1,917
Industrial Engineers	1,236

Electronics Engineering Technicians	1,197
Engineering Technicians, Except Drafters, All Other	1,174
Validation Engineers	1,064
Drafters, All Other	1,037
Production	25,360
Production Workers, All Other	5,146
First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	2,687
Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers	2,270
Team Assemblers	1,204
Helpers--Production Workers	1,179
Bakers	1,071
Welders, Cutters, and Welder Fitters	1,060

Source: BGLI

Figure 4. Top Occupations



Source: BGLI

For a regional view of in-demand sectors and job openings, see the following breakdown of each of Georgia’s Workforce Regions below. Please note that this regional analysis is based on aggregate state-level data sources. A more detailed and accurate depiction of local/regional industry demands can be found in the respective local and regional plans. The incompleteness of employment and demand data within some sectors can lead to challenges when painting a state-wide picture. However, OWD will work with all local areas to accurately depict current trends and needs for the completion of local planning.

Region 1 – WorkSource Northwest Georgia (LWDA 1): Region 1 has seen significant growth in Health Care & Social Assistance (7,847), Manufacturing (5,318), Retail Trade (4,106), and Transportation (3,849). Employers such as WellStar Health System, Hospital Corporation of America, and Floyd Medical Center continue to show increased need for healthcare employees. An upsurge in Manufacturing, especially within the flooring industry, shows increased employment at Shaw Industries and Mohawk. For the period January 1 through December 4 of 2019, job postings for CDL Truck Drivers (3,825) and Registered Nurses (1,938) show the continued need for certified employees in those fields.

Region 2 – WorkSource Georgia Mountains (LWDA 2): Region 2 has seen significant growth in job postings for Health Care & Social Assistance (7,256), Retail Trade (3,753), Transportation & Warehousing (2,097), and Manufacturing (2,028). Employers such as Northeast Georgia Health, Northside Hospital, Anthem Blue Cross, and the University of North Georgia continue to expand and generate jobs. Additionally, the upsurge in the Transportation & Warehousing and Manufacturing sectors is attributed to the growth of Home Depot and Lowes. For the period January 1 through December 4 of 2019 job postings for CDL Truck Drivers (2,155) and Registered Nurses (1,841) show the continued need for certified employees.

Region 3 – WorkSource Metro Atlanta (LWDAs 3,4,5,6 & 7: WorkSource City of Atlanta (3), WorkSource Cobb (4), WorkSource DeKalb (5), WorkSource Fulton (6), WorkSource Atlanta Regional (7)): Metro LWDAs have experienced significant growth in Health Care & Social Assistance (104,189), Administrative Support Services (70,863), Professional, Scientific & Technical Employment (70,276), Retail Trade (54,361), Finance & Insurance (45,327), Manufacturing (40,488), and Transportation & Warehousing (27,330). The sector growth is most visible in the following occupations, listed during the period January 1 through December 4 of 2019 with the job postings for: Software Applications Developer (37,570), Registered Nurses (20,342), Sales Representatives (19,482) and CDL Drivers (13,129). Primary employers include Wellstar Health Systems, Emory Healthcare, DeKalb Medical Group, Marriott International, Home Depot, Piedmont Healthcare, Anthem-Blue Cross, Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta, Deloitte, and Northside Hospital.

Region 4 – WorkSource West Central (LWDA 8): Region 4 has experienced significant growth in Health Care & Social Assistance (6,245), Retail Trade (2,968) Transportation & Warehousing (2,325), and Manufacturing (2,182). This growth represents the continued need for healthcare workers at WellStar Health Systems, Piedmont Hospital, and other healthcare facilities. For the period January 1 through December 4 of 2019, job postings for CDL Truck Drivers (2,511) and Registered Nurses (1,465) illustrate the continued need for certified employees in those fields.

Region 5 – WorkSource Northeast Georgia (LWDA 9): Region 5 has experienced a significant increase in openings in Health Care & Social Assistance (7,099), Educational Services (5,160), Retail Trade (4,587), Manufacturing (3,758), and Transportation & Warehousing (3,473). This growth represents the continued need for workers at employers such as the University of Georgia, Piedmont Healthcare, Trinity Health, Home Depot, and Marriott. For the period January 1 through December 4 of 2019 job postings for CDL Truck Drivers (3,497) and Registered Nurses (1,362) show the continued need for certified employees in those fields.

Region 6 – WorkSource Macon-Bibb (LWDA 10) & WorkSource Middle Georgia (LWDA 11): Region 6 has experienced growth in Health Care & Social Assistance (8,491), Retail Trade (4,416), and Transportation & Warehousing (2,693). Hiring at employers such as Anthem BlueCross, Hospital Corporation of America, Navient Health, and the U.S. Air Force represent the need for skilled workers. Openings for CDL Truck Drivers (2,568) and Registered Nurses (1,709) show the continued need for certified employees in those fields.

Region 7 – WorkSource CSRA (LWDA 12) & WorkSource East Central (LWDA 13): Region 7 has experienced growth in openings in Health Care & Social Assistance (9,654), Retail Trade (4,173), and

Professional, Scientific and Technical Employment (3,366). Major employers associated with this growth include University HealthCare, Anthem Blue Cross, Hospital Corporation of America, and MCG Health System. Postings for CDL Truck Drivers (2,689) and Registered Nurses (2,455) show the continued need for certified employees in those fields.

Region 8 – WorkSource Lower Chattahoochee (LWDA 14) & WorkSource Middle Flint (LWDA 15): The region has a diverse industry base and strong workforce demand in Health Care (9,063), Finance (4,027), and Transportation & Warehousing (3,040). Hiring is strong at employers such as Anthem Blue Cross, Lifepoint Health, Synovus, and AFLAC. The need for CDL Truck Drivers (3,149) and Registered Nurses (1,878) remains strong.

Region 9 – WorkSource Heart of Georgia (LWDA 16): Region 9, a geographically large workforce area with diverse industry sectors, has experienced employment growth in Health Care & Social Assistance (1,777), Transportation & Warehousing (1,741), Retail Trade (1,303) and Public Administration (639). Hiring is attributed to employers such as Hospital Corporation of America, Royal Express, Southern Frozen Foods, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Department of Corrections. For the period January 1 through December 4 of 2019 job postings for CDL Truck Drivers (1,939) and Registered Nurses (486) shows the continued need for certified employees in those fields.

Region 10 – WorkSource Southwest Georgia (LWDA 17): Region 10, a geographically large workforce area with diverse industry sectors, indicates growth in Health Care & Social Assistance (4,587), Transportation & Warehousing (2,168), Retail Trade (2,063), and Manufacturing (1,302). Growth is attributed to employers such as Phoebe Putnam Health Systems, Koch Industries, and the City of Albany. The need for CDL Truck Drivers (2,306) and Registered Nurses (1,419), as well as many other healthcare occupations, remains elevated.

Region 11 – WorkSource Southern Georgia (LWDA 18): LWDA 18, a geographically large workforce area with diverse industry sectors indicates growth in Health Care & Social Assistance (3,792), Transportation & Warehousing (1,908), and Manufacturing (1,387). This growth is reflected in job openings at employers including Hospital Corporation of America, South Georgia Medical Center, Pruitt Health, and Valdosta State University. For the period January 1 through December 4 of 2019 job postings show the continued need for CDL Truck Drivers (2,054) and Registered Nurses (705) as well as many other healthcare occupations persists.

Region 12 – WorkSource Coastal = (LWDA 20): Region 12 has experienced robust employment growth and strong demand remains as illustrated by openings in the following fields: Health Care & Social Assistance (11,704), Manufacturing (4,970), and Transportation & Warehousing (3,898). Employers in the area with the most job postings this year include; Southeast Georgia Health System, Anthem Blue Cross, Hospital Corporation of America, and Gulfstream Aerospace. For the period January 1 through December 4 of 2019 job postings show continued growth for CDL Truck Drivers (2,964), and Registered Nurses (2,727). With the deepening of the port in Savannah and the significant planned expansion of the port, it is expected that the area will further emerge as the leading transportation and logistics hub for the Southeast and experience continued rising talent demands to support this industrial growth.

(ii) Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations

Using USDOL BLS Statistics as well as state data, GDOL’s Workforce Statistics and Economic Research division produces annual short-term employment projections and biennial long-term employment projections. The most current short-term projections are for base year 2018, while the most current long-term projections are for base year 2016. Figure 5. below indicates short-term industry employment and projections for the State, 2018-2020.

Figure 5. Industry Title	2018 Estimated Employment	2020 Projected Employment	Total 2018- 2020 Employment Change	Projected Annual Growth Rate
Total Employment, All Industries	4,676,802	4,888,964	212,162	2.24%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	89,012	92,994	3,982	2.21%
Construction	183,652	214,249	30,597	8.01%
Manufacturing	404,865	416,316	11,451	1.40%
Trade, Transportation, & Utilities				
<i>Utilities</i>	18,895	18,460	-435	-1.16%
<i>Wholesale Trade</i>	191,626	200,788	9,162	2.36%
<i>Retail Trade</i>	492,270	501,946	9,676	0.98%
<i>Transportation and Warehousing</i>	214,201	231,393	17,192	3.94%
Information	108,079	112,702	4,623	2.12%
Financial Activities				
<i>Finance and Insurance</i>	162,827	166,650	3,823	1.17%
<i>Real Estate and Rental and Leasing</i>	65,680	71,468	5,788	4.31%
Professional & Business Services				
<i>Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services</i>	256,278	271,946	15,668	3.01%

<i>Management of Companies & Enterprises</i>	70,735	77,180	6,445	4.46%
<i>Administrative & Support and Waste Management & Remediation</i>	306,038	326,106	20,068	3.23%
Education & Health Services				
<i>Educational Services</i>	390,990	406,071	15,081	1.91%
<i>Health Care & Social Assistance</i>	535,934	557,262	21,328	1.97%
Leisure & Hospitality				
<i>Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation</i>	48,406	52,246	3,840	3.89%
<i>Accommodation & Food Services</i>	425,767	451,391	25,624	2.97%
Other Services (Except Government)	151,819	156,245	4,426	1.45%
Government				
<i>Federal Government, Excluding Post Office</i>	98,653	95,340	-3,313	-1.69%
<i>State Government, Excluding Education & Hospitals</i>	71,974	72,027	53	0.04%
<i>Local Government, Excluding Education & Hospitals</i>	142,884	146,737	3,853	1.34%

Source: GDOL

Georgia's service-based industries are projected to continue growing. Short-term projections indicate the largest growth in the Construction industry, Management of Companies and Enterprises, and Real Estate and Rental and Leasing. Growth is predicted in most other industry sectors. Taken as a whole, these projections show an increase in critical sectors of Georgia's economy and reflect the national trends of a strong and growing economy. This change is seen throughout the economy, illustrated by a return of jobs within the real estate and leasing sectors.

One industry projected to decline is Government. This continues the trend that began in 2008. Most of the decline in the government sector is due to continued budget cuts and hiring freezes across federal agencies.

Figure 6. below indicates GDOL’s long-term industry projections for Georgia, 2016-2026.

Figure 6. Industry	2016 Estimated Employment	2026 Projected Employment	Total 2016- 2026 Employment Change	Annual Percent Change
Total, All Industries	4,504,561	5,029,483	524,922	1.11%
Accommodation & Food Services	411,928	441,888	29,960	0.70%
Administrative & Support and Waste Management & Remediation Services	292,987	332,917	39,930	1.29%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	88,435	97,468	9,033	0.98%
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	47,871	56,834	8,963	1.73%
Construction	169,333	192,783	23,450	1.31%
Educational Services	374,912	425,993	51,081	1.29%
Finance & Insurance	99,202	102,645	3,443	0.34%
Government	159,207	176,851	17,644	1.06%
Health Care & Social Assistance	482,090	580,653	98,563	1.88%
Information	101,628	106,653	5,025	0.48%
Management of Companies & Enterprises	142,880	155,044	12,164	0.82%
Manufacturing	66,026	78,049	12,023	1.69%
Mining, Quarrying, & Oil and Gas Extraction	384,807	415,670	30,863	0.77%

Other Services (except Public Administration)	5,026	3,870	-1,156	-2.58%
Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	176,632	195,683	19,051	1.03%
Real Estate & Rental and Leasing	239,453	271,564	32,111	1.27%
Retail Trade	69,194	70,058	864	0.12%
Transportation & Warehousing	62,406	72,729	10,323	1.54%
Utilities	484,276	538,010	53,734	1.06%
Wholesale Trade	190,333	223,735	33,402	1.63%

Source: GDOL

Georgia's long-term projections show positive growth trends across major industries. Health Care and Social Assistance and Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation will continue to be one of the largest areas of growth (1.88% and 1.73% annual growth), as will Manufacturing (1.7% annual growth). Georgia's service-providing industries continue to grow. Growth in the Construction and Real Estate sectors evidence a return of pre-recession growth with 1.31% and 1.27% projected annual growth rates, respectively.

Figure 7. below indicates GDOL's projections for fastest growing occupations, 2016-2026.

Figure 7. Occupation	2016 Base Employment	2026 Projected Employment	Total Change in Employment	Percent Change in Employment	Annual Growth Rate	Annual Openings from Growth	Annual Openings from Replacements	Annual Openings
Rotary Drill Operators, Oil and Gas	70	110	40	67.2%	5.3%	0	10	10
Costume Attendants	220	320	100	45.9%	3.9%	10	60	70
Film and Video Editors	860	1,240	380	43.2%	3.7%	40	100	140
Physician Assistants	3,800	5,430	1,630	42.8%	3.6%	160	240	400
Personal Care Aides	24,890	34,980	10,090	40.5%	3.5%	1,010	4,190	5,200
Bus Drivers, Transit and Intercity	3,600	5,060	1,460	40.4%	3.5%	150	520	670
Statisticians	740	1,020	280	38.9%	3.3%	30	70	100
Set and Exhibit Designers	700	970	270	38.7%	3.3%	30	80	110
Nurse Practitioners	4,290	5,940	1,650	38.4%	3.3%	170	250	420
Occupational Therapy Assistants	790	1,100	310	38.8%	3.3%	30	120	150
Physical Therapist Assistants	1,970	2,670	700	35.3%	3.1%	70	270	340
Computer Numerically Controlled Machine Tool Programmers, Metal and Plastic	290	400	110	36.0%	3.1%	10	30	40

Physical Therapist Aides	860	1,160	300	33.8%	3.0%	30	110	140
Camera Operators, Television, Video, and Motion Picture	470	620	150	33.0%	2.9%	20	50	70
Nursing Instructors and Teachers, Postsecondary	970	1,290	320	32.1%	2.8%	30	80	110
Actors	1,980	2,600	620	31.2%	2.8%	60	230	290
Transit and Railroad Police	420	560	140	31.8%	2.8%	10	30	40
Farmworkers, Farm, Ranch, and Aquacultural Animals	2,840	3,760	920	32.3%	2.8%	90	500	590
Producers and Directors	4,170	5,450	1,280	30.7%	2.7%	130	420	550
Respiratory Therapists	3,730	4,870	1,140	30.5%	2.7%	110	200	310

Source: GDOL

Figure 8. indicates GDOL data on the top 20 occupations based on annual openings – long- term projections, 2016- 2026.

NOTE: Education Codes: 1 Doctoral or professional degree, 2 Master's degree, 3 Bachelor's degree, 4 Associate's degree, 5 post-secondary non-degree award, 6 Some college, no degree, 7 High school diploma or equivalent, 8 Less than high school

The majority of the projected fastest growing occupations are in the healthcare and arts and entertainment fields. Eleven of the twenty listed occupations require Associate Degrees or some college level courses.

Figure 8. Top 20 Occupations based on Annual Openings - Long-Term Occupational Projections 2016-2026										
SOC Code	Occupations	Typical Education	2016 Base Employment	2026 Base Employment	Total Change in Employment	Percent Change in Employment	Annual Growth Rate	Annual Openings from Growth	Annual Openings from Replacements	Annual Openings
35-3021	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	8	111,850	129,130	17,280	15.4%	1.4%	1,730	21,830	23,560
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	8	141,260	159,280	18,020	12.8%	1.2%	1,800	21,430	23,230
41-2011	Cashiers	8	110,290	115,410	5,120	4.6%	0.5%	510	20,940	21,450
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	8	115,480	136,190	20,710	17.9%	1.7%	2,070	16,990	19,060
35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses	8	78,910	83,500	4,590	5.8%	0.6%	460	15,220	15,680
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	7	98,780	108,850	10,070	10.2%	1.0%	1,010	13,100	14,110
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	7	84,210	87,420	3,210	3.8%	0.4%	320	9,950	10,270
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	3	88,130	101,150	13,020	14.8%	1.4%	1,300	7,610	8,910
43-5081	Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	7	58,010	65,760	7,750	13.4%	1.3%	780	7,790	8,570
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and	8	53,780	60,130	6,350	11.8%	1.1%	640	7,290	7,930

	Housekeeping Cleaners									
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	5	59,740	68,220	8,480	14.2%	1.3%	850	6,730	7,580
43-6014	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	7	66,370	64,310	-2,060	-3.1%	-0.3%	-210	6,940	6,730
41-4012	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	7	53,810	61,860	8,050	15.0%	1.4%	810	5,780	6,590
45-2092	Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, Nursery, and Greenhouse	8	39,360	42,660	3,300	8.4%	0.8%	330	6,180	6,510
39-9011	Childcare Workers	7	37,590	41,920	4,330	11.5%	1.1%	430	5,710	6,140
51-2092	Team Assemblers	7	48,000	49,910	1,910	4.0%	0.4%	190	5,640	5,830
35-2021	Food Preparation Workers	8	30,930	33,820	2,890	9.3%	0.9%	290	5,400	5,690
37-2012	Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	8	37,580	42,180	4,600	12.3%	1.2%	460	5,180	5,640
41-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	7	45,390	50,550	5,160	11.4%	1.1%	520	5,000	5,520
29-1141	Registered Nurses	3	73,840	87,350	13,510	18.3%	1.7%	1,350	4,060	5,410

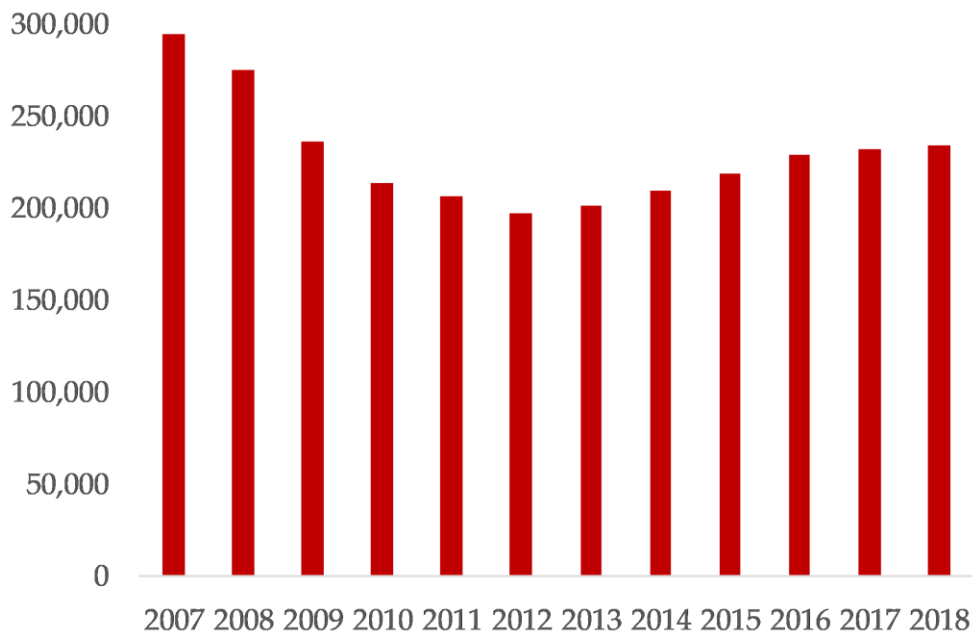
Source: GDOL

Occupations within the skilled trades may have a high demand for skilled labor without appearing in the fastest growing occupations projections. Georgia will need to replace almost half of the current workers in skilled labor occupations due to an aging workforce. As these occupations require an extensive amount of specialized knowledge and lengthy training, many of these skilled trade occupations will be in high demand.

The Construction Labor Market Analyzer reports that by the year 2020, the industry will have a deficit of 1 million craft professionals. An earlier CLMA report notes that 83% of construction firms are now having trouble finding qualified craft workers, especially in the Southeast. In Georgia, nonresidential building construction is expected to see a 44% increase in employment by 2022.

Georgia's construction industry suffered significant job losses during the Great Recession but has experienced a partial recovery. While the industry lost nearly 100,000 jobs during the Great Recession, it has added back 36,000 since the low in 2012, an 18% increase.

Figure 9. Georgia Construction Industry Employment, 2007–2018



Source: EMSI, Inc.; US Bureau of Labor Statistics

Over the next decade, the construction industry is projected to see strong growth with an increased demand for construction services and laborers. The US Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that national construction employment will grow 11% from 2016 to 2026, which is faster than average for the industry. The Associated General Contractors of America (AGC of America) estimates that Georgia’s construction employment in March 2018 totaled 193,000, an increase of 5.4% from March 2017 and a 14% decrease from the state’s peak in March 2007.⁵ Associated Builders and Contractors, Inc. estimates that Georgia’s construction unemployment in February 2018 was 5.4%, which is Georgia’s lowest estimated February rate on record and the sixth lowest rate in the United States.⁶

Occupations in Aerospace, another prominent industry in Georgia, are expected to experience strong demands in the coming years, despite not appearing in the fastest growing occupations projects. More than 99,000 Georgians are currently employed in the aerospace industry. Aerospace careers span skillsets and industry sectors, including manufacturing, engineering, research and development, aviation transportation, aircraft maintenance, airport support services, and many others. Georgia is home to the world’s most visited airport—Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport—an economic engine that supports a workforce of 63,000 and generates a \$34.8 billion economic impact across the metro Atlanta region.

The mandatory FAA retirement age for pilots and continued growth of the industry has led to projections of severe shortages in the coming years. One Georgia employer cited that nearly 3,000 of its pilots were set to turn 65 within the next five years. According to a recent report by Cowen &

⁵ Ken Simonson, chief Economist, AGC of America, simonsonk@agc.org, from Bureau of Economic Analysis (GDP); Census Bureau (spending, small business); ConstructConnect (formerly CMD)(starts); Bureau of Labor Statistics (jobs,pay).

⁶ www.abc.org/News-Media/Construction-Economics/State-by-State-Construction-Economics/entryid/13728/february-construction-unemployment-rates-down-year-over-year-in-34-states-says-abc

Company, more than 42% of active US airline pilots at the biggest carriers—about 22,000—will retire over the next 10 years. In order to continue to maintain service, much less to grow and expand, both major and regional airlines must find ways to develop qualified pilots. Delta Air Lines, one of Georgia’s largest employers, plans to hire more than 1,300 pilots in 2020, which the company said is its largest round of hiring in a single year in more than two decades. The airline said it is part of a broader effort to hire more than 8,000 pilots over the next decade as pilots retire, and as the company grows with a record number of customers. Delta also plans to hire at least 2,500 flight attendants in 2020, the highest in the airline’s 95-year history.⁷

The growing demand for air transportation has also increased demand for aircraft maintenance technicians, more formally known as Part 147 A&P mechanics. The industry faces several challenges in recruiting aircraft maintenance technicians, particularly competition across industries. Candidates with an A&P license can also find lucrative careers in theme parks, railroads, power companies, ship building, and other industries. Aircraft maintenance work involves a variety of disciplines, including engines, avionics, troubleshooting, advanced systems, sheet metal/composites, ethics, compliance, and manuals.

Like much of the nation, school districts all across Georgia are grappling with a severe shortage of primary and secondary teachers. Despite numerous changes in recent years (including increases in compensation, changes in benefits packages, etc.), there is still an inadequate supply of teachers to meet current and future demands. Additionally, many districts are struggling with daunting retention issues. According to a report by the USDOE Office of Postsecondary Education, Georgia has prominent shortages in the following teaching areas: Elementary Instruction, English Language Arts, and Mathematics.⁸

(iii) Employers’ Employment Needs

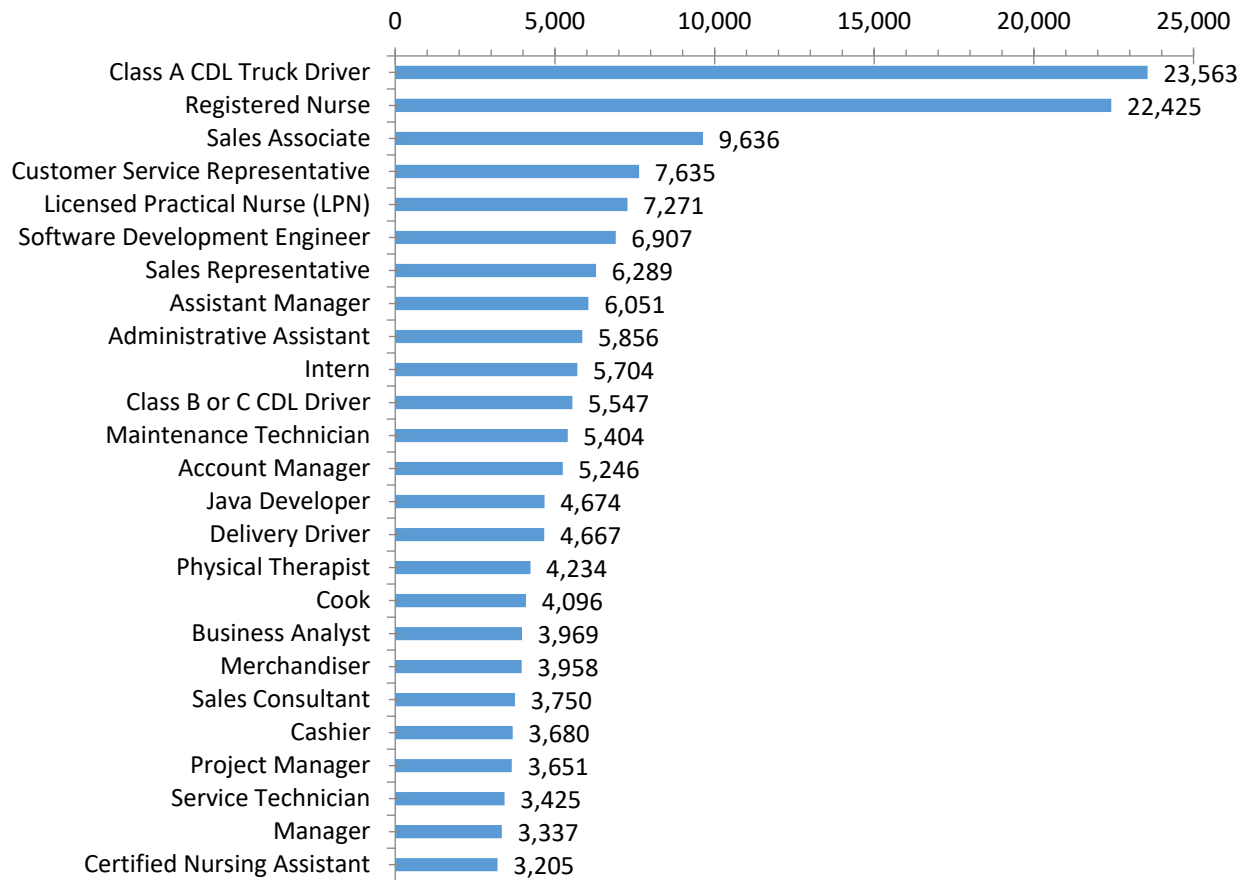
BGLI data provides a real-time view of existing employer needs. The following figures show the demand, top certifications, and skills of these employer needs.

Figure 10. below indicates that the demand continues for traditional jobs such as Registered Nurses and CDL Truck Drivers.

⁷ https://www.ajc.com/blog/airport/delta-plans-hire-300-pilots-and-500-flight-attendants-next-year/p70fXa5bxYvWUXS14dVHhK/?fbclid=IwAR0A44jxkME8PkixiOKGPboZKTD06VMe962q8xCogztzMVLFl4dGXrK_y-M

⁸ <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/pol/bteachershortageareasreport201718.pdf>

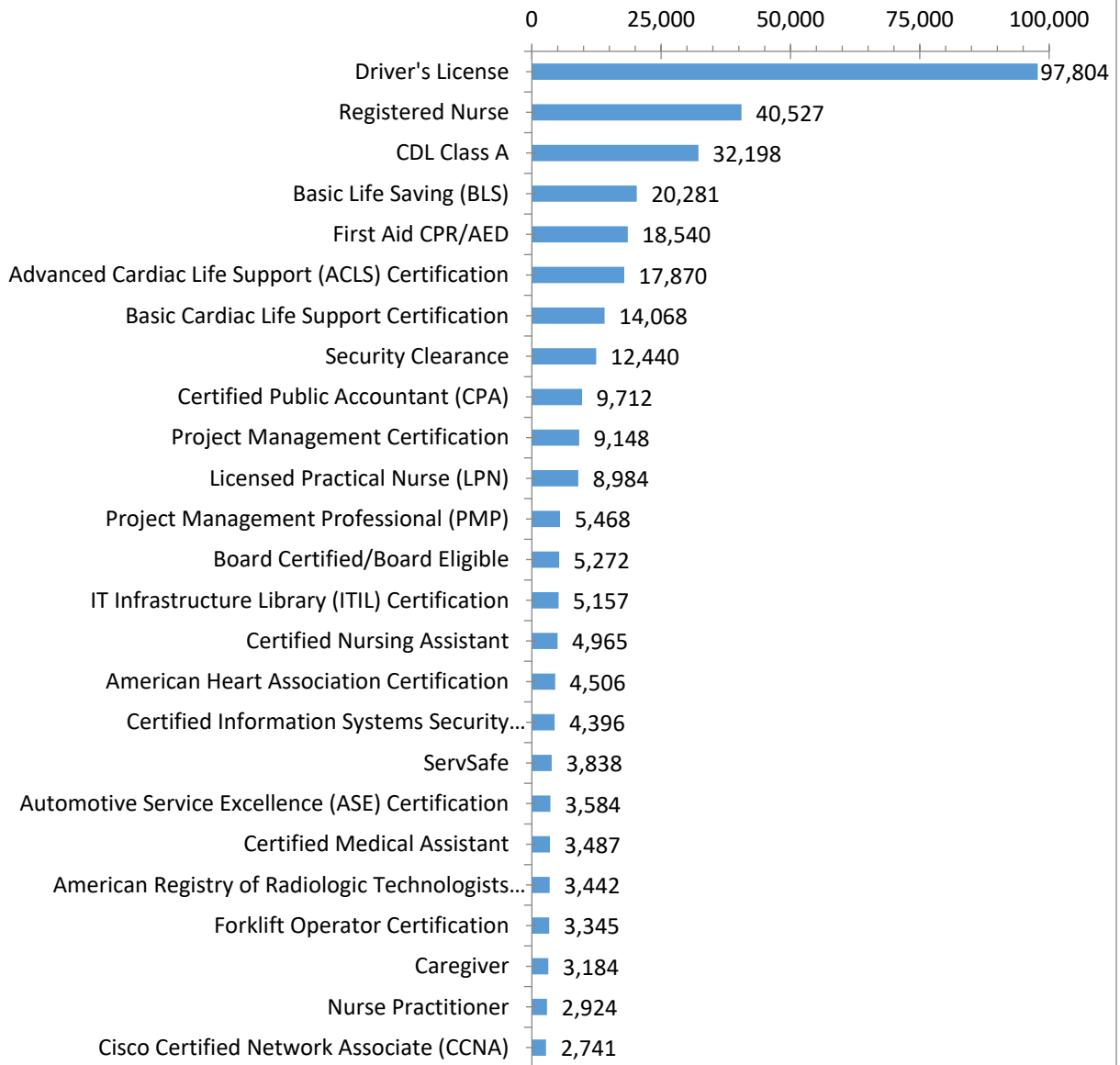
Figure 10. Top Titles



Source: BGLI

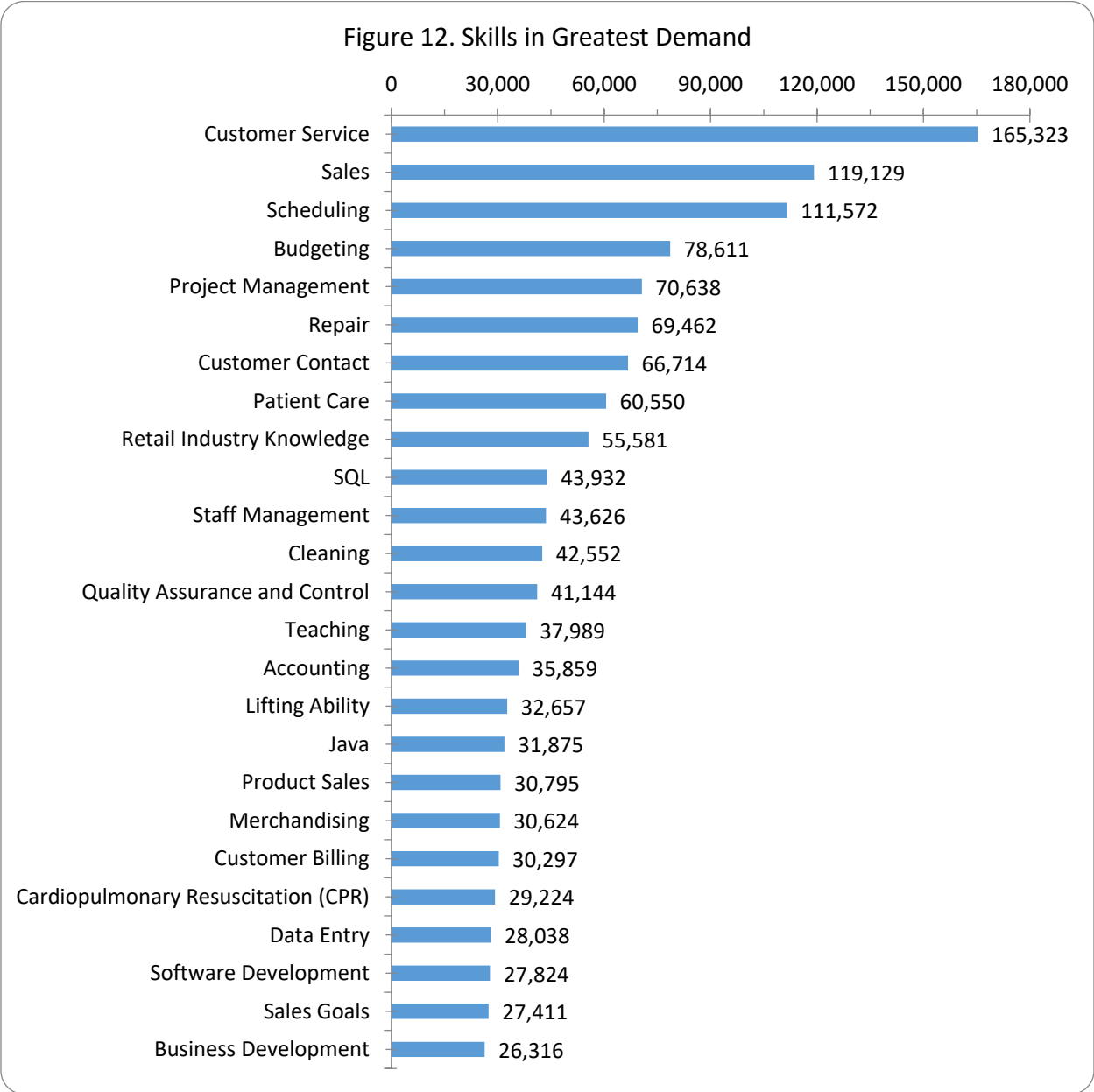
Figure 11. Indicates that the top certifications are shared by the Health Care, Trucking and IT sectors.

Figure 11. Top Certifications



Source: BGLI

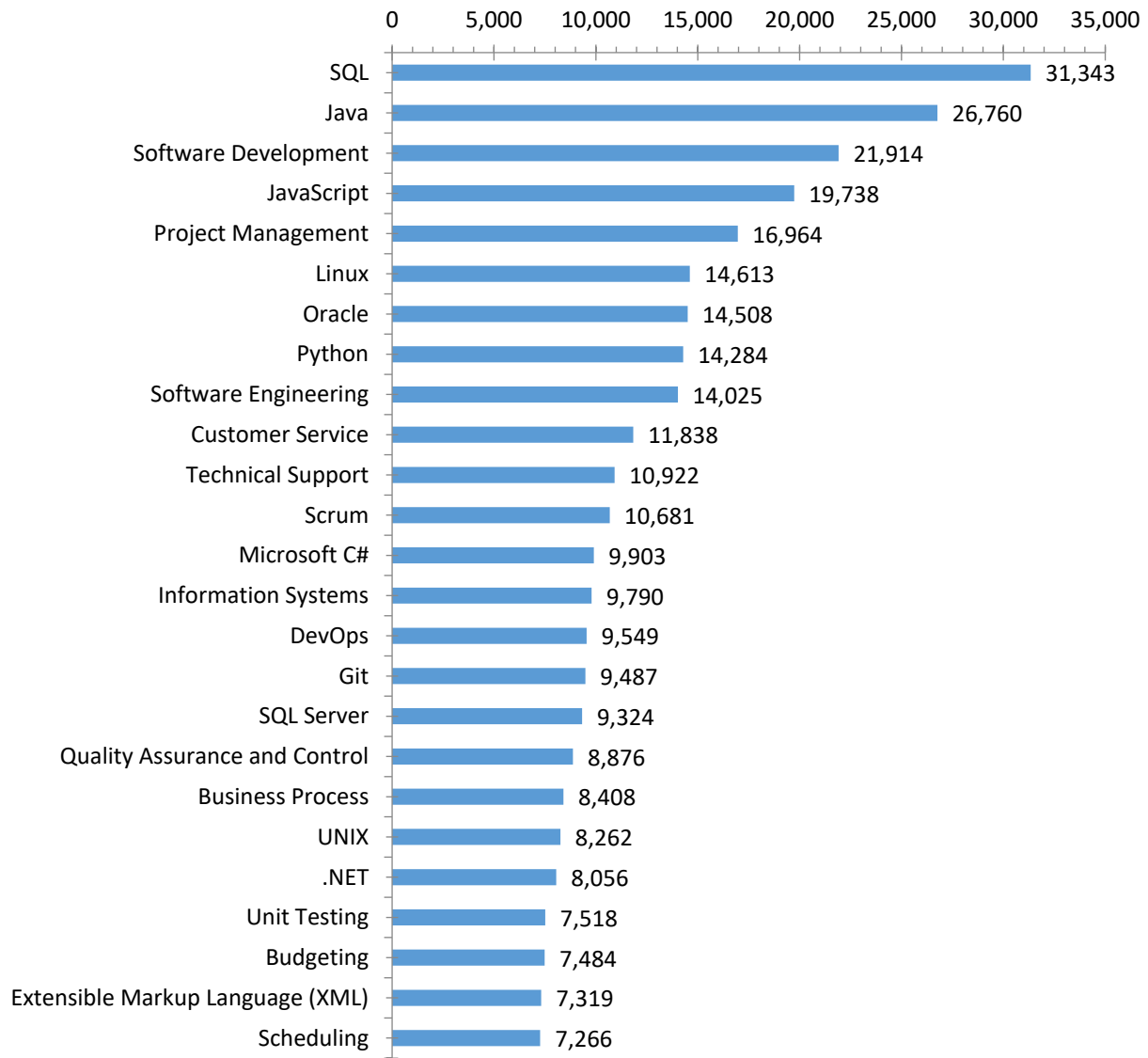
Figure 12. Highlights the skills that are cited most often in job postings from the last year across the state.



Source: BGLI 4,724,838 Job Postings Jan 1, 2019 – Dec. 4, 2019

Figure 13. Indicates the increased need for higher-level IT workers with a variety of skill sets. Additional training and education are needed to support the growth of Georgia’s IT workforce.

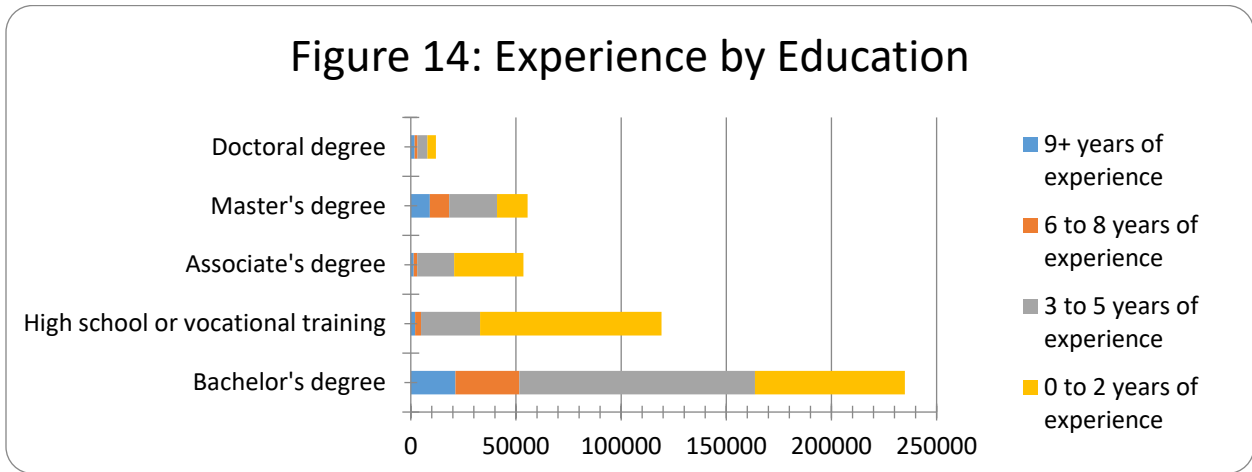
Figure 13. I.T. Skills in Greatest Demand



Source: BGLI 1,194,379 Job Postings Jan 1, 2019 – Dec. 4, 2019

Figure 14. Indicates the education and experience requirements noted in the BGLI postings for 2019, year to date. 48% of records were excluded because employers did not include both a degree level and experience requirements in job postings.

Figure 14: Experience by Education



Source: BGLI 475,038 Job Postings Jan. 1, 2019 – Dec. 5, 2019

(B) Workforce Analysis

(i) Employment and Unemployment

Georgia’s seasonally adjusted unemployment rate dropped from 4.4% in December 2017 to 3.4% in October 2019. The rate declined as employers continued to create jobs. The number of initial claims for unemployment insurance declined from 26,117 in December 2017 to 18,653 in September 2019, a decrease of 27.5%.

Labor Force Demographics

Georgia continues to be one of the fastest growing states in the nation. From April 2010 to December 2018, Georgia’s population grew by 8.6%, adding 831,822 residents. The current population has grown to 10,519,475, showing continuous growth since 2000 (pop. 8,186,453). Census projections show that Georgia should continue this growth over the next decade. Counties in Georgia with the highest population in 2018 were Fulton County (1,050,114), Gwinnett County (927,781), Cobb County (756,865), DeKalb County (756,558), Clayton County (289,615), Chatham County (289,195), Cherokee County (254,149), Forsyth County (236,612), Henry County (230,220), Hall County (202,148) and Richmond County (201,554). These counties make up the composition of the Metropolitan Atlanta Workforce Areas, in addition to the cities of Savannah and Augusta.

The 2013-2017 ACS five-year estimates indicate that Georgia’s Poverty Rate (16.9%) is higher than the U.S. rate (14.6%), although Georgia’s rate has fallen in recent years while the national rate has ticked up almost 2% during the same period. Figure 15. below indicates that individuals with barriers to employment comprise large segments of the population. Georgia has specifically developed service strategies to address barriers to employment for many of these population segments.

Figure 15. Populations with Barriers to Employment	
Total Population (12/2018)	10,519,475

Veterans	646,350
American Indians and Alaska Natives	30,552
Native Hawaiians or Other Pacific Islander	5,237
Individuals with Disabilities	1,237,621
Older Individuals (65+)	1,270,953
Ex-Offenders**	17,268
Homeless ***	9,499
Youth Aged out of Foster Care	700
English Language Learners	536,445
Low Levels of Literacy	919,657
Single Parents	742,410
Persons below Poverty Level	1,679,030
Disconnected Youth *	48,000
SNAP Recipients	1,575,637

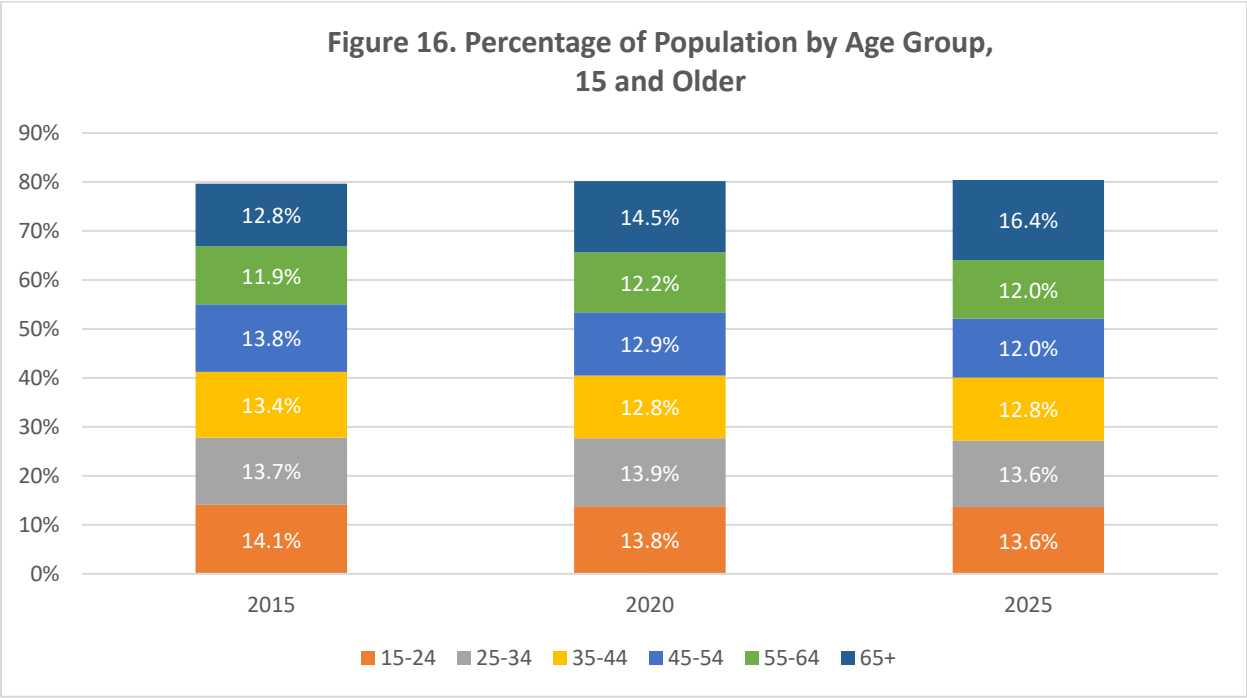
Source: ACS 2013-2017 five year Estimates (unless otherwise noted by *)

* National Kids Count Data (Teens 16-19 not in school and not working)

** DOC inmate release data for 2018

***US Interagency Council on Homelessness

As Georgia's population grows in size, it is also aging. Figure 16. shows the projections for the percentage of Georgia's working-age population, 2015 to 2025.



Source: USDOL/BLS

In 2000, the median age was 31.5. Today, the median age in Georgia is 36.4. This upward trend is due to an increase in the number of older individuals. While most of the other age groups are relatively similar in size, the 25-54 age groups will continue to decrease. The increase in the percentage of the population over 65 will have significant impacts on Georgia’s economy. First, there will be an increase in demand for healthcare professionals, particularly for the elderly and aging populations. Second, it signifies a high percentage of workers on the verge of exiting the labor force, creating a need for replacement workers in addition to growth openings.

Georgia’s population has limited language barriers, with only about 2.2% of households without a member over the age of 14 who speaks English. The overall state population is predominantly Caucasian (59.4% of total population). The largest minority group is African Americans (31.3% of the population), while Hispanic, Asian, and other minority groups make up about 16% of Georgia’s population.

One of Georgia’s most valuable labor resources is the returning military veteran population. Georgia has one of the largest veteran populations in the nation, with over 646,350 service members. The 2018 unemployment rate for veterans in Georgia was 2.8%. Many of these military veterans possess core competencies which correlate directly to civilian occupations in Georgia’s high demand industries.

Georgia’s Economic Base

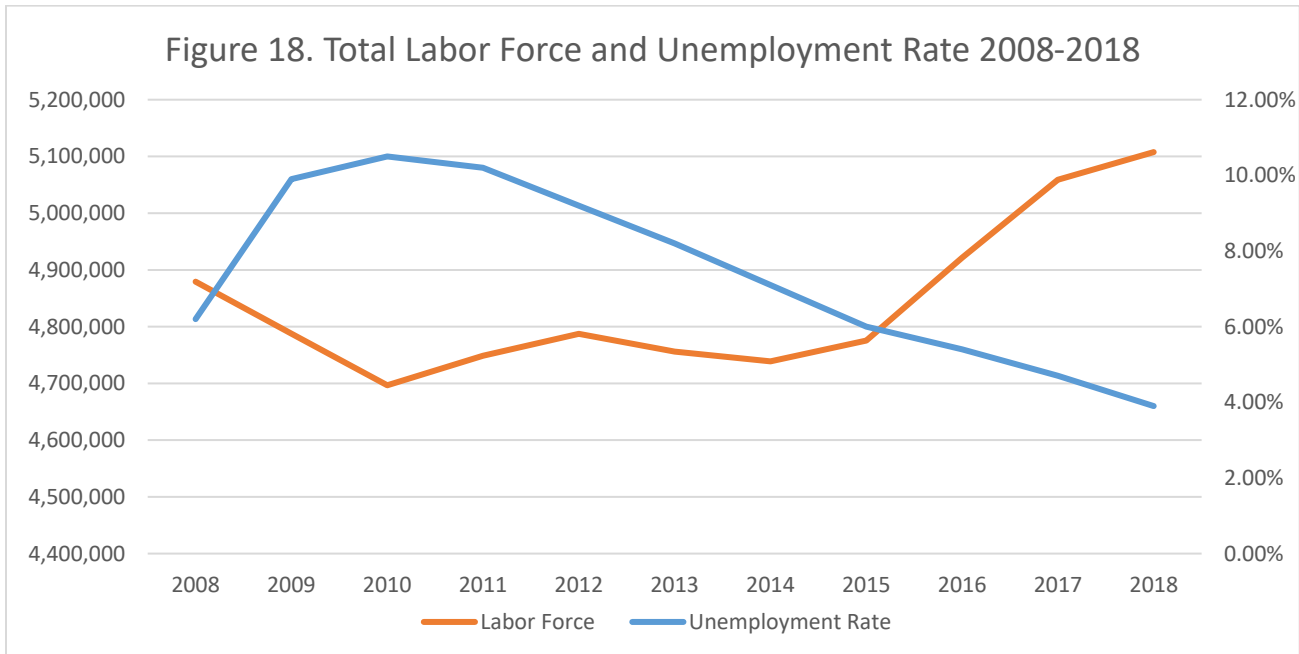
GDOL provides total employment data through 2018. Utilizing ten-year employment data, Georgia’s employment can be compared to U.S. Employment trends. Figure 17. compares total non-farm employment, not seasonally adjusted, from 2008 through 2018. Georgia was hit more severely than the national economy (-5.9% Georgia vs. -3.2% nationally in 2009). Georgia added 135,803 jobs in 2017, representing 3% growth versus 1.7% nationally.

Figure 17. Total Non-farm Employment 2008-2018 (partial 2018)

Year	Nation			Georgia		
	Total Employment	Annual Change	Percent Change	Total Employment	Annual Change	Percent Change
2008	138,419,000	821,000	0.6%	4,631,205	61,994	1.4%
2009	134,055,000	-4,364,000	-3.2%	4,356,828	-274,377	-5.9%
2010	129,799,000	-4,256,000	-3.2%	4,302,220	-54,608	-1.3%
2011	130,878,000	1,079,000	0.8%	4,221,195	-81,025	-1.9%
2012	133,272,000	2,394,000	1.8%	4,321,095	99,900	2.4%
2013	135,282,000	2,010,000	1.5%	4,366,490	45,395	1.1%
2014	137,550,000	2,268,000	1.7%	4,382,689	16,199	0.4%
2015	140,592,000	3,042,000	2.2%	4,461,989	79,300	1.8%
2016	143,196,000	2,604,000	1.9%	4,586,459	124,470	2.8%
2017	145,696,000	2,500,000	1.7%	4,722,262	135,803	3.0%
2018	147,810,000	2,114,000	1.5%	4,906,411	184,149	3.9%

Source: USDOL/BLS

Figure 18. below compares unemployment and the civilian labor force from 2006 to 2016. From 2007 through 2016, Georgia’s unemployment rate fluctuated between 4% and 5.2%. The total civilian labor force grew steadily during this time, adding just over 420,000 workers. The unemployment rate grew in 2009 and 2010 to 10% before experiencing a downturn. With the growth of 37,400 jobs in 2012, the unemployment rate fell for the first time in four years, to 9.8%. The December 2017 unemployment rate measured 4.4%.

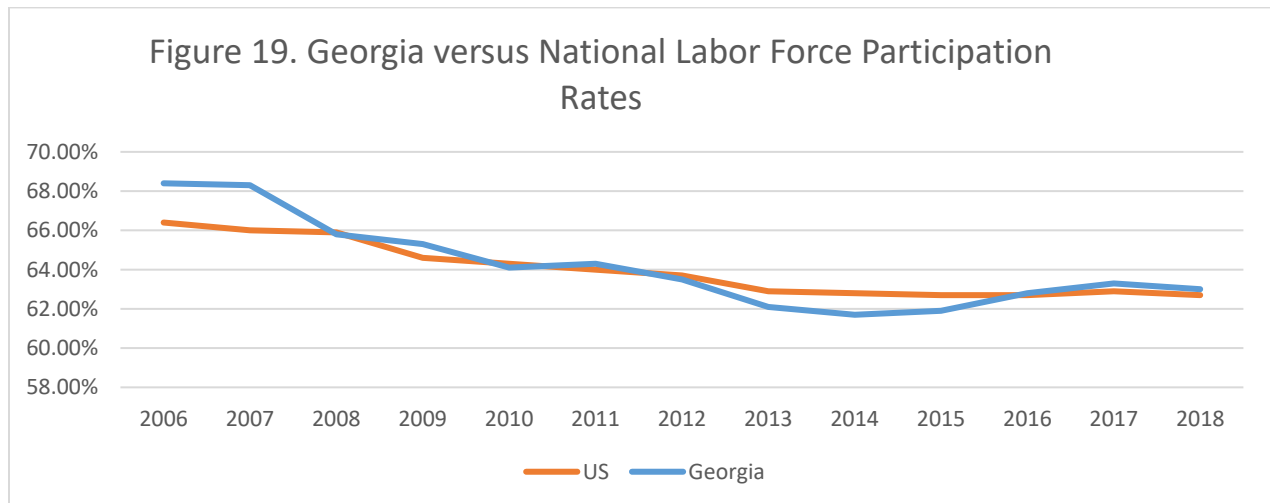


Source: GDOL

Labor Force Participation Rates

The labor force participation rate is defined as the number of persons who are employed and unemployed but looking for a job divided by the total working-age population. The labor force participation rate in Georgia dropped slightly to 62.20% in 2018 from 62.8% in 2016. The labor force participation rate in Georgia averaged 65.1% from 1998 until 2016, reaching an all-time high of 68.4 % in 2006 and a record low of 62.1 % in 2013.

In the long-term, the Georgia Labor Force Participation Rate is projected to trend around 64.63% in 2020, according to econometric models. Figure 19. compares national and state labor participation rates.



Source: USDOL/BLS

(ii) Labor Market Trends

Figure 20. Illustrates the total non-farm employment in Georgia, 2013-2018 by industry sector.

Figure 20. Total Non-Farm Employment (thousands) in Georgia 2013-2018 INDUSTRY	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	850,400	877,400	905,500	926,000	926,700	943,000
Government	681,600	678,200	679,300	685,900	687,500	693,800
Professional and Business Services	582,000	611,400	633,100	653,400	675,000	692,400
Education and Health Services	510,000	523,100	539,900	561,700	569,500	584,500

Leisure and Hospitality	411,400	428,100	448,100	469,400	478,600	490,600
Manufacturing	357,800	368,000	379,100	388,200	400,300	408,000
Financial Activities	229,300	231,600	234,300	238,900	243,300	248,200
Construction	145,900	156,800	166,500	176,100	186,700	196,200
Other Services	153,200	153,600	155,500	157,600	158,300	159,300
Information	102,200	107,800	111,500	111,400	118,500	114,600
Mining and Logging	8,900	9,000	9,000	9,500	9,500	9,500
Total Nonfarm:	4,032,400	4,144,900	4,261,900	4,378,000	4,453,900	4,540,000

Figure 21. Indicates GDOL's Labor Market Trends across Occupations 2005-2025. Trends indicate growth in the five top jobs: Customer Service Representatives, General and Operations Managers, Registered Nurses and Secretaries and Admin Assistants. Other occupations remain fairly constant with small increases in growth through 2025.

Figure 21. Trends across Occupations						
SOC	Job Description	2005 Jobs	2010 jobs	2015 jobs	2020 jobs	2025 jobs
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	86,907	83,460	95,628	99,374	105,520
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	78,097	73,264	83,151	84,899	89,108
29-1141	Registered Nurses	61,077	66,005	70,854	78,889	85,250
43-6014	Secretaries and Admin Assistants	70,315	68,740	75,159	78,850	83,775
53-3032	Truck Drivers	54,334	47,225	54,083	54,847	58,335
41-4012	Sales Reps, Wholesale and Mfg	55,058	49,272	55,018	55,495	57,908
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	48,062	45,745	51,217	53,518	56,911
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers	44,432	47,782	47,513	50,921	54,737
49-9071	Maintenance and Repair Workers	46,524	44,753	48,556	49,833	52,111
13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	32,588	34,186	40,175	44,167	48,041
25-1099	Post-secondary Teachers	34,708	38,170	40,991	44,425	47,529
13-1199	Business Operations Specialists	30,539	31,792	33,673	34,474	35,497
41-3099	Sales Representatives, Services	27,579	24,294	27,176	28,631	31,233
29-2061	Licensed Practical Nurses	21,117	22,937	25,203	27,403	29,108

53-3033	Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	26,799	24,289	27,230	27,243	28,406
13-1111	Management Analysts	21,419	22,671	25,548	26,707	28,015
15-1132	Software Developers, Applications	17,444	18,044	21,837	24,376	26,786
15-1151	Computer User Support Specialists	19,311	19,418	22,816	24,611	26,670
25-2031	Secondary School Teachers	22,593	23,949	22,959	24,219	25,842
49-3023	Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	22,244	19,759	22,691	23,327	24,650

(iii) Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce

Figure 22. Represents the level of educational attainment in Georgia’s population 25 years and older. Georgians are similar to the national population in educational attainment with a High School Diploma, Some College, and attainment of a Bachelor’s Degree. Slightly fewer Georgians have an Associate’s Degree or Graduate Degree or higher.

Figure 22. Education Attainment of Population 25 years and older				
Educational Attainment	2017 Nation	2017 Georgia	% of National Population	% of Georgia Population
Less Than 9th Grade	11,759,554	336,288	5.4%	5.0%
9th Grade to 12th Grade	15,677,560	583,369	7.2%	8.7%
High School Diploma	59,093,612	1,877,212	27.3%	28.0%
Some College	44,935,834	1,390,995	20.8%	20.8%
Associate's Degree	17,917,481	502,431	8.3%	7.5%
Bachelor's Degree	41,377,068	1,241,995	19.1%	18.6%
Graduate Degree and Higher	25,510,535	761,536	11.8%	11.4%
Total	216,271,644	6,693,826	100%	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2017 Annual Social and Economic Supplement

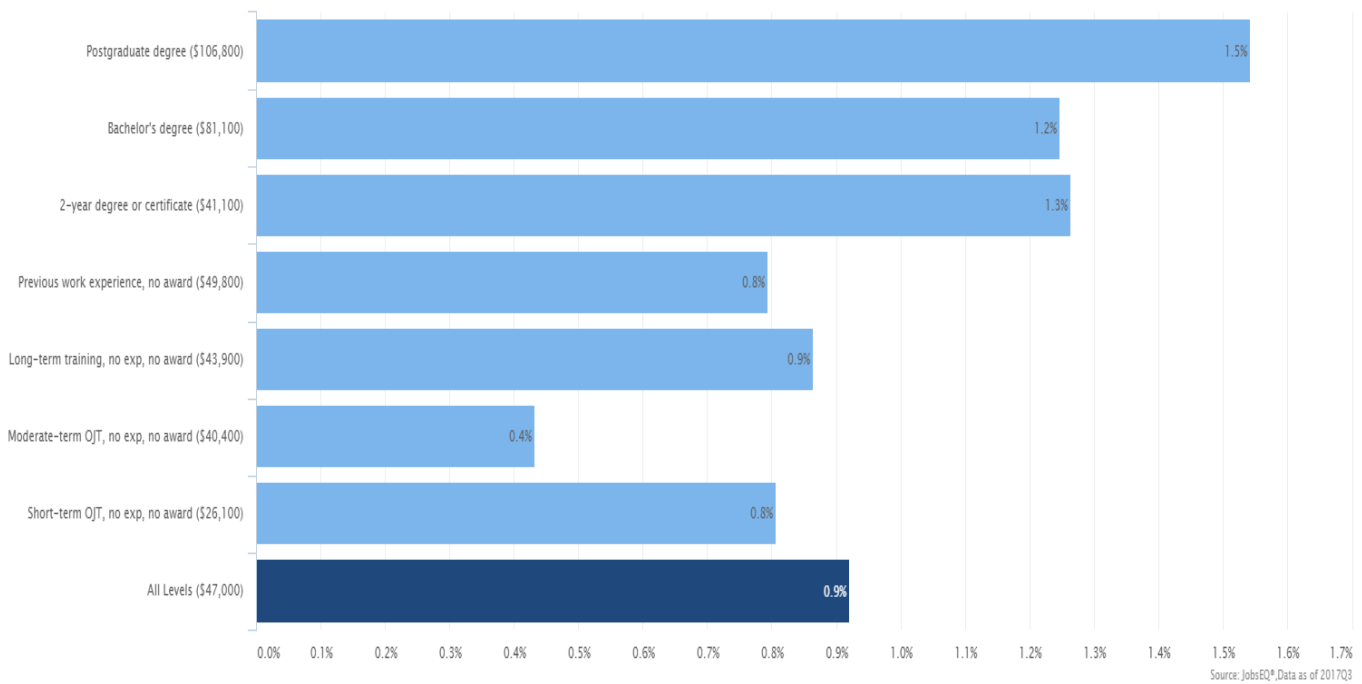
Figure 23. Average Annual Projected Job Growth by Training Required for Georgia (All Occupations)

Expected growth rates for occupations vary by the education and training required. While all employment in Georgia is projected to grow over the next ten years, occupations typically requiring a postgraduate degree are expected to grow 1.5% per year, those requiring a bachelor’s degree are forecast to grow 1.2% per year, and occupations typically needing a 2-year degree or certificate are expected to grow 1.3% per year.

Annual Average Projected Job Growth by Training Required for Georgia



All Occupations



Source: JobsEQ

(iv) Skill Gaps

According to the national skills coalition, Georgia has a middle skills gap. While an estimated 55% of jobs require middle skills, or skills that require post-secondary education but not a 4-year degree, only 43% of the state’s workers are trained at the middle skill level. High skill jobs account for 31% of the jobs in Georgia but 35% of workers are considered ‘highly skilled’. This middle skills gap continues to grow as Figure 24 shows the comparison of labor supply to the demand for all jobs based upon educational achievement and projected job growth.

	2017 Jobs	2027 Jobs	Growth	Annual Openings	Georgia Labor Supply	Future Demand
Less than High School	1,079,110	1,220,790	141,680	47,790	1,030,721	1,071,550
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	1,679,760	1,912,330	232,570	61,140	1,901,186	1,776,280

Some college, no degree	306,640	370,250	63,610	12,550	1,375,552	204,070
Associate's degree	150,180	180,060	29,880	6,030	454,433	232,280
Bachelor's degree	789,540	952,220	162,680	32,890	1,165,361	687,170
Graduate or professional degree	152,550	197,750	45,200	7,640	667,516	138,320

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017 ACS Estimates

The BLS labor supply projections would seem to indicate a surplus of workers, particularly those with advanced degrees, however, growth occupations indicate that the majority of high demand growth occupations will require some form of additional education and certification/credential. Projections through 2027 illustrate that there will be a need for individuals with all levels of education.

A Georgetown University study notes that BLS data “assigns” the minimal education and training requirements for employment. The BLS educational assignment method is based on the subjective judgment of BLS analysts in consultation with a number of external consultants to cover change in 755 occupations. The BLS recognizes that assigning a single education level to a job does not accurately reflect what skills are needed on the job as virtually every occupation in the economy comes with a variety of legitimate educational attainment levels. In addition, because it focuses on the lowest level of education required for an occupation, it is not forward-looking in an economy where entry-level skill requirements have been increasing rapidly since the 1980s.”

The study also notes “the economy will create 46.8 million openings—13.8 million brand-new jobs and 33 million “replacement jobs,” positions vacated by workers who have retired or permanently left their occupations. Nearly two-thirds of these 46.8 million jobs—some 63 percent—will require workers with at least some college education. About 33 percent will require a Bachelor’s degree or better, while 30 percent will require some college or a two-year Associate’s degree. Only 36 percent will require workers with just a high school diploma or less (Figure 24). This growth in demand for postsecondary education dovetails with two major trends. First, the fastest-growing industries— such as computer and data processing services—require workers with disproportionately higher education levels. Second, over time, occupations as a whole are steadily requiring more education. The implications of this shift represent a sea change in American society. Essentially, postsecondary education or training has become the threshold requirement for access to middle-class status and earnings in good times and in bad. “The study also concludes that “the core mechanism at work in increasing demand for postsecondary education and training is the computer, which automates repetitive tasks and increases the value of non-repetitive functions in all jobs. Occupations with high levels of non-repetitive tasks, such as professional and managerial jobs, tend to require postsecondary education and training. These types of jobs are growing, while positions dominated by repetitive tasks that tend to require high school or less, like

production jobs, are declining. The iPod is an example of a typical post-industrial product. Less than 20 percent of the value added in the manufacture of video and audio equipment from the United States comes from the blue collar production workers who manufacture it. By contrast, about 80 percent of the value added comes from the white collar office workers who design, market, finance, and manage the global production and dissemination of these products.”

Gaps between Supply and Demand

Nationally, the largest inherent gaps in the labor force result from a deficiency in the development of skills. Educational attainment is an issue both nationally and in Georgia with post-secondary degree attainment hovering around 35%. Georgia continues to develop strategies for increasing its high school graduation rate, as well as connecting out-of-school and older youth with programs to complete degree equivalency programs.

While Figure 24. illustrates the skills needed for the entire economy, it also masks important workforce needs as described in the Georgetown University study. A report by the Federal Reserve Bank, “Identifying Opportunity Occupations”, describes an “opportunity occupation” as one that is generally considered accessible to someone without a bachelor’s degree and that pays at least the national annual median wage. The report cites that employment in opportunity occupations fell by 1.7 million nationally even as total employment rose by 4.9 million. The report notes that employers have increased their expectations for ideal candidates to include a bachelor’s degree in order to fill a position that has not required a four-year degree historically – a process called “up-credentialing”. BGLI also shows that the majority of openings require at least a college degree and 3-5 years of experience. Studies confirm that employers are substituting the attainment of a college degree with having the motivation and skills potential for employment. A college degree is now considered the educational baseline for employment in many occupations.

Figure 25. shows labor demand by educational attainment.

Figure 25. Labor Demand by Educational Attainment				
	2017 Jobs	2027 Jobs	Growth	Annual Openings
Less than High School	1,209,755	1,365,072	155,317	218,306
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	1,856,673	2,043,942	187,269	254,532
Some college, no degree	435,929	495,596	59,667	55,859
Associate's degree	101,878	116,057	14,178	11,676
Bachelor's degree	1,052,005	1,217,029	165,024	115,943
Graduate or professional degree	182,888	216,375	33,487	16,926

Source: EMSI

Many new job postings only require that an applicant have a high school diploma. Occupations categorized as requiring only a high school diploma in addition to certifications or licenses include advanced manufacturing and skilled trades such as truck driving, carpentry, and welding. These occupations align with in-demand occupations, growth sectors, and the Governor's strategic industries. Through apprenticeship and other targeted training programs, Georgia citizens can be prepared to enter these promising careers.

(2) Workforce Development, Education and Training Activities Analysis

An analysis of the State's workforce development activities demonstrates a broad range of services offered to Georgia residents. These services are aligned with Governor Kemp's initiatives to develop a skilled workforce to meet current and future needs across the industry spectrum. The State's WIOA core partners provide services that assist the State in delivering workforce, education, and training activities in a cohesive manner. An analysis of partner programs is provided below:

(A) *The State's Workforce Development Activities*

Title I: Training Services

Training Services in Georgia are administered by TCSG's Office of Workforce Development (OWD) through the WorkSource Georgia network. For PY18, over 21,000 distinct individuals, including carryovers, received services. Of these, 9,145 new individuals registered using the WorkSource Portal (via the Geo Solutions Virtual One Stop System platform), with 6,256 individuals enrolling in training under WIOA in PY18.

An analysis of PY18 training provided to WIOA participants indicates that truck driving continues to be the single largest training occupation with 872 entering training in PY18. The healthcare field continues to grow, with 3,581 individuals receiving training in the following occupations: nursing (RN, LPN, and CNA), radiography, pharmacy technicians, phlebotomy, dental hygiene, physical therapy, respiratory care, medical technologists, medical educators, etc. Six hundred thirty two (632) entered training in computer operations and office support. The majority of training was classroom/web based with 246 individuals participating in employer based on-the-job training (OJT) and 3,209 participating in work experience.

WIOA staff-assisted training services to individuals focused on providing the following: (1) comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, (2) individual employment plans to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participants to achieve employment goals, (3) group counseling, individual counseling, and career planning, (4) case management for participants seeking training services, (5) short-term prevocational services including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training for those who lack occupational credential/certification and require short-term continuing education in order to acquire certification/credentialing required for success in growing industries.

A key component of Title I services includes business services. WorkSource Georgia's continuous efforts to serve Georgia's business and industry allows the placement of participants in transformational and sustainable careers. The State's determination to integrate service and delivery to employers ensures a strategic approach to assist collaborative partners in overcoming workforce challenges and plan for the workforce of the future.

The WorkSource Georgia system is equipped to support businesses in identifying and hiring qualified candidates in many ways. American Job Centers across the state allow for applicant referrals and screening for employers, which reduces their time and cost associated with these services. A number of pre-employment assessments may be leveraged in order to screen candidates for an employer. The use of these assessments can give an employer valuable insight to an applicant's competencies and skills gaps. Furthermore, a company may work with a local WorkSource area to advertise job postings or utilize online services such as the Employ Georgia network. WorkSource Georgia is also equipped to host job fairs and allow companies to utilize space for interviews.

The State has provided a number of professional development opportunities to front-line business services staff in order to improve services to employers. These professionals continue to promote the use of WIOA work-based learning services. On-the-Job Training (OJT) is the most popular service that WSGA areas may offer. However, in PY18, several resources were created to provide technical assistance to LWDA's in administering and expanding the use of other work-based learning services such as Incumbent Worker Training (IWT), Customized Training (CT), and Work Experience (WEx). These resources included service toolkits, targeted technical assistance, enhanced and revised state policy, and multiple in-person and virtual training opportunities through the WSGA Academy. The State will continue to identify opportunities for continuous improvement to serve Georgia's business and industry.

Title II: Adult Education Services

The TCSG Office of Adult Education (OAE) provides AEFLA grant funds to local providers through a competitive application process. In May 2017, OAE awarded grants to 31 providers throughout Georgia. Of these 31 providers, 27 offered adult basic education and secondary education, 25 offered English language acquisition activities, and 10 offered Integrated English Language and Civics education. All providers offered at least two activities concurrently. In addition, 30 providers offered workplace preparation activities, including integrated education and training (IET). Per WIOA 203 (11), IET is a service approach that requires three primary components – 1) adult education and literacy, 2) workforce preparation activities, and 3) workforce training – offered concurrently and contextually. Approved IET programs must align with the local and regional workforce plans for the area served and must lead to stackable industry-recognized and/or postsecondary credentials. During the first full year of IET implementation (2018-2019), 217 adult education students participated in 21 different IET programs focusing on industries such as manufacturing, welding, hospitality, nursing assisting, information technology, and more.

In late January/early February 2020, OAE will launch its next competitive grant round. OAE has structured its application to ensure its next round of providers establish and operate programs that provide the adult education and literacy activities identified in WIOA Section 203. As with the previous

grant round, OAE will continue to support the State's workforce development activities by requiring subrecipients to partner with other core partners, businesses, industries, and others to develop and provide ongoing IET opportunities for students.

Title III: Employment Services

The workforce system provides easy access through a variety of entry points. As the provider of Wagner-Peyser (WP) services, GDOL is uniquely poised to welcome customers into the workforce system and provide comprehensive and targeted referrals to core partners both online and in person. While a large amount of WP referrals come from Unemployment Insurance (UI), GDOL also utilizes Business Services Unit to identify and attract customers (See Appendix 1).

No matter the entry point into the workforce system, customers are first provided career services (previously core and intensive services) through WP. These services are provided through the one-stop system and other affiliate sites. These sites are located statewide for customers that desire to meet in person with staff to assist in accessing needs and recommending from the host of services and resources available to meet those needs. If the customer is deemed to be ready for gainful employment after receiving career services, WP staff assist the customer with job search, including job development, and placement. If the customer is deemed in need of training services, then WP staff refer the customer to core partners based on the individual needs of the customer. Training services are provided to the customer through WIOA, Vocational Rehabilitation, or Adult Education Services.

With integration of service delivery, it is anticipated that increasing numbers of WIOA job seeker customers will access GDOL services, including the enhanced Employ Georgia (EG) Career Explorer. The EG Career Explorer is a state-of-the-art software application designed for job seekers who prefer a self-service online tool to manage their career path and interact virtually with Wagner-Peyser staff and services to support successful career placement. It is a user-friendly system with real time labor market data to support career search. Customers can upload, paste and create up to five resumes and identify gaps in skills, experiences, and education to determine what may be needed to enhance or improve their ability to remain competitive in the current and future job market.

Similarly, it is anticipated that an increased number of WIOA employer customers will access GDOL services virtually, through the enhanced EG Talent. The EG Talent is a state-of-the-art software application for employers preferring a self-service online tool to manage their job postings and candidate referrals, while interacting with Wagner-Peyser staff and services remotely.

Georgia's EG system provides enhanced self-service options for employers, including the capability to:

- Remotely create a secure account, with unlimited subsidiaries linked by federal EIN
- Create their home page
- Create job postings (with Job Post Writer, search on nationwide job postings, etc., if needed)
- View résumés of potential employees via range bound, contextual key word, etc., searches
- Utilize automated invitations and screenings
- Conduct automated screening interviews with knock-out questions
- Sort, screen, flag, directly contact, and track candidates
- Add notes and scheduled reminders

- Continue to seek GDOL staff assistance with all of the above

Title IV: Vocational Rehabilitation Services

The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program in Georgia is administered by the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (GVRA) and assists eligible individuals with physical and/or mental disabilities to prepare for, secure, retain, advance in, or regain competitive integrated employment. GVRA/VR also partners with businesses seeking to hire qualified individuals with significant disabilities. Services available to jobseekers as they are determined reasonable and appropriate include: counseling and guidance, assistive technology, vocational assessment, medical evaluations, vocational and academic training, on-the-job training, work adjustment training, supported employment, and job development/placement. Services focused on employer activities include: candidate identification, jobsite coaching, helping an employer identify the right solutions/accommodations for employee to be effective on the job through onsite job analysis, and technical support and training on those accommodations to ensure long-term success.

VR services are provided in all areas of the State by a skilled rehabilitation team in coordination with community rehabilitation providers. GVRA/VR believes that cooperation and collaboration is necessary to maximize resources and address all aspects impacting individuals with significant disabilities in gaining and maintaining employment in Georgia. GVRA/VR is strongly allied with partners of the statewide workforce development system and maintains many other cooperative agreements and working partnerships with entities outside the core workforce development system. To ensure participants and businesses are engaged, GVRA/VR will continue to focus on delivering activities already occurring within the state's workforce system as well as to expand current efforts in an organized and integrated manner that best serves individuals with disabilities.

As noted in Section IX, GVRA/VR provides assistance to individuals with significant disabilities to reach their competitive integrated employment goals. GVRA's goals and priorities include service improvement across multiple disciplines and areas in the state.

(B) Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities

Strengths

Over the past several years, the State increased its focus on localized service delivery across the state and integration of core workforce services. The State maintains a focus on creating a unified workforce development system that connects the wide array of services available through core partners to provide an unprecedented level of services to participants.

In the previous State Plan, the State laid out a strategy to leverage working groups to develop an enhanced workforce development system. The working groups developed milestone plans to assist with movement towards full workforce development system integration in support of WIOA. The plans included co-location of workforce services, increased virtual access, and data interface processes to facilitate the sharing of key workforce data between core partners. Over the past several years, the State has been actively working to fully implement the milestones established by those working groups.

In addition, the State recognizes continued opportunities to serve several strategic populations throughout the state. Georgia has one of the largest veteran populations in the country and continues to pursue programs for returning and current veterans. Specific initiatives for veterans aim to build upon existing skills and focus on seeking to match veterans with occupations leading to successful outcomes. Past methods for matching military occupations to civilian careers were not adequate and failed to holistically serve the population. The State identified this issue and has since hired a full-time Veterans Services Lead position within OWD to help ensure the state workforce system is adequately equipped and prepared to serve this large population by connecting them with in-demand occupations and industries. This focus on strategic populations will span the core partners and other organizations, where feasible. The OWD staff assigned to the areas will continue to build relationships and develop policy and programming with partner staff to ensure the needs of these populations are being met by the workforce system.

Although limited visibility and awareness of the WIOA services in the State is a weakness identified below, various programs have increased in popularity and continue to grow. For example, in program year 2018-2019, 30 providers offered IET opportunities for adult education students. These opportunities allowed 217 adult education students to participate in 21 different IET programs focusing on industries such as manufacturing, welding, hospitality, nursing assisting, information technology, and more. Through IET opportunities and dual enrollment in postsecondary education, 260 adult education students earned 585 stackable industry-recognized or postsecondary credentials. The State will continue to increase awareness and grow these successful programs to meet the needs of employers and jobseekers.

A state economy that continues to thrive and grow also presents opportunities for business expansion and increases the need for additional skilled workers. In order to seize the opportunities created by the state's growing industries, Georgia has worked to design a workforce development system, integrated with economic development activities through the use of regional sector partnerships, to help ensure workers and employers are prepared to support and sustain Georgia's growing industries.

In developing the previous State Plan, the working groups mentioned above identified several key weaknesses in the State's public workforce system: limited data integration, limited physical service integration, and limited financial and administrative integration across core partner programs. Additionally, OWD's chief executive at the time identified weaknesses in the visibility of the state and local workforce system, actionable opportunities for the workforce system. WIOA will continue to be utilized as a catalyst to create an improved workforce system, enhanced training for local boards to ensure a unified statewide message, increased technical assistance to LWDA's, communication across the workforce system, and set the tone for interagency collaboration.

Significant progress has been made in the time since the previous plan was drafted in each of these areas. Efforts to integrate data reporting across the core partners have been successful. As mandated under WIOA, the State has worked the last four years to become fully compliant with co-location requirements of all One-Stops and affiliate sites. An iterative process was utilized to analyze the service delivery structure in each LWDA to determine the most strategic integration of services across core partners (and beyond, where feasible) to better deliver federal workforce services. Progress has been

made with the integration of financial and administrative processes across core partners; however, this remains the most challenging to address. Consequently, it will remain a strategic priority for the next four years.

OWD has worked tirelessly to improve the visibility of WorkSource Georgia and significant progress has been made in the past four years. The State has accomplished this through strategic technical assistance to LWDAs regarding effective and appropriate outreach efforts, targeted outreach efforts at the state level through partnerships such as Great Georgia Jobs, and enhanced visibility of state and local staff at partner meetings and events. These efforts will continue for the next four years.

To encourage more actionable opportunities for the workforce system, OWD made significant investments of staff time and resources in rolling out the WorkSource Sector Partnerships to establish effective regional sector partnerships in each of the State's 12 economic development regions. These sector partnerships are designed to make each regional workforce development system better designed to meet the needs of regional employers, more integrated with the region's economic development strategic plan, and better aligned with the secondary and post-secondary education efforts across the region. These efforts have been invaluable in better positioning LWDAs as catalysts for change in their regions and ensuring they are plugged into key regional initiatives related to education and workforce development.

Since the last State Plan, OWD has launched the WorkSource Georgia Academy to address the needs for enhanced training, technical assistance, and professional development across Georgia's public workforce system. The WorkSource Academy has been used to provide: training for Local Boards and board staff; numerous conferences, webinars, seminars, and workshops to LWDAs and partners to improve service delivery and operations; and resource sharing to showcase best practices and improvement strategies across the state. The efforts of the Academy have also been extended to members of the SWDB to ensure they are fully informed and equipped to be active leaders in the State's workforce system.

The State continues to seek opportunities for greater interagency collaboration, even beyond the WIOA core partners. These efforts involve planned strategic partnerships with the Georgia Department of Human Services, Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Georgia Department of Education, and Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, among others.

Weaknesses

Despite tremendous progress that has been made in recent years to improve Georgia's public workforce system, several weaknesses remain. Some of these weaknesses remain a challenge to be addressed by the state and local partners, and those will be of priority for the system during the coming years. However, some of these weaknesses are beyond the scope of change for the state and local partners. The weaknesses for Georgia going into the next four-year state planning period are:

- *Full Data Integration Across Partners* – While the state has worked diligently the last few years to fully integrate data reporting efforts across core partners, there is still progress to be made. This task will include a much more robust effort to develop a technology platform that can

accommodate and synchronize the existing disparate data management systems currently utilized in the state.

- *Cohesion of LWDAs within a Shared Region* – As seen in the maps attached in the appendices, Georgia is divided into 19 Local Workforce Development Areas, and subsequently 12 Local Workforce Development Regions. This arrangement creates four regions that have multiple LWDAs within their borders. While significant progress has been made with intraregional coordination and collaboration in some regions (such as Region 3, Metro Atlanta), there is still work to be done to ensure all regions with multiple LWDAs are able to operate seamlessly for the benefit of participants and business partners.
- *Continued Limited Visibility and Awareness* – While significant progress has been made in recent years to improve the visibility and awareness of the WorkSource Georgia network across the state, as referenced above, substantial barriers still remain to fully and effectively increasing the public awareness of the State’s workforce system. The financial restraints of WIOA in regards to allowable outreach and marketing activities severely restrict the ability of the state and local areas to sufficiently proliferate the information regarding available resources to potential participants and employers. The State will continue to work increase familiarity with the workforce system for providers, potential participants, and employers.
- *Federal Financial Constraints* – As Georgia continues to experience a strong economy with historically low unemployment rates, the strategy for the public workforce system has had to shift to serve a participant base that includes a disproportionately higher population of individuals with significant barriers to employment, as compared to the rates in previous years following the Great Recession. As a larger percentage of the state’s participant population is composed of individuals such as transitioning veterans, individuals with disabilities, individuals re-entering from incarceration, English-language learners, and those reliant upon public assistance, and a much smaller percentage is composed of individuals who have been laid off or separated from employment due to no fault of their own. As a result, there has been a significant increase in the use of Adult funds compared to Dislocated Worker funds. Consequently, this has created a constraint for the State in trying to develop strategic approaches to serving the adult priority populations mentioned above, among others. While LWDAs are able to freely transfer between their Adult and Dislocated Worker (DW) funds, OWD is not able to do so with Governor’s Reserve Title I funds. This creates a challenge for developing strategic programming to better serve these large priority adult populations throughout the state, as the funds are limited. This has proven to be a critical weakness in the State’s efforts to expand offerings to these populations.

(C) State Workforce Development Capacity

TCSG, OWD

As the administrator of the State’s Title I funds, TCSG’s Office of Workforce Development and the WorkSource Georgia network are well-positioned to effectively deliver the services described above to individuals and businesses across the state.

The WorkSource Georgia network is divided into 19 Local Workforce Development Areas and 12 Workforce Development Regions. Each Area is managed by a local Workforce Director who is

responsible for ensuring that the area is appropriately staffed and supported to deliver services to the area as effectively and efficiently as possible. Each area is structured and organized in a manner that is appropriate for the service delivery structure in place for the LWDA; consequently, the number and nature of staff in each area varies.

At the state-level, OWD strives to maintain appropriate capacity for administering statewide Title I funds effectively, while also operating as efficiently as possible to maximize programmatic funds available to LWDA's across the state. OWD is strategically divided into five teams to streamline the services and assistance provided to the LWDA's: Compliance, Grants Management, Programs & Business Services, Data & Information, and Communications. Each of these teams are designed to work with the appropriate local and regional staff to assist with the administration and provision of Title I services. These teams provide regular technical assistance, guidance, and training to LWDA and partner staff to constantly strengthen the system's capacity and ability to provide high quality services. To enhance and expand the training and assistance offered by the State year-round, OWD developed the WorkSource Georgia Academy.

The WorkSource Georgia Academy is the training apparatus of the Office of Workforce Development (OWD). The goal of the Academy is to provide consistent and timely training to LWDA staff and to educate state and local board members and partners on the provision of WIOA services in the State of Georgia. The WorkSource Georgia Academy will accomplish this goal using five methods: Annual Conference, Topical Training, Online Library, Technical Assistance, and Outreach Materials.

- *Annual Conference* - The WorkSource Academy Annual Conference is a two-and-a-half day training offered yearly to SWDB members, LWDB members, LWDA staff, and partner staff from across the state. OWD works with the Office of Adult Education, Georgia Department of Labor, and Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency to create integrated and meaningful programming focused on a variety of content. Speakers include local, state, and federal staff, in addition to national subject matter experts. Each year content is designed to address the most pressing issues and questions for the Workforce System.
- *Topical Training* - The WorkSource Georgia Academy offers topical training events throughout the program year. The topics are chosen based on local area feedback and needs identified by state staff. The training is offered to different groups within the local areas and may include partner program staff depending on the topic. Trainings may be held statewide, regionally, virtually, or if there is a specific need, a local area may reach out to request individualized training.
- *Online Library* - OWD provides an online resource library that allows users to register for future trainings, expand their knowledge, and improve the practice of workforce development within the state. The resources include PowerPoint presentations, technical guides, templates, and video feed from previous trainings. This enhances the usability of the training for staff not able to travel to in-person sessions. Cataloguing past training material also assists local areas with onboarding future staff members.
- *Technical Assistance* - The state has created a portal to receive technical assistance questions. Once received, questions are placed into a queue and reviewed within a timely manner. Questions and answers are stored for future uses. This system ensures that local areas can go

to one source for technical assistance needs and that the state can ensure areas receive consistent guidance. The state is also able to identify the frequency of questions on certain topics, which may result in a topical training or resource guide.

- *Outreach Materials* - OWD creates templates for outreach documents. These documents clearly explain participant eligibility and services offered across the state. The documents also contain consistent branding and messaging. The goal of this effort is to introduce consistency into how WorkSource services are discussed and viewed by the general public. OWD staff also assist local areas with the creation of new or improvement of existing web material. Staff provide design resources and assistance to ensure that each local area is able to best display the services that they offer.

TCSG, OAE

The OAE's Instructional Services and Professional Development & Transition Resources teams provide ongoing technical assistance and professional development to local programs, including support for IET programs. The Instructional Services Team includes Grant Program Support Coordinators (GPSCs) that provide one-on-one guidance to local providers. GPSCs work with local providers on identifying training partners and IETs that align to local and regional workforce plans, as well as developing a single set of learning objectives (SSLOs) that ensure the IET offers adult education, workforce preparation skills, and training concurrently and contextually. The Instructional Services Team also offers a regular webinar series, which allows programs to share best practices for IET development and implementation. The Professional Development & Training Resources team works with national IET experts to offer training opportunities for local providers to improve the quality of their IETs. The OAE also conducts risk assessments and monitoring annually to ensure program quality, which includes monitoring IET implementation and quality.

GDOL

Consistent and strategic investment in staff development reflects Georgia's commitment to integrated workforce services. GDOL staff are trained in employment services and UI programs, enabling customers to receive seamless services designed to facilitate their return to employment.

Staff complete a structured training curriculum which equips them to provide high-quality services to both jobseekers and business. Training is comprised of intensive interviewing techniques, administering career assessments, accessing and interpreting labor market information, customized service strategies for employers and jobseekers, identifying the potential need for soft skills and skills gap training, developing workforce partnerships, identifying and linking to available supportive services, résumé writing expertise, and employment counseling to address barriers to employment and to assist with career selection.

Additional staff training is provided in the following areas: strategies for business recruitment events, the use of multiple methodologies to connect qualified jobseekers with employers, providing workforce statistics and prevailing industry wages, guidance on employment laws as it relates to the workplace, UI, Federal Bonding (FB), the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) and many other

workforce services. Staff also have access to customer service training to enhance services to jobseekers and businesses. Through the online Learning Management System managers and staff can easily access individualized training records and manage staff training plans to ensure the full syllabus of course needs are met.

GDOL also offers training, technical assistance, and support to partner staff who serve local job seekers and employers to ensure that program partners are highly engaged in local and State workforce partnerships. This allows for the exchange of information on core programs, UI legislation, new workforce training providers, and available programs. Other GDOL staff development activities are listed in Section VII.

GVRA

GVRA/VR has offices in both metropolitan and rural areas to assist in the workforce development of individuals with disabilities. Along with adults, GVRA/VR serves both youth and students with disabilities to better prepare them to become an integral part of Georgia's workforce. GVRA/VR offers an array of services to every Georgia public school district to help students transition to successful competitive integrated employment. GVRA/VR also conducts outreach activities to identify and attract those youth with disabilities who are not in school to participate in community-based alternative career pathways based on the specific skill requirements of Georgia's employers; or if appropriate, to assist these youth in returning to school, either secondary or post-secondary. GVRA/VR engages employers statewide to educate them on the value and benefits of hiring an individual with a disability and to determine their workforce needs. GVRA/VR collaborates with a large provider community to offer needed quality vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities. GVRA continues to work with providers to assist them in the development of vocational rehabilitation services directly focused on employment outcomes.

(b) Strategic Vision and Goals

(1) Vision

Georgia's workforce development system is focused on connecting talent with opportunity through the provision of career services, education and training. Through strong interagency collaboration and a focus on excellent customer service, Georgia's employer-driven workforce system supports and stimulates the State's economic growth. This collaboration and coordination ensures advancement towards Governor Kemp's goal to ensure that someone's potential is not determined by their zip code or county.

The state administration of the WIOA grant is well positioned within the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG). The State's Adult Education and Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act grant funding are also administered in part by TCSG, which allows for better coordination with partner agencies and programs. This position also permits the workforce development system to develop a seamless flow of customers across programs and diverse areas of the state.

This planning document reflects the State’s vision and goals to strengthen the workforce system’s ability to align and coordinate among partners to best serve individuals and companies competing in today’s and tomorrow’s labor market.

(2) Goals

1. Utilize sector partnerships to inform and guide strategic workforce development strategies and enhance partnership coordination.
2. Further develop regional integration to ensure streamlined services to both businesses and individuals.
3. Utilize the workforce system to increase statewide prosperity for rural and urban communities.
4. Align the workforce system with education systems at all levels.
5. Alleviate a tightened labor market by increasing the participation of strategic populations in the workforce system.

Utilize Sector Partnerships to Guide Strategies and Coordination

Sector partnerships have become an integral part of Georgia’s workforce system. The State’s investment in 12 regional partnerships have increased understanding of workforce needs and enabled greater coordination between partner agencies. These partnerships have enabled workforce developers to hear directly from employers and strategize to meet their current and future needs. As a result of these discussions, each region has identified target industries for which to build a readily available workforce.

Increase Statewide Prosperity

Governor Kemp’s commitment to initiatives that spur growth for all parts of the state creates an opportunity for the workforce system to thrive in its mission to serve individuals and employers. As the #1 State in the nation in which to do business for seven years in a row, all core WIOA partners continue to improve coordination efforts of economic development and workforce development. This effort has been critical in making informed decisions and developing careful strategy to meet the needs of employers throughout the state. Through WIOA implementation, the State’s increased interagency cooperation among core partners well positions the workforce system to contribute greatly to statewide prosperity.

An emphasis on business services will also allow the State to increase statewide prosperity. Programs and initiatives such as work-based learning, Rapid Response, Customized Recruitment, and Registered Apprenticeships continue to be key components of the State’s efforts to serve businesses. In line with Governor Kemp’s goal to ensure someone’s potential is not determined by their zip code or county, the State has a goal to increase access points to individuals and businesses located in remote areas. This greatly enhances the workforce system’s ability to serve rural Georgia and increase statewide prosperity. These areas are employing a number of resources to provide services, including mobile units in conjunction with public libraries, technical college satellite campuses, and other service agencies.

Align Workforce and Education Systems

Education systems are key partners of the workforce system. Georgia is well equipped with a plethora of post-secondary options through the University System of Georgia (USG) and the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG). Georgia's Department of Education and Georgia's Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) are also integral parts of creating career-focused alignment from cradle to career for individuals across the State. All WIOA core partners are committed to further aligning training services provided through the workforce system with education partners to best serve companies and individuals looking to play key roles in the economy of today and tomorrow.

Further Develop Regional Integration

Four of Georgia's twelve WIOA Regions have multiple local areas located within their geographic boundaries. WIOA's focus on regional planning has given the state the unique opportunity to enhance the customer service provided to individuals and businesses attempting to navigate the service structure across Local Area lines. Georgia will continue to provide enhanced resources and guidance to the local areas in order to accomplish seamless service delivery. Examples of this include coordinated participant intake and eligibility, as well as common business service forms and processes.

Address a Tightened Labor Market

The Georgia Department of Labor has reported a steadily decreasing unemployment rate in the State – reaching 3.4 percent as of October 2019. Although undoubtedly a significant achievement and indicator of a strong economy, this low unemployment rate decreases the number of individuals actively participating and readily available to meet the needs of workforce challenges and shortages. The US Bureau of Labor Statistics reports a 63.3 percent national civilian labor force participation rate, which indicates nearly 37 percent of the civilian working age population have the opportunity to meet the needs of employers facing workforce shortages. In Georgia, that number is slightly lower at 62.2 percent, dropping from 62.8 percent in 2018.

The State's workforce system is the ideal place to train and prepare this population for inclusion in the labor market. In order to identify and serve individuals who are not considered active in the workforce system, the core WIOA partners continue to work to promote resources and opportunities among strategic populations. These populations include, but are not limited to, transitioning veterans, opportunity youth, returning citizens, English language learners, individuals who are basic skills deficient, and individuals with disabilities.

(3) Performance Goals

WIOA mandates six performance measures for its core programs. Performance measures are calculated using the following methodology:

Entered Employment Quarter 2- Measures the percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program. For youth, the measure also includes the percentage who were in education or training activities during the second quarter after exit.

Entered Employment Quarter 4- Measures the percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program. For youth, the measure also

includes the percentage who were in education or training activities during the fourth quarter after exit.

Median Earnings Quarter 2- Measures the median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.

Credential Attainment Rate- Measures the percentage of participants who obtained a recognized post-secondary credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within one year of exit from the program.

In-Program Skill Gains- Measures the percentage of participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized post-secondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains, which are defined as documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress toward such a credential or employment.

Effectiveness in Serving Employers- Measures the state workforce system's effectiveness in serving employers by evaluating the employee retention, employer penetration and repeat business customer rates.

Georgia's anticipated performance outcomes for PY20 and PY21 are found in Appendix B.

(4) Assessment

TCSG, OWD

The State of Georgia makes use of many activities to assess the successful provision of workforce services and the delivery of the Governor's strategic vision and goals. The activities discussed below all play a role in ensuring that the state is able to make continuous and quality improvements in terms of adhering to federal and state regulations, providing quality services to the workforce system customer, and meeting federal and state outcome expectations. The assessment activities will also monitor the state's progress towards accomplishing the vision and goals for the workforce development system discussed previously. OWD will place special emphasis on assessment and monitoring of LWDA's for WIOA integration and WIOA compliance to ensure that timely progress is being met in local area systems change and one-stop integration. If core partners determine areas of weakness in WIOA implementation, appropriate and timely technical assistance will be provided.

Adherence to State and Federal Regulations

The first way in which the State ensures the overall effectiveness of the workforce development system is through conducting yearly, onsite monitoring. For one week every year, each LWDA hosts a team of three OWD staff members which includes one individual from the compliance, grants administration, and programs teams. This team conducts comprehensive monitoring of which the primary goal is to ensure adherence to federal and state regulations. The team uses a risk assessment to determine the number of samples to be reviewed for each subject area; and the team then evaluates those samples using customized monitoring tools developed and maintained by OWD management. Interviews are also conducted to ensure understanding of regulations and the cohesiveness of local processes.

If the monitoring team identifies exceptions, the LWDA is given a list of corrective action tasks to complete. OWD staff work with local staff to ensure that these corrective action tasks are completed and that overall process improvement takes place. OWD will also give observations to LWDA's. Observations are indicative of items that could be improved upon, but do not rise to the level of an exception. Finally, OWD staff identify notable practices in LWDA's in an attempt to highlight local successes and disseminate best practices. The yearly monitoring process ensures that all customers are able to receive the services they need in the most efficient manner possible. The State also ensures that entities receiving WIOA funds are following the basic principles outlined by USDOL for the expenditure of the funds.

The onsite monitoring of LWDA's actively promotes continuous system improvement. As federal, state, and local guidance is released constantly, onsite monitoring ensures that LWDA's maintain up-to-date, compliant service delivery structures and practices. Onsite monitoring consists of policy and system reviews which determine an LWDA's compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and policies. Onsite monitoring also provides LWDA's an opportunity to detail unique programs, policies, and/or practices that they utilize. OWD's identification and dissemination of these best practices can lead to improvements across the entire state's workforce system. Through the corrective action process, LWDA's receive additional assistance from OWD in updating and modifying their service delivery to comply with the applicable federal and state guidance.

Additionally, the SWDB is annually presented a final monitoring report which details the results of the onsite monitoring of Georgia's nineteen LWDA's. This report highlights areas where further guidance or assistance may be necessary and informs the SWDB of unique service delivery processes that may be beneficial to other LWDA's in the state. Many policies, guidance letters, and technical assistance efforts result from the issues and best practices identified during annual onsite monitoring and directly contribute to Georgia's consistent, continuous improvement of its workforce system.

OWD programmatic staff also conduct LWDB certification every two years. During this period, programmatic staff ensure that the LWDB roster satisfies federal criteria. Staff also read meeting minutes ensure that LWDB's are following state and federal open meeting requirements. Finally, LWDB bylaws are examined for compliance with relevant state law and rule provisions. If exceptions are identified, LWDA's are given a list of corrective action tasks to complete. Programmatic staff work with the LWDA's to complete these corrective action items, and if necessary, identify individuals to fill vacant board seats. Ensuring that each board meets composition requirements and that meetings are being conducted correctly provides consistency across all LWDA's. This consistency ensures that each LWDB is able to carry out the Governor's vision and WIOA requirements in the most effective manner.

Beginning with the review of PY16 activities, OWD introduced several tools to ensure compliance with the guidance issued at the federal and state level for WIOA implementation. OWD staff utilize these additional tools to review One-Stop Certification and Re-certification, One-Stop Operator Selection, One-Stop Memorandums of Understanding (MOU), and Infrastructure Cost Sharing Agreements, which are summarized below.

In accordance with federal regulations, the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB), in consultation with the Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDB) and Chief Local Elected Officials

(CLEO), developed minimum criteria for the certification of comprehensive and affiliate one-stop centers throughout Georgia. Initial certification of sites is evaluated by OWD to ensure accurate completion, adherence to service delivery requirements, accessibility requirements, and appropriate partner presence. OWD requires LWDA's to submit completed certification packets for all sites included in the local MOU. OWD maintains a list of those certified sites around the state, and during the annual monitoring process reviews the material to ensure all certification is up-to-date, and that re-certification is conducted in accordance with the local MOU, state policy, and federal regulations.

To support OWD's efforts to assess Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) One-Stop Operator procurement, OWD utilizes an additional monitoring tool to evaluate operator selection. The tool incorporates statutory criteria, regulatory criteria, and federal and state level guidance to provide a basis for OWD monitoring findings and observations. The tool evaluates the procurement standards utilized by the LWDA, the written policies and procedures, the method of procurement to ensure full and open competition, and the LWDA's written standards of conduct regarding conflicts of interest. OWD also utilizes the tool to monitor the implementation of operator evaluation criteria, which includes the entity's organizational overview, financial accountability, capacity, partnerships, program outcomes, and data and reporting systems.

The One-Stop MOU tool evaluates compliance with criteria from 20 C.F.R. §678 and ensures each LWDA has executed an equitable and allocable One-Stop Operator cost-sharing agreement. OWD staff complete the tool based on the LWDA's execution and application of the formal agreement amongst local partners. The question include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Does the MOU contain the signatures of the LWDB chair, all one-stop partners, and the CLEO?
- Was the negotiation process documented?
- Pursuant to WIOA section 121 and applicable federal regulations, does the MOU contain provisions regarding the following:
 - Program service delivery;
 - Infrastructure funding agreement (IFA) and cost reconciliation;
 - Equal Opportunity provisions;
 - Effective duration of and amendments to the MOU and IFA;
 - Mandatory review of the MOU;
 - Description of the process to be used among partners to resolve issues during the MOU duration period when consensus cannot be reached;
 - Internal control provisions, if merited by participating partners; and,
 - Roles of the LWDB and CLEO?

Provision of Quality Services to the Workforce System Customer

The second way in which the State ensures effectiveness is through the yearly customer satisfaction survey. OWD's Data and Information Team prepares and facilitates a survey of at least 500 past participants. Once the data is collected the results are detailed in the USDOL Annual Report. The Data and Information Team also examines the data to identify areas in which the workforce system can improve the customer experience and outcomes. If needed, those recommendations are distributed to LWDA's. By focusing on customer experience, workforce staff ensure positive outcomes and word-of-

mouth referrals to the workforce system. This type of testimonial is necessary to ensure that customers continue to seek services.

Meeting of Federal and State Outcome Expectations

The final way in which the State ensures effectiveness is through yearly performance negotiations. During performance negotiations the OWD Data and Information Team studies each LWDA's previous year's performance and consults with the programs team to identify considerations that could affect performance in a positive or negative manner. These considerations may include, but are not limited to, the following: the receipt of additional grant funding, commitment to serve "hard-to-serve" populations, an increased number of layoffs in the area, etc. Using this information, the Data and Information Team prepares customized reports for each LWDA. Every year LWDA's are encouraged to show continual improvement, which is reflected in the goals that OWD negotiates. Should LWDA's feel that their final negotiated rates are unattainable, OWD programs staff offer technical assistance with program design and exit strategy.

The Data and Information Team also monitors performance year round, and LWDA's are given an opportunity to renegotiate their performance levels if they are under-performing based on special and/or unforeseen considerations. OWD staff also take a proactive stance, making every effort to intervene early if quarterly performance data suggests that an LWDA is struggling with a measure. This type of support ensures that program design changes can be made in time to rectify issues and ensure final performance measures are met.

OWD utilizes the WorkSource Georgia Portal to store participant information and to enroll WIOA participants. The system collects information which can be utilized by LWDA case managers and management to provide systems reports on LWDA performance. LWDA's can produce reports on hard-to-serve populations, as well as pre-determine performance measure achievement. This self-assessment by LWDA's is encouraged and the GWROPP is used extensively by OWD for performance monitoring.

TCSG, OAE

The Office of Adult Education utilizes several methods to track its effectiveness in meeting the goals of Georgia's workforce development system. Specifically:

Through regular data analysis, OAE's instructional services team regularly monitors each program's progress in meeting the performance indicators outlined in WIOA section 116. OAE tracks progress towards these performance metrics by regularly pulling data and reports from GALIS (Georgia Adult Learners Information System). In addition, GPSCs regularly monitor Integrated Education & Training (IET) enrollment and quality. GPSCs then provide tailored support, technical assistance, and training to programs to ensure continuous program improvement.

Additionally, OAE utilizes a comprehensive monitoring process in which programs can receive a virtual or in-person monitoring visit in following areas: (a) fiscal, (b) instruction, programming & performance, and (c) data, assessment and intake. While the monitoring process evaluates many aspects of an adult

education program, it also evaluates each program's effectiveness as it relates to the goals of Georgia's workforce development system. Specifically, the monitoring process assesses:

- The extent to which the adult education program has an active and strategic memorandum of understanding (MOU) and partnership with its respective local workforce development board(s) (LWDB) and one-stop(s);
- The quality of its Integrated Education & Training (IET) program, including the extent to which the IET leverages industry partnerships and prepares and places students in jobs in in-demand occupations;
- The quality of its career services; and
- The extent to which the program provides distance education or dual enrollment opportunities that allow all students, including those with disabilities or those in remote areas of the state, to participate in the adult education program and, ultimately, obtain jobs in in-demand industries.

Finally, OAE conducts Career Services Tracking. OAE and local programs also have staff that provide career and wraparound services to adult education students. The goal of these services is to support adult education students in obtaining the skills and credentials needed to obtain a job that earns a family-sustaining wage. OAE and local programs measure progress towards the state's workforce development system's vision and goals by tracking career services metrics, such as WIOA partner collaboration, one-stop engagement, IET participation, dual enrollment in postsecondary education, and more.

GDOL

Financial Assessments

In addition to annual audits, GDOL submits regular reports to the federal agencies responsible for oversight of the grants received by GDOL on expenditures and drawdowns. Regular reports are also submitted to the state Office of Planning and Budget (OPB) and the State Accounting Office (SAO). Financial program managers are also responsible for day-to-day management of grant expenditures for their respective programs to ensure compliance with specific grant guidelines and the advancement of the agency mission.

STAR Review Team

The GDOL Staff Technical Assistance Review (STAR) process is a four-day review conducted in two phases, which includes a desk review and subsequent on-site review. Technical assistance teams of subject matter experts are responsible for conducting the reviews and providing immediate technical assistance training directly to staff in the career centers. The team evaluates and analyzes documented services in GDOL's electronic system remotely, prior to the Career Center visit, and direct service delivery while on-site. The immediate on-site training based on the results of the findings provide an opportunity for the STAR team to identify programmatic misunderstandings quickly and immediately address issues through training and discussion while on the premises.

The STAR team meets with the management team throughout the review process, and during the exit conference to discuss feedback reports. A technical assistance plan is developed in consensus with management to correct or improve any process or programmatic deficiencies. The STAR team subject matter experts conduct random follow-up during the six-month period immediately following the technical assistance review to ensure quality improvements are implemented. On-going technical assistance is available through the team during implementation. This process also allows for the team to document best practices across the state which are utilized in developing new service delivery processes for the agency.

GVRA

GVRA/VR monitors the performance of service delivery staff members as well as service providers to ensure all efforts lead to successful competitive integrated employment for clients. GVRA/VR will also monitor employer satisfaction to ensure that individuals with disabilities seeking employment meet businesses' skill requirements and that the services provided through GVRA are aligned with the needs of Georgia's employers. GVRA/VR engages in a technical assistance agreement with Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center (WINTAC) to ensure improvement in the areas of performance management and quality assurance.

Based on feedback from individuals with disabilities, providers, internal rehabilitation professionals, the Client Assistance Program, the State Rehabilitation Council, other Disability Advocacy groups, the Rehabilitation Services Administration Monitoring Report, as well as performance data, leadership is aware that GVRA/VR is not meeting the needs of individuals seeking services. Therefore, two studies were commissioned to identify barriers and possible solutions. In collaboration with the SRC, GVRA/VR contracted in 2019 for the completion of a Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment. The results of that study will be available in early 2020. GVRA/VR also contracted with a private consulting firm in the fall of 2019 to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the organizational structure, its processes and procedures and to examine the staffing patterns required to function optimally. Those findings will also be available in early 2020. Based on the findings of both examinations, GVRA/VR will implement changes and improvements.

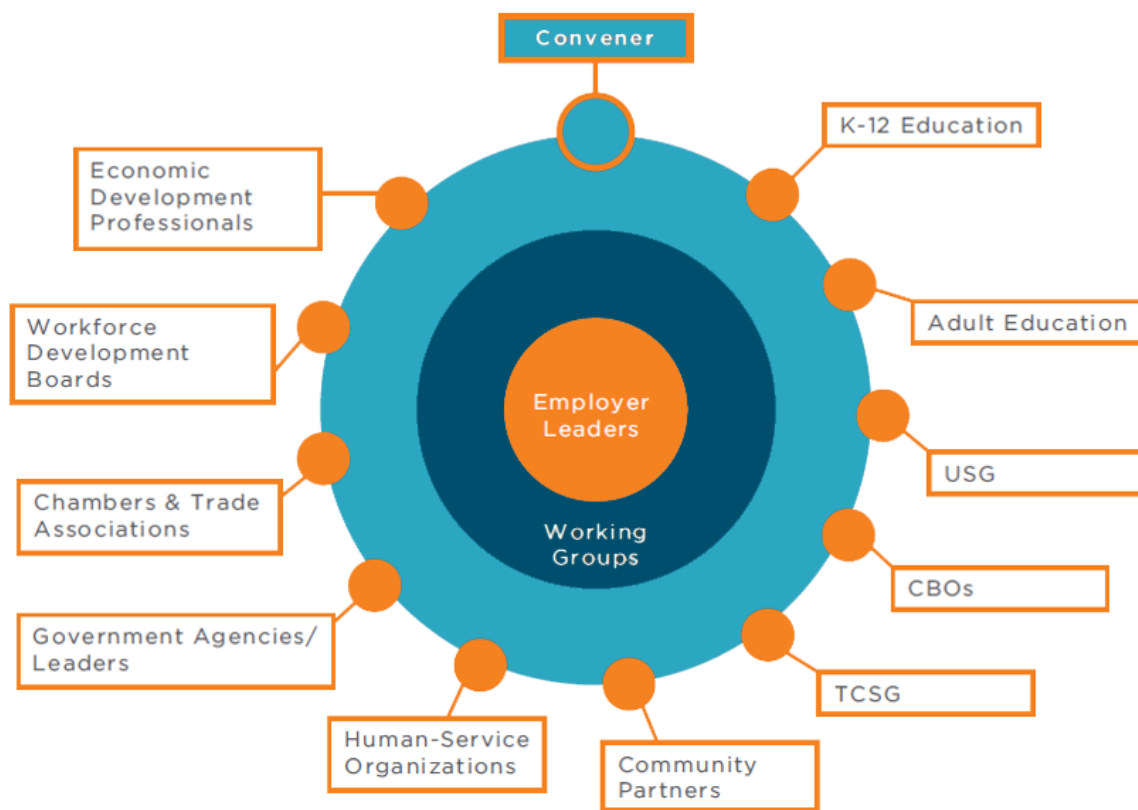
(c) State Strategy

The State will continue to work to create a truly unified public workforce system over the next four years. This strategy will include efforts to further enhance integration across core partners, expand that integration to partners beyond those in the core, strengthen the public workforce system's alignment and responsive to the business community, and create a strong statewide system by investing in the creation of strong integrated regions. These efforts embody the five major goals identified for the State above. The tool identified as the most effective strategy to achieve all of these goals is sector partnerships. Consequently, the State plans to continue and expand its investments of staff and resources in the WorkSource Sector Partnerships over the next four years.

WorkSource Sector Partnerships were officially launched in 2016 to strengthen Georgia's workforce system and better align the system with the needs of employers across the state. This initiative was launched to equip the state's 12 Workforce Development Regions to better serve the needs of their regional industries. These partnerships, which are composed of a diverse group of stakeholders,

represent the business, economic development, workforce development, education (early, primary, secondary, and post-secondary), social service, and Community Based Organization (CBO) communities within reach region. The partnerships are designed to better understand and act on the needs of key regional industries by developing an integrated strategy to inform and direct the region’s education and workforce development efforts based on employer feedback and guidance. The ultimate goal of the efforts being to make the State’s robust workforce and education efforts more effective and efficient. These regional sector partnerships further build an infrastructure of communication and collaboration across the numerous members of the workforce and education communities and between the public and private sectors throughout the state.

Each region has been tasked with establishing a steering committee to guide the work for each sector partnership and to keep them engaged in the growth and development of the work. The steering committee represents the larger group of partners involved in the sector partnership. Steering committee meetings are intended to keep all members engaged and up-to-date with the work being done throughout the region. The graphic below demonstrates the suggested structure and composition of the steering committee; although, the partners represented in this illustration are not meant to be all inclusive. As such, additional partners may be appropriate in each region.



The steering committee develops the strategies for the partnership, and those strategies guide the development of associated working groups to implement the strategies. Those working groups oversee the development and implementation of the multiple sector strategies that are developed as part of

the sector partnership (examples of some of those working groups could be: K-12 Engagement Working Group, CTAE Program Improvement Working Group, Post-Secondary Program Improvement Working Group, Individuals with Disabilities Working Group, Re-Entry from Incarceration Working Group, Apprenticeships Working Group, Transportation Working Group, etc.). These are the groups that will actually do the work of the sector partnership; this is where partnership leaders are able to divide responsibilities among partners based on their expertise, resources, and networks. These working groups should each be comprised of a diverse group of both employers and the other relevant partners represented on the steering committee. Without this structure in place, it will prove impossible for the sector partnerships to adequately build out the envisioned work and keep it moving forward.

To assist with the implementation of these efforts, WorkSource Georgia has awarded two rounds of grants to regions across the state. The first round of grants, released in 2017, was specifically designed to assist regions with building the capacity to effectively implement these efforts in their regions. Most regions utilized the funds to contract with external consultants and to hire full-time staff dedicated to the work. In 2019, the second round of grant funds was awarded. These funds were intended to continue and expand upon the accomplishments in round one. Most regions utilized the funds to sustain the full-time staff dedicated to the efforts from round one, continue their work with their consultants, or to support the build out of innovative programming to implement the vision crafted in round one. Each region has experienced success and made progress in better serving their regional employers.

Utilizing the organizational model illustrated above, the State is promoting a more integrated approach to regional workforce development through the use of these sector partnerships. With both rounds of grant funding, each region was required to assemble a diverse group of stakeholders to compose the steering committee of their sector partnership in order to be eligible to receive funding. The required grant partners included:

- *Industry and company representatives in the selected sector (at least 5 within each selected industry)*
- *Local Technical College System of Georgia Institution(s)*
- *Local University System of Georgia Institution(s)*
- *Georgia Department of Labor*
- *Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency*
- *Local Chamber(s) of Commerce/Local Economic Development Professional(s)*
- *Georgia Department of Economic Development Existing Industries Representative*
- *K-12 School System(s) representative*
- *Military transition assistant(s), or other applicable staff, from local military base(s) (If a military base is located in the region)*

The following additional partners were also strongly encouraged to be engaged as members of the steering committee for the sector partnerships:

- *Community-based organizations and non-profits*

- *Local social services partners, such as your local office managing SNAP and TANF program participants, transportation, housing, etc.*
- *Regional Commissions*
- *Private primary, secondary, and post-secondary education providers*
- *Other regional or local education organizations, such as RESAs*
- *Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA)*
- *Foundations and philanthropic partners*
- *Case managers or student navigators (TCSG and Georgia Department of Human Services)*
- *Temporary employment firms*
- *Potential training participants (those looking to increase their skills)*
- *Associations and organizations representing specific industries and businesses*

Prior to the implementation of WorkSource Sector Partnerships, no region in Georgia was operating a workforce or education collaborative that engaged such a diverse group of partners. These partnerships will prove critical in moving Georgia toward a statewide workforce development system that is truly aligned across all relevant partners and in sync with the needs of employers.

Additionally, at the state level, the four core agencies managing WIOA funds continue to pursue opportunities for alignment and collaboration, and a strategic partnership is in the early stages to form a stronger relationship and programmatic delivery structure between the four titles of WIOA and the workforce efforts of TANF, SNAP E&T, and the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) CAPS program. The strengthening of these partnerships at the state level will be an invaluable guide to the efforts being implemented at the regional level. Joint guidance documents and best practices (regarding issues such as partner referrals, data sharing, and developing strategies to better leverage and braid funding streams) will be distributed by the statewide partners to regional leaders to assist with establishing new regional partnerships and expanding existing ones.

As mentioned in the *Weaknesses of the Georgia Workforce Development System* section above, there is still progress to be made in several regions across the state that contain multiple LWDA. This is a weakness for the system because it often creates confusion and frustration for participants and businesses within that region who are forced to navigate multiple systems with disparate programmatic and administrative structures. WorkSource Sector Partnerships are also a strategic tool for improving this regional collaboration and integration across LWDA boundaries. In both rounds of grant funding, LWDA were required to apply for funding jointly as a region, if the region contained more than one LWDA. A single vision for the region and plan for implementation had to be developed in order to be eligible for funding. Grant applications also had to include plans for improving collaboration throughout the region, transcending area lines. These partnerships will continue to be a strategic instrument for the state in further developing intraregional and interregional cohesion.

Sector partnerships are a proven approach to aligning the training and education programs in a community with the employee skills and competencies needed by employers in a given industry sector. Consequently, the State has determined that WorkSource Sector Partnerships are the ideal tool to ensure the workforce and education systems in each region are aligned with regional in-demand industries and associated occupations, such as those identified in the *Economic Analysis* section above.

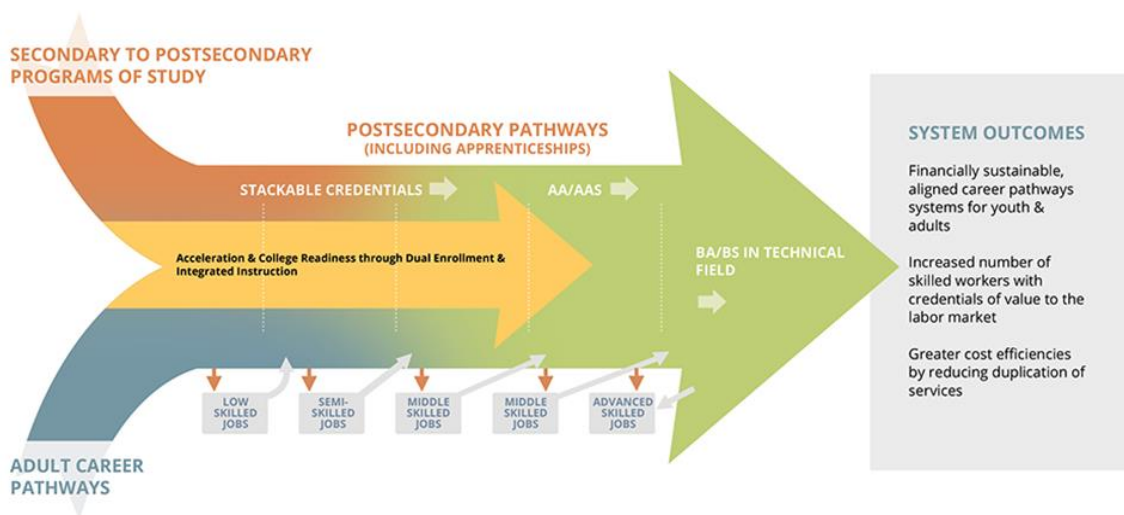
By establishing collaboration in each region that is led and guided by business leaders in key industries, the regional partners are better informed and equipped to ensure their programmatic offerings and strategies are aligned with the actual needs of the region's employers. Consequently, they can provide regional employers with a more skilled and reliable workforce.

Nonetheless, these partnerships must be mutually-beneficial for all involved, and they will be used to allow business leaders to learn from the workforce and education communities in their regions as well. These partnerships can help business leaders see the value in investing in their workforce. Additionally, the dialogue can help employers refine the essential skills and experiences needed for their in-demand occupations. In analyzing the available talent in a region, these partnerships can help employers see previously over-looked talent opportunities, such as veterans, returning citizens, individuals with disabilities, individuals without four-year degrees, opportunity youth, etc.

In order to provide that steady pipeline of regional talent, these sector partnerships must develop effective career pathways. Career pathways are an integrated collection of programs and services intended to develop an individual's core academic, technical, and employability skills by providing them with continuous education and training and placing them in high-demand, high-opportunity careers. Each step on a career pathway is explicitly designed to prepare individuals to progress to the next level of education and/or employment, and they must target jobs in industries of importance to local and regional economies.

For these pathways to be effective, they must contain several core components. They must include multiple ways to enter and exit education pathways, with marketable credentials at each step, linking noncredit and credit training and short-term certificates with longer term credentials. There must also be active participation by employers in pathway development, worksite training, placements, internships, apprenticeships, or financial support for worker learning to address regional workforce needs. The newly created programs must include innovations in program content and delivery such as new K-12 occupation-focused learning opportunities, contextualized and accelerated basic/employability skills, new technical certificates and diplomas, flexible class schedules, experiential learning, cohort-based instruction, and combinations of online and face-to-face instruction. Most importantly, the pathways must provide integrated support services, such as career and academic coaching, financial assistance, access to public benefits, or other safety net supports provided by a range of partners including CBOs.

Career pathways create avenues of advancement for the unemployed, underemployed, individuals with barriers to employment, incumbent workers, and future labor market entrants. The main goals of career pathways are to connect individuals with sustainable career paths and produce a steady supply of qualified talent for employers. Career pathways provide greater clarity and structure in career training and provide tracks of advancement that have relevance, credence, and currency with employers. They must also be designed to be accessible to individuals at varying levels of education, including adult learners.



As the State works to achieve its goal of alleviating a tightened labor market by increasing the participation of strategic populations in the workforce system, WorkSource Sector Partnerships will be an invaluable tool. These regional collaboratives are uniquely positioned to forge strong public-private partnerships that can be used to assist numerous groups that face challenges to employment. Some of these populations include: military personnel transitioning back into civilian life and their spouses, individuals with disabilities, individuals experiencing homelessness, individuals transitioning out of incarceration and those with existing criminal records, individuals struggling with substance abuse, English language learners, and individuals who are basic skills deficient. Each of these groups require a tailored strategy to assist with overcoming their barriers to training and employment. These sector partnerships are comprised of the partners that have the resources and networks necessary to properly train and connect these individuals with long-term career opportunities.

However, for these efforts to be possible, each regional sector partnership must consider the impact and importance of their efforts through the lens of diversity, equity, and inclusion. They must work to understand the factors that affect both the *development of talent potential* in the region and the *deployment of talent potential* in the region. The most common factor affecting the *development* of talent is access to adequate resources. This could include access to the necessary education and training resources, adequate support services (transportation, childcare, healthcare, etc.), or sufficient health services, among others. The most common factor affecting the *deployment* of talent is the existence of systemic barriers. These barriers could include geographical constraints, lack of quality employment opportunities, wage stagnation, labor force changes, and persistent discrimination. Regional sector partnership leaders must keep all of these factors in mind as they work to develop goals and strategies for their partnership to ensure *everyone* in the region is able to benefit from the efforts.

As the State continues to face the challenge of achieving optimal visibility and awareness of the public workforce system, as mentioned in the *Weaknesses of the Georgia Workforce Development System* section above, WorkSource Sector Partnerships will also be utilized to address this issue over the next

four years. By tackling the issue using a regional approach, as opposed to simply attempting the efforts at the state level, the State is able to deploy more strategic and targeted outreach and awareness efforts to maximize the engagement of potential participants and businesses. Each region is different, and the demographics and presence of strategic populations in each vary greatly. Consequently, a regionally-tailored outreach effort is the most effective means of bringing greater awareness across the state regarding the resources and opportunities available through the public workforce system. The OWD Communications & Programs Teams will continue their training, guidance, and technical assistance efforts to regional leaders to assist with the deployment of these tactics.

In considering all of the aforementioned factors, it is clear that the work of the WorkSource Sector Partnerships is critical and incredibly challenging. Understanding the magnitude and importance of this challenge, the State has made these efforts its top priority when developing the State’s strategy for the next four years.

TCSG, OAE

The Office of Adult Education will employ the following strategies to support the state’s strategic vision and goals. Since each strategy aligns with multiple goals, the chart below specifies the specific goals related to each strategy. In addition, the chart provides a high-level overview of the activities OAE will implement to support these strategies. These activities are described in detail in Section III(2).

Strategies	Aligned Goals	Activities
Require all local programs to offer at least one IET opportunity for students.	Sector Partnerships (1) Increase Prosperity (3) Strategic Populations (5)	IET requirement in Request for Application; IET technical assistance and webinars
Support local programs in developing strong and strategic relationships with LWDBs and one-stops.	Sector Partnerships (1) Regional Integration (2)	One-stop MOUs; participate in LWDB meetings
Promote enhanced learning opportunities for students such as dual enrollment and distance education.	Education Alignment (4) Strategic Populations (5)	Distance education, postsecondary dual enrollment
Expand high school equivalency (HSE) options for Georgians.	Education Alignment (4) Strategic Populations (5)	Pilot alternative HSE pathway programs
Elevate the quality of career services provided to students.	Sector Partnerships (1) Regional Integration (2) Strategic Populations (5)	Require local programs to have career services staff member; career services technical assistance, support, and reporting

GDOL

The Business Services Unit (BSU) of the Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL) reflects a new direction and emphasis on employer-driven service delivery and provides access to market driven staff dedicated to fulfilling the needs of Georgia employers. The realignment of vision and purpose has positioned GDOL to refocus its commitment to the business community and provide a venue for a more proactive and employer friendly partnership.

The Regional Coordinators Program partners with economic developers, locally, regionally and statewide by executing prompt turnaround data and customized solutions to workforce issues. Regional Coordinators help economic developers identify data critical for the successful location and expansion of industry.

The Business Services Recruiters continually develop and maintain relationships with employers, identifying talent pools for target industries, identifying employer talent requirements and matching talent with employer hiring needs.

The Special Workforce Assistance Team (SWAT) works closely with Chambers of Commerce, Industrial Authorities, and economic developers to fill the gaps and barriers to employment many job seekers face. SWAT job readiness events feature workshops on a plethora of topics such as improving interviewing skills, networking skills, and using social media in job search. The team is staffed with expert staff that are trained and prepared to assist job seekers with résumé assistance and the development of marketing tools necessary to impress hiring managers.

The BSU manages Regional Career Expos that can be tailored to targeted industries, job seekers, and skill requirements, as well as general and community events. Business and job seekers from all industries are invited to attend and interact with the goal of a job match between employer and job seeker. The BSU is also working in collaboration with TCSG on the FastTrack program, which efforts are focused around creating a three to six week program providing certification in Manufacturing, Basic Construction Fundamentals, Welding and Industrial Maintenance.

GDOL's Customized Recruitment (CR) is a specialized resource offered to new businesses to Georgia. This service is aimed towards the streamlining of the company's candidate search and recruitment process by utilizing a team of highly successful GDOL recruiters, working on behalf of the employer. The CR team partners with economic developers and project managers to ease the recruitment process by providing screening assistance thus alleviating direct applicant contact with the employer prior to screening. Candidates go through multiple steps of established CR checks and balances, ensuring their qualifications, applications or résumés are consistent with the needs of the employer prior to referral to the employer for established next steps.

GDOL's Customized Recruitment X (CRX) is a specialized resource that was created in response to the needs of existing Georgia companies who are experiencing growth. Modeling the highly successful Customized Recruitment program, CRX provides the same expert level of services to Georgia's existing businesses who will be expanding. Candidates go through the same process established with CR to ensure their qualifications, applications or résumés are screened prior to referral to the employer for established next steps.

Regional Summits, known as "Employers in the Know", are designed to help business owners, hiring

professionals, and others better understand and conquer compliance challenges in the workplace. “Employers In the Know” attendees meet and hear from the Commissioner of GDOL as he shares valuable information on current GDOL initiatives and programs. The Regional Summits also provide information from Labor Law experts about federal policies and legislation that help ensure businesses are compliant and profitable in the upcoming years. Employers are provided information about other Georgia’s state agencies and what they are doing to promote job growth and economic development.

GeorgiaBEST for Employers focuses on equipping Georgia’s future workforce with the skills needed to succeed in the marketplace. Loss of productivity affects business profitability and can be traced to a number of components. Employers consistently agree that poor attendance, a lack of understanding of the importance and meaning of teamwork, organizational skills, and time management must be addressed to ensure a reliable and consistent workforce and strong communities. This initiative addresses GDOL’s commitment to the future workforce and economic prosperity by providing necessary tools for employability skills training and education through a partnership administered by Workforce Areas.

GVRA

GVRA/VR is in the middle of examining its organizational structure, processes and procedures, and current staffing patterns required to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities; after this analysis is complete, major organizational transformation will occur that impacts the entire agency. Past efforts to improve business processes by which individuals with disabilities are served did not achieve the desired outcomes. A major focus of GVRA/VR will be to increase its capacity to meet the needs of individuals with significant disabilities in their goal of achieving competitive integrated employment by expanding collaborative partnership with other state agencies that serve these populations. An example is the collaboration with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) to increase the number of individuals obtaining integrated competitive employment by streamlining the collaboration of client facing staff of both agencies to align efforts and eliminate duplicate or redundant costs. Coupled with this endeavor is the utilization of best practice services in Customized Employment and the evidence based practice of Individual Placement and Support, both are models of supported employment.

III. OPERATIONAL PLANNING ELEMENTS

(a) State Strategy Implementation

(1) State Board Functions

The active collaboration between SWDB, OWD, and the State’s one-stop delivery system is the key component of workforce development in Georgia. This collaboration begins with the Governor, who is responsible for the appointment of the SWDB members. SWDB’s duties include the development of a statewide strategic plan, which establishes the four-year strategy for the Statewide Workforce Development System. SWDB is also responsible for assisting the Governor with additional functions designated by WIOA which are listed below:

- Strategic Functions

- Developing and implementing the state plan and performance measures
- Developing career pathways strategies
- Developing/expanding strategies for partnerships in in-demand sectors/occupations
- Developing and aligning policies
- System Capacity Building
 - Developing strategies to support staff training and awareness
 - Disseminating best practices
 - Developing and continuously improving the one-stop delivery system
 - Supporting effective local boards
- System Alignment and Effective Operations
 - Developing strategies for aligning technology and data systems
 - Developing LWDA allocation formulas
 - Developing a statewide LMI system
 - Developing policies and guidance on one-stop partner roles and resource contributions

SWDB is required to comply with federal and state conflict of interest policies and sunshine provisions. The federal conflict of interest policy states that a member of SWDB may not vote on a matter regarding the provision of services by such member or a measures that would provide financial benefit to such a member or his/her immediate family. A state board member may not engage in any other activities determined by the Governor to constitute a conflict of interest as specified in the SWDB bylaws, and must sign the SWDB bylaws to satisfy the State's conflict of interest policy. SWDB must also comply with federal and state sunshine provisions. These federal and state regulations require SWDB to make available to the public, at regular intervals, all information regarding their activities.

SWDB meets at least four times a year and at such other times as the chairperson determines or as provided by the rules of the board. A member of the board can designate another person to attend meetings of the board on such person's behalf. Such designee may participate in the activities and discussions of the board, but cannot have a vote in matters before SWDB.

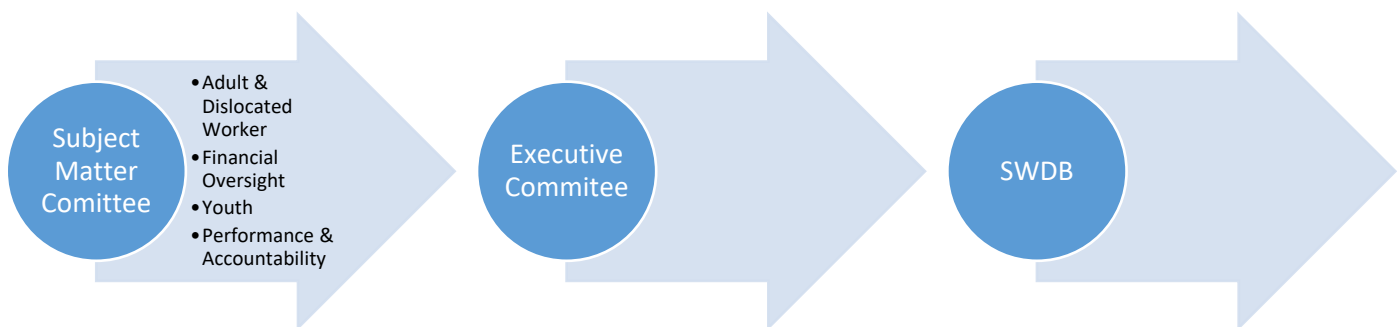
Before actions are voted on by the SWBD, the SWDB committees vet them. There are currently four subject matter committees that also meet quarterly and SWDB members are assigned by the SWDB chairperson to serve. The following are the current subject matter committees: Adult & Dislocated Worker Committee, Financial Oversight Committee, Youth Committee, and Performance & Accountability Committee. Each of these committees also have two or more LWDA directors who serve as advisors and an OWD staff person who coordinates the meetings and performs tasks related to research.

- Adult & Dislocated Worker Committee: The Adult & Dislocated Worker Committee is charged with the development of policy and programs that benefit the State's Adult and Dislocated Worker population.
- Youth Committee: The Youth Committee is charged with the development of policy and programs that benefit the State's Youth population.

- Financial Oversight Committee: The Financial Oversight Committee is charged with the development of the budget and financial policy regarding WIOA funds.
- Performance & Accountability Committee: The Performance & Accountability Committee is charged with utilizing performance data to help drive the decisions before the SWDB, the development of policy regarding the one-stop system governance, as well as review of ETPL and sanctions appeals.

Once an action is vetted by the appropriate subject matter committee, it is placed on the agenda of the SWDB Executive Committee. This committee’s membership is made up of the chairperson, vice-chairperson, and the committee heads. The chairperson may also appoint any other SWDB member to the Executive Committee, if deemed necessary. The Executive Committee takes up the actions of the subject matter committees and votes to add the actions to the SWDB full board meeting. When necessary, the Executive Committee can act on behalf of SWDB. However, in most circumstances, a motion will go before a subject matter committee, the Executive Committee, and the full board before it is adopted.

SWDB Decision Making Flow Chart:



The chairperson and vice-chairperson of SWDB are appointed by the Governor based upon recommendations from individuals in the business community. The members of the board serve three (3) year terms, as established by the Governor. SWDB members continue to serve at the discretion of the Governor, except for the member of the House of Representative and the member of the Senate, who continue to serve at the discretions of the Speaker of the House and the Lieutenant Governor, respectively. SWDB adopts bylaws to guide its proceedings. Each member of the SWDB, who is not otherwise a state officer or employee, is authorized to receive reimbursement for reasonable, necessary travel expenses incurred in the performance of his or her duties as a member of the board, provided that such funds are available and such reimbursements are allowable under federal law. Should funds not be available or allowable for this purpose, such members will serve without reimbursement.

SWDB works to coordinate policies and resources with other state agencies and LWDBs. The inclusion of key stakeholders in the membership of SWDB allows for the governing body to align such policies and resources across the state. The following state agencies have permanent memberships on the SWDB: GDOL, TCSG, GVRA, and GDVS. The representatives from these organizations give valuable insight into state programs, initiatives, and the writing of the state plan. Two members of the Georgia

Legislature also sit on the SWDB. They give valuable insight into the direction of the legislature and keep the board up to date in key areas of interest.

(2) Implementation of State Strategies

(A) Core Program Activities to Implement the State's Strategy

Georgia's strategy for workforce development aims to support the State's core mission to meet the needs of Georgia's growing economy and align programs and resources to create an effective and efficient method of workforce development. The State's strategy is focused on supporting a unified workforce system that maximizes the services and supports of all core program partners to address the needs of jobseekers, employers, and the State as a whole.

Utilize Sector Partnerships to Guide Strategies and Coordination

Because of the State's investment in Sector Partnerships, Georgia is set on a course to utilize these lessons to guide the continued implementation of WIOA and improve coordination of the workforce system. As required by WIOA, sector partnerships set the foundation for what a true collaboration should be amongst workforce system stakeholders. Now that Georgia has a solid foundation and has begun the second round of WorkSource Georgia Sector Partnership grants, the regions can continue to enhance integration and capacity to tackle additional issues within the industries selected and/or begin to address other areas of industry need. This work has informed Georgia's strategies for developing career pathways as these strategic partnerships are comprised of employers, education and training providers at all levels, workforce development representatives, and community-based organizations in key industries and occupational sectors. The career pathways developed by this group of diverse stakeholders allow for multiple ways to enter and exit education pathways, with marketable credentials at each step, linked noncredit and credit training and short-term certificates with longer term credentials. The active participation of employers in pathway development, worksite training, placements, internships, apprenticeships to address regional workforce needs will continue to be crucial to achieving success for business and jobseekers alike. Additionally, Georgia will continue to focus on innovative program content and delivery, such as new K-12 occupation-focused learning opportunities, contextualized and accelerated employability skills, new technical certificates and diplomas, flexible class schedules, experiential learning, cohort-based instruction, and combinations of online and face-to-face instruction. Finally, sector partnerships will continue to inform the process of integrated support services, such as career and academic coaching, financial assistance, access to public benefits, or other safety net supports provided by a range of partners, including Community Based Organizations.

At this phase of the WorkSource Sector Partnerships efforts, the State has learned many valuable lessons for continued implementation. As the foundation of these collaborative groups were created through the first round of sector partnership work, Georgia's workforce system can continue to build on this work, not only to further the efforts begun in those industries already identified, but to use the network and collaboration to spill over into other areas of need. As the regions continue in the second round of Sector Partnership grants, they will continue to address and improve the system's capacity. Specifically, the regions will continue to address the gaps identified in the needs assessments, facilitate

a regular cycle of accountability, and evaluate performance measures to ensure goals are successfully met.

The State aims to continue the WorkSource Sector Partnership work currently in progress across the 12 regions and build on that success. The WorkSource Sector Partnerships are a strategic tool for improving regional collaboration and integration across LWDA boundaries. In both rounds of grant funding, LWDAs were required to apply for funding jointly as a region, if the region contained more than one LWDA. A single vision for the region and plan for implementation had to be developed in order to be eligible for funding. The work of these partnerships has allowed the regions to engage businesses and inform the educational and workforce development efforts. And while each partnership is uniquely tailored to the local needs identified by the region, the continued implementation of WorkSource Sector Partnerships will help to inform the efforts of the State's workforce system as a whole. To this end, OWD has offered, and will continue to offer, a variety of trainings related to sector partnership work. The WorkSource Georgia Academy offers training and technical assistance to the LWDAs, and has geared many of the trainings to sector partnerships. For example, the WorkSource Georgia Academy's annual conference has offered sessions the past two years that range from "Sector Partnerships 101" for those new to the work, as well as more in-depth sessions discussing best practices, lessons learned, and challenges to anticipate in the process. Those sessions included topics such as, "Strategic Doing: Innovative Approach to Tackling Sector Partnerships," "Building Career Pathways," "Tracking and Measuring Success of Sector Partnerships," and "Reflections on Round One Sector Partnership Efforts." These sessions were presented both by individuals within Georgia's workforce system and from experts in other states.

GDOL's BSU emphasizes employer-driven service delivery, and access to a market driven staff that is dedicated to fulfilling the needs of Georgia's employers. BSU partners with economic developers, employers, and businesses to identify talent pools for target industries, customize solutions for workforce issues, and assist with critical industry expansion needs. The State also makes labor market information available to employers through self-access and web subscription services to promote the workforce system as a tool for employers to meet their needs. Georgia has taken steps to educate employers on the resources available through presentations, marketing materials, and outreach services.

Increase Statewide Prosperity

The State aims to increase the opportunities the workforce system provides, both to individuals and to businesses, and across rural and metro areas. As noted in the State's goals, Georgia's coordination between workforce development, economic development, and programs such as GeorgiaBEST, Rapid Response, and Registered Apprenticeships have further enhanced Georgia as a destination for business and led Georgia to the forefront in attracting employers to the State.

In conjunction with the efforts mentioned above, the State has utilized Rapid Response as a proactive tool that offers workforce services to employers throughout the business lifecycle, in addition to during layoffs and other large events. Rapid Response leverages the relationships and knowledge of LWDAs to help provide services to employers and workers. This integrated approach allows the State to not only assist with mass layoffs and employment needs, but to assist LWDAs and local employers as they seek

to identify key next steps. Throughout this process, key stakeholders communicate regularly with UI and TAA to help ensure the full range of services are available to both employers and employees.

Through the WorkSource Georgia Academy, OWD has offered Rapid Response-specific training across the State through regional seminars, as well as at the annual Academy conferences, a Business Services-specific conference, and a Business Services webinar. The Business Services Conference sought to bring WIOA business services from theory to practice and offer guidance and best practices for implementing these programs. With the increasing popularity of business service programs, the conference included sessions on Registered Apprenticeships, requirements for Business Services contracts, as well as Business Services data and performance requirements. In addition to these conferences, OWD has revised various Business Services policies to ensure accurate implementation of these services and has published Resource Guides on OJT, IWT, and CT to provide detailed instructions on implementing these programs. The Resource Guides include detailed description of the programs, frequently asked questions regarding implementation, and provide best practice examples. These Resources Guides are hosted on OWD's website (<https://tcsge.edu/worksource/resources-for-practitioners/resource-guides/>).

Align Workforce and Education Systems

The long-term goal in Georgia is to create seamless pathways for students from primary and secondary education, through college and/or training, into successful careers regardless of zip code. This work will include: increasing the level of communication and collaboration between educational learning programs in the state, improving the early exposure students have to industry and career options, analyzing state policies to ensure the properly foster this work, as well as other efforts.

To ensure the agencies engaged in this work can work together to address this goal, and in compliance with WIOA requirements, the TCSG OAE and local Adult Education programs have representation on the SWDB and Local Workforce Development Boards, respectively. This enables local Adult Education leaders and practitioners to remain connected to the workforce initiatives and partnership policies. Through the sector partnership work, education representatives from across the education spectrum (K-12 up through post-secondary) are regularly involved in the work of WIOA and connected to the workforce regions. Furthermore, OWD is currently partnering with the Georgia Department of Education on evaluating and improving their credentials of value in their CTAE programs. OWD will continue this partnership as the work progresses over the coming years and also work to pursue additional partnership opportunities between WIOA and Perkins in the state. The workforce system will also continue to engage USG, TCSG, and other education providers in Georgia to ensure a wide variety of institutions and programs are represented on the State's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).

Further Develop Regional Integration

Georgia's goal for the workforce system is to create a comprehensive system where, regardless of how a customer accesses the system, they will be provided with seamless, integrated, and consistent services. To that end, OWD continues to work with the LWDA's to streamline their intake and eligibility procedures and work toward a uniform process across the regions. OWD is also supporting local-led

efforts toward integration in regions with multiple LWDBs. In order to accomplish this goal, OWD is conducting interviews with local staff, reviewing intake, eligibility, and suitability documents, and attending regional meetings to ensure the smooth roll-out of standardization.

OWD is also working to accomplish coordinated services on the Business Services side with common forms and processes. The OWD Business Services team has conducted trainings for local staff on these common forms and best practices for serving employers in their region as mentioned above, in addition to the policy updates and additional guidance to the LWDBAs. Another example of this is the roll-out of a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system for Rapid Response projects to be used by OWD, GDOL Rapid Response staff, and LWDBA staff to track the progress of Rapid Response projects in the regions. The implementation of this technology allows the multiple organizations participating in this work to communicate and collaborate efforts in an efficient, effective way.

Address a Tightened Labor Market

Georgia recognizes that in order to reach the broadest possible range of individuals, efforts must focus on continually improving collaboration and communication between and amongst all partner agencies serving jobseekers. OWD continues to work to promote resources among strategic populations who may not be active in the labor market. Georgia has crafted programs focused on enhancing services to veterans and transitioning service members, opportunity youth, individuals with disabilities, and returning citizens in order to connect those individuals with employers across the state. As clearly stated in WIOA, serving individuals with barriers to employment is a priority for all core programs. OWD's Strategic Populations Team is specifically designed to prioritize these individuals by increasing their access to services from the state's public workforce system. In order to successfully complete this task, the Strategic Populations Team focuses on assisting the State's 19 LWDBAs with ongoing services and supports to remove programmatic and physical barriers at the state and local level. These barriers limit the likelihood for these individuals to access services and to achieve long-term success in the workforce system and employment.

Under WIOA, individuals with barriers include a wide range of categories from youth in the foster care system to immigrant adults. The ultimate goal for OWD's Strategic Populations Team is to remove all barriers that negatively impact the individuals within these categories. The starting point of this work was through the creation of a new structure of support and services offered by the team to the LWDBAs. The team is divided into three key categories: youth, individuals with disabilities, and veterans. Each of these categories includes individuals who have additional barriers to employment, such as involvement with the justice system, low-income, enrolled in the foster care system, English language learners, and more. Each category has a subject matter expert (or "Lead") that is available to the LWDBAs to provide ongoing technical assistance and training to serve as a liaison to promote communication and best practices in and out of the state. These Leads will also review current state and local policy to remove programmatic and other relevant barriers. Additionally, OWD's Strategic Populations Team will be partnering with the Data & Information and Programs teams to pursue better methods for disaggregating data related to minority populations in order to develop targeted strategies for serving priority groups that may require a more tailored approach to training and placement. By analyzing the provision of WIOA resources and services in Georgia through the lens of

race, equity, and inclusion, OWD will be able to better identify and understand the needs of specific priority populations that may currently be missed due to inclusion in larger data categories that do not illuminate those specific needs.

The following tables highlights WIOA participant characteristics and outcomes from PY18 for adults and dislocated workers as well as targeted populations within the youth program.

Adult and DW	Served	Employment Q2 Adult	Employment Q4 Adult	Credential Adult	Skill Gains Adult	Employment Q2 DW	Employment Q4 DW	Credential DW	Skill Gains DW
Male	11,647	81.5%	80.3%	69.6%	32.4%	87.7%	86.9%	77.4%	18.8%
Female	18,230	85.6%	85.0%	72.3%	31.1%	85.8%	83.7%	68.8%	17.0%
African American	19,361	83.4%	82.0%	66.3%	27.0%	85.4%	83.3%	68.1%	12.3%
White	8,857	85.5%	85.7%	79.4%	38.7%	88.5%	88.0%	82.0%	25.9%
Hispanic	1,537	78.1%	85.1%	82.2%	35.1%	87.1%	87.0%	76.1%	21.1%
American Indian / Alaskan Native	334	77.5%	85.2%	58.8%	28.6%	37.5%	100.0%	100.0%	15.4%
Pacific Islander	80	88.9%	100.0%	100.0%	25.0%	71.4%	83.3%	83.3%	0.0%
More Than One Race	607	77.5%	81.0%	70.7%	27.5%	73.7%	83.3%	83.3%	10.3%
Veteran	648	82.5%	76.8%	61.3%	26.1%	81.3%	76.3%	76.7%	23.1%
Disabled	1,394	67.5%	61.3%	61.3%	17.1%	93.3%	70.6%	53.3%	12.8%
Low Income	17,623	83.4%	82.3%	71.5%	30.5%	84.5%	83.1%	71.4%	16.4%
Offender	1,732	76.5%	73.0%	74.0%	41.6%	90.6%	92.1%	83.3%	17.6%

Youth	Served	Employment Q2 Youth	Employment Q4 Youth	Credential Youth	Skill Gains Youth
16-18	2,862	80.8%	73.5%	60.2%	6.7%
19-24	2,776	78.8%	78.9%	62.4%	10.7%
Male	2,506	79.8%	77.0%	60.4%	8.4%
Female	3,298	80.5%	76.3%	61.8%	8.7%
Limited English	174	100.0%	100.0%	25.0%	1.9%
Single Parent	437	84.9%	77.4%	53.8%	9.0%
Parenting Youth	905	84.0%	78.0%	63.0%	10.8%
Offender	551	82.4%	76.7%	68.6%	6.9%
Homeless or Runaway	191	80.0%	71.4%	37.5%	2.9%
Disabled	368	57.1%	72.7%	63.0%	6.0%

An example that displays OWD's Strategic Populations Team's commitment toward providing ongoing assistance and support to the LWDAs is the development of a series of youth technical assistance roundtables. This service is meant to serve as a more robust method to deliver technical assistance to youth managers and providers across the state. The goal of these roundtables, in addition to provide training, is to increase dialogue across areas so that youth providers and youth staff are able to share similar concerns, ideas, and questions, resulting in a stronger and more effective WIOA youth program.

The focus on these strategic populations is also carried out by the work of the OWD Business Services Team by advocating for businesses to work with these populations to address the workforce shortage the company may be facing. The WorkSource Georgia Academy's Business Services Conference offered sessions that discussed ways to serve these populations with sessions such as Overcoming Employment Barriers, Veterans Priority of Service, Serving Individuals with Disabilities, and Connecting Re-entering Individuals with Employers.

In addition to working with these strategic populations, the State has a goal to increase access points to individuals and businesses located in remote areas. This greatly enhances the workforce system's ability to serve rural Georgia and increase statewide prosperity. As such, LWDAs are utilizing a number of resources to provide services, including mobile units, public libraries, technical college satellite campuses, and other service agencies to bolster the network of locations in the state of Georgia.

As detailed in Section II(c), TCSG OAE will utilize the following strategies and activities in meeting the State's workforce development system goals. The activities are described in detail below the chart.

Strategies	Aligned Goals	Activities
Require all local programs to offer at least one IET opportunity for students.	Sector Partnerships (1) Increase Prosperity (3) Strategic Populations (5)	IET requirement in Request for Application; IET technical assistance and webinars
Support local programs in developing strong and strategic relationships with LWDBs and one-stops.	Sector Partnerships (1) Regional Integration (2)	One-stop MOUs; participate in LWDB meetings
Promote enhanced learning opportunities for students such as dual enrollment and distance education.	Education Alignment (4) Strategic Populations (5)	Distance education, postsecondary dual enrollment
Expand high school equivalency (HSE) options for Georgians.	Education Alignment (4) Strategic Populations (5)	Pilot alternative HSE pathway programs
Elevate the quality of career services provided to students.	Sector Partnerships (1) Regional Integration (2) Strategic Populations (5)	Require local programs to have career services staff member; career services technical assistance, support, and reporting

To accomplish the goal of requiring all local programs to offer at least one Integrated Education & Training (IET) opportunity for adult education students, OAE will ensure Georgia’s adult education students have clear and direct paths to employment in in-demand industries. OAE requires all its providers to offer at least one IET opportunity for its students. As part of the Fiscal Year 2021 grant competition, all applicants are required to discuss their plans to offer IET, including which training providers they will partner with and how they know their IET will prepare students for a regionally in-demand occupation as identified by their respective local workforce development board (LWDB).

Once awarded, OAE will continue to support IET implementation by offering training and technical assistance – including the webinar series, IET Phone Home, and ongoing assistance from OAE’s Instructional Services Team – to its providers. In addition, as part of the annual renewal process, providers will be required to reflect, using qualitative and quantitative data, on the successes and challenges of their IET, as well as the extent to which their IET placed students in regionally in-demand careers, and to discuss plans to continually improve their IET offerings.

To accomplish the goal of supporting local programs in developing strong and strategic relationships with LWDBs and one-stops, OAE will conduct the following activities: Per 121(b), OAE’s adult education providers enter into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the one-stop centers in the local workforce development area(s) (LWDA) where they serve students. In addition to fulfilling the terms outlined in each specific MOU, representatives from local adult education providers regularly attend LWDB meetings and establish strategic partnerships with LWDBs and other core WIOA partners to support adult education students. One-stop providers refer individuals in need to adult education

services to the adult education provider. While the nature of each partnership varies by region, some examples of how LWDBs, one-stops, and adult education providers collaborate are listed below.

- LWDBs provide funding, through individual training accounts and other means, for adult education students, specifically students participating in IET.
- Adult education providers offer classes at their local one-stop.
- Adult education providers develop their IET to prepare students for in-demand occupations as identified by their LWDB.

OAE supports its local programs in navigating the MOU process as well as continually strengthening their partnerships with their LWDBs and one-stops. Specifically, since OAE and Worksource Georgia are both housed within the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG), the two departments are able to collaborate to strengthen systems – such as aligning intake procedures, strategically utilizing funding, and developing strategic and compliant MOUs– that enable adult education programs, LWDBs, and one-stops to successfully serve Georgians.

In order to promote enhanced learning opportunities for students such as dual enrollment and distance education, OAE will conduct the following activities:

- **Dual-Enrollment:** OAE is housed at TCSG which provides it an excellent opportunity to ensure Georgia’s adult education students have access to postsecondary education opportunities. Currently, OAE students can dually-enroll in both the adult education program and classes or training programs offered through any of Georgia’s 22 technical colleges.
- **Distance Education:** Several of Georgia’s adult education programs offer distance education programs for students. However, in an effort to increase enrollment and reach more Georgians in need of adult education services, OAE is focused on strengthening and expanding distance education opportunities for students. Specifically, in the upcoming competitive grant round, applicants will discuss their plans for distance education. Once funded, OAE will provide professional development and support programs in piloting different approaches to distance education.

OAE also plans to expand high school equivalency (HSE) options for Georgians. In an effort to ensure more Georgians can obtain their HSE and obtain jobs in in-demand industries, Georgia is exploring expanding HSE options for Georgians. Currently, it is piloting alternatives to the GED® such as the HiSET® and Career Plus HSE, which will allow individuals to combine previously-earned high school credits, completed portions of the GED® exam, and technical college credentials to receive a HSE diploma.

Finally, in order to elevate the quality of career services provided to students, under OAE’s current grant competition, all adult education providers are required to have an individual or partnership that fulfills the responsibilities of a Career Services Specialist – ensuring adult education students can successfully transition from the adult education program to postsecondary education, training, or a career. These responsibilities include, but are not limited to: (a) developing strong and trusting relationships with adult education students, (b) developing partnerships with local education, training, and social service organizations that can support students in transitioning to postsecondary education,

training, or careers; and (c) guiding and coaching students on potential postsecondary, training, and career options.

To elevate the quality of career services provided to students, OAE and local programs measure progress towards the state's workforce development system's vision and goals by tracking career services metrics, such as WIOA partner collaboration, one-stop engagement, IET participation, dual enrollment in postsecondary education, and more. In addition, OAE staff provide tailored professional development for Career Services Specialists.

Under the USDOL-ETA Workforce Information Grant, GDOL's Workforce Statistics and Economic Research (WS&ER) division produces and disseminates industry and occupational employment projections and conducted and published relevant economic analyses and economic studies. Economic analyses are conducted in the form of customer defined labor-shed analyses, workforce area and workforce commuting analyses, detailed commuting reports and summary commuting Infographic reports, standardized industry analysis reports, wage studies, trend analysis reports and other customer requested data research projects. These support the economic development needs of a wide array of workforce system stakeholders, including State Workforce Agencies, State and Local WDBs, economic agencies, workforce development organizations, chambers of commerce, education and training institutions, community colleges, and other state-identified strategic partners and stakeholders.

GDOL works closely with the Georgia Technical College System of Georgia, Georgia Department of Economic Development, the state and local Chambers of Commerce and Development Authorities and other local government agencies regarding new business prospects. Close partnerships with GDOL Business Services Unit Regional Coordinators, who serve as local community brokers to request and deliver specialized data requests, benefit local Workforce Boards and partner agencies, local businesses, and prospective businesses by making them aware of the availability of quality workforce information.

(B) Alignment with Activities outside the Plan

In supporting the activities identified in (A), Georgia will also leverage the services and coordination efforts of programs outside the Unified Plan to accomplish the State's strategies and goals for WIOA. These include, but are not limited to, SNAP, TANF, and other state programs providing employment-related services.

Alignment of Workforce Services to Human Services

The Georgia Department of Human Services administers TANF and SNAP at the State level, while services are delivered at the local level through a network of DFCS offices located in each of Georgia's 159 counties. TANF and SNAP identify employment barriers and promote the development and maintenance of community connections and resources that address basic skill deficiencies. The State will continue to encourage the partnerships and collaboration through policy cross-training for staff, potential co-location of TANF and WIOA staff, and work toward a streamlined referral process for customers eligible for WIOA services.

Additionally, GVRA cooperates with the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities to provide the services needed to help mutual clients reach their competitive integrated employment goals.

Alignment of Programs Serving Migrant Workers

Agricultural outreach is an opportunity for the State to coordinate with agencies and programs outside of the core partners included in the Unified Plan. As part of the State's agricultural outreach efforts, GDOL staff develop partnerships and provide available resources to local organizations serving MSFWs. Resources include, but are not limited to: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Needy Assistance Program (SNAP), the Georgia Farmworker Health Program, the Georgia Association for Primary Health Care, Inc., the Georgia Free Clinic Network, Telamon Corporation, Georgia Migrant Education, community food banks, the Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and entities that provide Adult Literacy, English as a Second Language (ESL), and GED® services to MSFWs.

Specific details on the State's efforts to reduce barriers to employment for the Agricultural Industry are part of service delivery through GDOL career centers as detailed in Section VII(e)(4).

Alignment of Veterans Programs

With a large military presence, the State of Georgia has many resources available for veterans, both through the One-Stop partner programs and community and faith-based organizations around the State. Georgia provides Veterans Priority of Service for all USDOL-funded workforce programs, as outlined in 38 U.S.C. 42 and the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (see Section III(b)(7)). Covered individuals (veterans and eligible spouses) are identified at the initial point of contact of employment, training, job placement, and related services as stated in the Jobs for Veterans Act (P.L. 107-288).

Georgia has a strong reemployment service delivery strategy that links a network of organizations and programs serving veterans, which includes GDOL, TCSG, SDVS, the Georgia National Guard and Reserve, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, and the Georgia Veterans Education Career Transition Resource Center. Additionally, OWD has adjusted its staff with regard to veterans services and continues to work with LWDAs as they serve veterans across the state. The new role of Veterans Services Lead, as part of the Strategic Populations Team, is designed to provide veterans-related technical assistance to LWDAs, as well as train LWDAs and other system stakeholders on WIOA-compliant veterans services and best practices. This role also serves as OWD's liaison to external education, workforce, and other veteran-related partners to better align programs and services around the state with WIOA-funded activities.

Alignment with the Criminal Justice System

Serving individuals with a criminal background is another strategy Georgia is employing to address a tightened labor market. Some LWDAs have implemented programs in the local jails and prisons to provide those individuals with training opportunities to increase the likelihood of obtaining employment or continuing their education upon release. These LWDAs have coordinated with the Georgia Department of Corrections, the Georgia Department of Community Supervision, and various

community partners, such as local business and faith-based organizations. With regard to youth, OWD actively participates in the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice's Reentry Task Force, which aims to increase collaborative grant opportunities and develop an integrated system of care for youth returning home from custody in a DJJ facility. Adult education providers who receive WIOA Section 225 funding for corrections education also partner with the Georgia Department of Corrections to offer adult education services such as classes, tutoring, and training opportunities.

Alignment with Registered Apprenticeship

Registered Apprenticeships are a top priority for OWD. As a proven training model to best meet the needs of businesses and provide long-term sustainable career opportunities for individuals, apprenticeships are an ideal workforce development tool to address the diverse challenges faced by the public workforce system. Consequently, OWD is investing significantly in the expansion and strengthening of Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) throughout the state. All of Georgia's 22 Technical Colleges are approved Registered Apprenticeship sponsors with USDOL, and WorkSource Georgia recently signed on as a sponsor as well. Additionally, OWD has assembled a four-person Apprenticeship Team in the State office to assist employers and partners across the state with establishing new RAPs. This team is designed to engage business partners, serve as the intermediary for the businesses to the USDOL Office of Apprenticeship and other essential workforce and education partners, and help eliminate the complexity and intimidation that is often associated with the RA process. OWD currently has two federal apprenticeships grants, the American Apprenticeship Initiative (AAI) Grant and the Apprenticeship State Expansion (ASE) Grant, OWD is currently working to fully utilize AAI and ASE to enhance the presence of RAPs throughout the state.

Furthermore, in coordination with OWD's Business Services Team, the State is investing in training, guidance, and technical assistance to the business services staff in each region to equip them to better assist with the creation of new RAPs and to better understand how to fully utilize WIOA funds to support the creation and sustainability of RAPs. The full integration of the public workforce system and Registered Apprenticeships is essential to the long-term success of the State vision and goals.

Alignment with Early Education

The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) administers the state's Two-Generation/Multi-Generation programs, which supports the development of child and adult serving resources. This project includes a core team of agencies including DECAL, TCSG, USG, and GDOL. Additional partners include DFCS, DHS, and local workforce areas and non-profits.

Through the Two-Gen/Multi-Gen work, Georgia has been working to better understand and find opportunities for alignment of programs that support workforce development in the state. The work has generated conversations about data and resource alignment to enhance the ability to refer common participants or potential participants into available opportunities. Additionally, the grant has helped develop the capacity for state partners to identify strategies for providing an enhanced level of service, including wrap-around or supportive services, using braided funding from programs outside of WIOA. An example of this alignment to support multi-generational strategies include locating information about Quality Rated and affordable child care at the one-stop or technical college campus

in order to remove a potential barrier to an individual completing or participating in workforce training.

(C) Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Individuals

Overview of Services to Individuals

Georgia has long supported the provision of coordinated and comprehensive workforce services to a universal population through Georgia’s One-Stop delivery system. The One-Stop delivery system is responsible for administering the State’s core program activities and providing access. The One-Stop Operator is the administrative entity responsible for accomplishing this in a seamless and fully-integrated manner, in order to provide better access to the various core programs services, and to improve long-term employment outcomes for individuals seeking assistance. One-Stop staff serve customers regardless of that individual’s barriers to employment, level of need, or degree of career development. Services are accessible to the “universal customer” at all of the One-Stop centers throughout the state. Each LWDA has at least one Comprehensive One-Stop Center that includes all of the core partner programs in line with the statutory requirements of WIOA, although many LWDAs have included multiple Comprehensive One-Stops throughout their area. Additionally, all LWDAs have established affiliate sites throughout their geographic region to enhance the availability and accessibility of services. The requirements for accessible services in these locations is included in the Memorandum of Understanding executed by the heads of the state agencies that provide the required core program services. Services are generally available to individuals based on need and the availability of funding. Additionally, a variety of labor market information and career development tools are available to the universal population at all centers.

In line with the statutory requirements, the career and training services provided through the One-Stop centers are comprised of WIOA Title I and Title III Wagner-Peyser funded services that must be available for the universal population in all designated One-Stop centers. OWD continues to coordinate with partners to increase flexibility of One-Stop services to ensure customers receive direct access to the services which best fit the individual’s identified need(s). The State has created policy to establish two levels of services for Adult and Dislocated Workers: career services and training services. These services, coordinated by LWDAs through the One-Stop system are listed below:

Career Services

Career services for Adult and Dislocated Workers include three types, as identified in 20 CFR 678.430: Basic Career Services, Individualized Career Services, and Follow-up Services.

- A. *Basic Career Services* must be made available and, at a minimum, must include the following services, as consistent with allowable program activities and federal cost principles:
- Determination of whether the individual is eligible to receive assistance from the Adult, Dislocated Worker, or Youth programs;
 - Outreach, intake, and orientation to information and other services available through the one-stop system;

- Initial assessment of skills levels, including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency using OAE and NRS approved assessment for Adult Education, as well as aptitudes, abilities (including skills gaps), and support service needs;
- Labor exchange services, including:
- Job search and placement assistance, and, when needed by an individual, career counseling, including the provision of information regarding in-demand industry sectors and occupations;
- Appropriate recruitment and other business services on behalf of employers, including information and referrals to specialized business services not traditionally offered through the One-Stop system;
- Provision of referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services, including programs and services within the One-Stop system and, when appropriate, other workforce development programs;
- Provision of workforce and labor market employment statistics information, including information relating to local, regional, and national labor market areas, including:
- Job vacancy listings in labor market areas;
- Information on job skills necessary to obtain the vacant jobs listed; and,
- Information relating to local occupations in demand and the earnings, skills requirements, and opportunities for advancement in those jobs;
- Provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of training services by program and provider type;
- Provision of information on how the LWDA is performing on federal performance measures;
- Provision of information on the availability of support services or assistance, and appropriate referrals to those services and assistance, including:
 - Child care;
 - Child support;
 - Medical or child health assistance available through the State’s Medicaid program and the Children’s Health Insurance Program;
 - Benefits under SNAP;
 - Assistance through the Earned Income Tax Credit;
 - Housing counseling and assistance services sponsored through U.S. HUD; and,
 - Assistance under a state program for TANF, and other support services and transportation provided through that program;
- Provision of information and assistance regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation, by which the LWDA must provide assistance to individuals seeking such assistance;
- Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs not provided under WIOA, including HOPE and Pell Grants.

B. *Individualized Career Services* must be made available if determined to be appropriate in order for an individual to obtain or retain employment. In accordance with TEGl 19-16, individuals must be

declared eligible to receive these services. These include the following services, as consistent with WIOA requirements and federal cost principles:

- Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of Adults and Dislocated Workers, which may include:
 - Diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools; and,
 - In-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals;
 - Development of an individual employment plan to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve his or her employment goals, including the list of, and information regarding the ETPL;
 - Group counseling;
 - Individual counseling and mentoring;
 - Career planning;
 - Short-term pre-vocational services, including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct services to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training;
 - Internships and work experience that are linked to careers;
 - Workforce preparation activities;
 - Financial literacy services;
 - Out-of-area job search and relocation assistance; and,
 - English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs
- C. *Follow-up Services* must be made available, as appropriate, and include counseling regarding the workplace for Adult and Dislocated Worker participants who are placed in unsubsidized employment. These services must be provided for a minimum of 12 months from the first day of employment.

Training Services

Training Services are provided to equip individuals to enter the workforce and retain employment. Examples of training services include:

- Occupational skills training, including training for nontraditional employment;
- On-the-Job training (OJT);
- Incumbent Worker training (IWT);
- Workplace training and cooperative education programs;
- Private sector training programs;
- Skills upgrading and retraining;
- Entrepreneurial training;
- Apprenticeship;
- Transitional Jobs;
- Job readiness training provided in combination with other training described above;

- Adult education and literacy activities, including activities of English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs, in combination with training; and
- Customized training (CT).

As detailed in Section VI(b)(1) of this plan, the SWDB has approved additional policies related to these services, including, but not limited to, OJT, IWT, and Transitional Jobs. Additionally, OWD has crafted further guidance in the form of Resource Guides to elaborate on the use and implementation of various training services. Specifically, the Resource Guides on OJT, IWT, and CT provide detailed descriptions of the service, frequently asked questions regarding implementation, and direct excerpts of relevant federal and state policies to assist LWDBs in the use of these services. To complement and enhance the delivery of career and training services through the One-Stop centers, the State is further integrating programs for targeted populations into the One-Stop system to ensure access to services by the most vulnerable. The following pages highlight some key Georgia programs for target populations.

Low-Income Individuals

Through the use of the services listed above, the State seeks to provide assistance and opportunities to low-income individuals seeking WIOA services. Consistent with WIOA, priority for adult services must be given to recipients of public assistance or other low income individuals. The State has updated policy and guidance to ensure these requirements are implemented appropriately in the LWDBs, and monitors adherence through the annual monitoring process. Additionally, in order to ensure these individuals are aware of and able to receive services, the State and LWDBs continue to utilize partnerships to identify and attract participants meeting the low-income requirement. For example, LWDBs within the Metro Atlanta area have begun to incorporate organizations that serve individuals experiencing homelessness on the LWDB. The inclusion of these representatives allows the LWDB to understand the challenges faced by the population they are seeking to serve and to ensure their service delivery is designed to meet the needs of the population.

Individuals with Disabilities

Georgia is focused on ensuring universal access across its workforce system. The State and its local partners maintain compliance with the provisions of WIOA Section 188, which require programmatic and physical accessibility. Through monitoring performance at both the state and local levels, Georgia ensures that all One-Stops are in compliance with Section 188 of WIOA, the ADA, and other applicable regulations. Georgia's workforce system is focused on more than compliance with these laws and regulations though, and seeks to truly increase access and availability of services to individuals with disabilities to address their barriers to employment. To ensure programmatic accessibility practices are effectively implemented, the OWD Strategic Populations Team provides robust policy development and program design technical assistance and guidance to designated One-Stop points of contact within the nineteen LWDBs. Specifically, the Strategic Populations Disability Services Lead works with the LWDBs to evaluate their practices, highlight best practices from around the state and country, and facilitate effective implementation of those practices.

TCSG, OWD

WorkSource Georgia Employment Network

Since 2016, OWD has been an Administrative Employment Network for the Ticket to Work program, which is established by the Social Security Administration (SSA). The Ticket to Work program is an employment outcome-based program that provides incentive funds to approved Employment Networks (EN) when they serve as SSA cash beneficiaries to help them obtain, retain, and/or maintain employment. As part of OWD's commitment to provide high-quality employment services to individuals with barriers to employment, OWD is expanding the availability of EN contracts to all interested LWDA's through the WorkSource Georgia Employment Network. This opportunity will create an additional income source for the participating LWDA's. Moreover, the WorkSource Georgia EN will increase the number of individuals with disabilities throughout the state who are receiving Title I services in a sustainable manner. This structure will transform our public workforce system by providing the capacity to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable job seekers within our state.

GDOL

Having completed an extensive Social Security Administration's (SSA) review and approval process in late PY18, GDOL was formally approved as an authorized Employment Network (EN) provider for the Ticket to Work program. The goals of the Ticket to Work program are to:

- Offer beneficiaries with disabilities expanded choices when seeking service and supports to enter, re-enter, and/or maintain employment
- Increase the financial independence and self-sufficiency of beneficiaries with disabilities; and
- Reduce and, whenever possible, eliminate reliance on disability benefits

As an authorized EN provider, GDOL provides employment and retention services to qualified Social Security Administration (SSA) Ticket-to-Work ticket holder participants statewide. GDOL will accept Ticket assignments from beneficiaries who are work ready, and provide career and labor market exploration, barrier identification and resolution counseling, in depth job search, résumé building and interview preparation assistance, benefits planning, job preparation and ongoing employment retention and case management support.

Partnership Plus (PP)

Partnership Plus models are designed to promote cooperation, collaboration and creativity in the provision of services and supports to assist beneficiaries with disabilities to achieve long-term employment success leading to economic self-support. As an authorized PP EN provider for GVRA, GDOL will accept Ticket assignments from beneficiaries who have completed Vocational Rehabilitation services and have been working for at least 90 days. GDOL provides ongoing support services to include job stabilization and retention, barrier identification and mitigation, benefits counseling, career advancement services, and in-depth case management support.

GVRA

GVRA/VR supports core partner programs in their efforts to service individuals with disabilities. Specific methods of service delivery can be found in Section IX. All individualized services meet the standards set forth by the federal regulations. As well as co-location in the one-stop system, GVRA/VR has offices

in many rural areas and ensures those areas without offices are served by professional rehabilitation staff members from other locations. GVRA is also exploring the feasibility of on-line applications in order to expedite the VR process.

Youth with Disabilities

GVRA/VR partners with local education agencies in the provision of transition services for students and youth with disabilities. Working with students and youth with disabilities supports the goal of ensuring employment opportunities for all citizens as well as providing a skilled workforce for employers. GVRA/VR also cooperates with the GDBHDD to provide the services needed to help mutual clients reach their competitive integrated employment goals. GVRA/VR continues to participate with all school systems in the provision of Project Search, pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) and/or VR funded and provider delivered transition services.

Georgia's one-stop system engages youth in customized career pathways through collaborative partnerships between GVRA/VR and GaDOE. GVRA/VR provides transition services to out of school youth with the timely development and approval of an individualized plan for employment. The GVRA/VR is in the final and fifth year of implementing the Georgia Pathways to Work program, which was an RSA grant funded initiative. The overall goal of the Georgia Pathways to Work program is to increase the number of students who achieve competitive integrated employment through improved access to the 18 existing career pathways for students with disabilities.

Formerly Incarcerated Individuals

In order to support citizens returning to the labor market from incarceration, GDOL provide incentives to the business community. The Federal Bonding Program (FB), managed by GDOL, is a program that alleviates much of the potential risk involved in hiring a formerly incarcerated individual. FB provides employers with liability coverage at no cost when they hire job applicants who cannot be covered by a commercial bond. In addition, business can benefit from WOTC, a tax incentive to businesses that hire and retain new employees who are members of qualified groups, including returning citizens. Information on federal bonding and WOTC is available online and at one-stop centers across the state.

Georgia also helps to reduce recidivism through The Offender Parolee Probationer State Training Employment Program (TOPPSTEP), where GDOL staff provide services and information on how to navigate the application and interview process with barriers to employment. These services are designed to help returning citizens find and keep a job. Additionally, GDOL staff provide assistance to businesses seeking to interview and hire these skilled workers.

Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers

Specific details on the State's efforts to reduce barriers to employment for the Agricultural Industry are part of service delivery through GDOL career centers as detailed in Section VII(e)(4).

Recipients of TANF

Although Georgia opted out of including TANF as a mandated partner in the One-Stop delivery system, the state agencies responsible for TANF and WIOA recognize the value of increased coordination

between the programs. As WIOA's Adult program gives priority to low-income individuals, TANF recipients automatically meet the program's income-based eligibility criteria. As such, OWD and DFCS will continue to strengthen communication and collaboration at the state level to coordinate services to eligible participants in the workforce system as part of Georgia's goal to address a tightened labor market. TANF recipients may need multiple supports to ensure long-term success in the workforce, but coordination amongst the programs will allow participants to overcome those multiple barriers without duplicating services.

Long-Term Unemployed

The State has many strategies to reduce the number of weeks an individual spends separated from the workforce, with a particular focus on reconnecting the long-term unemployed. Strategies include assessing the risk of benefit exhaustion and intervention for non-performance of job search can be found in Section VII(b-d).

Veterans

Georgia's unemployment rate for post 9/11 veterans is higher than the national average. Georgia is committed to helping veterans who enter, or are at-risk of entering, the criminal justice system by identifying and connecting these individuals with appropriate services, treatment, and any other support they need to become productive citizens. GDOL is partnering with several Veterans Treatment Courts throughout the state such as Cobb County Court System, Hall County Court System, Macon-Bibb County Court System, Muscogee County Court System and the Towaliga Accountability Courts, among others. Veterans Treatment Courts are specialized diversion courts that work with justice-involved veterans. Active combat experience has left a growing number of veterans with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Traumatic Brain Injuries. When left untreated, these conditions often contribute to substance abuse, unemployment, anger management issues, domestic violence, chronic illness, homelessness, and a host of other issues leading to involvement in the criminal justice system.

Georgia's DVOP specialists provide direct services to Georgia's Veteran Treatment Court system to help address the numerous barriers to employment of veterans convicted of nonviolent crimes. While the individual is on probation, the DVOPs work directly with the court to provide case management services, job opportunities, and the full array of services available in Georgia's one-stop system to help the veteran become reintegrated into their community. DVOPs also coordinate with other supportive partnership agencies and volunteer veteran mentors from their local communities, which collaboratively assist participants overcome their barriers, improve the quality of life for the veteran and their families, and to further encourage the veterans continued connection to sustainable employment and self-sufficiency.

In addition, the GDOL continues its partnership with the Homeless Veterans' Reintegration Program (HVRP) by providing employment services in support of reintegrating homeless veterans into meaningful employment within the labor force. Current grantees consist of non-profit and community-based organizations primarily located in metro Atlanta. These entities receive federal funding and may co-enroll their clients or participants with our agency as an introduction to the American Job Center (AJC). Wagner-Peyser staff assist these veterans in completing their ES registration and provide the

participant with Priority of Service information. After an initial assessment, the veteran identified as having any Significant Barrier(s) to Employment will be referred to a DVOP to receive Individualized Career Services.

The DVOP works closely with the veteran and the grantee representative to provide ongoing support, reemployment services, and connection to supportive partner resources. If it is determined that the veteran would benefit from additional training or educational opportunities to improve their job readiness, those supportive service referrals may be made with WIOA partners directly within the one-stop operation; for example, WIOA-approved training in a high demand area or Vocational Rehabilitation that may also be available. Upon the veteran overcoming the barrier(s) to employment and are determined to be “job ready”, the DVOP can assist with providing quality job referrals or job developments with employers who have a need for the skills the veteran has experience with or an education background.

TCSG, OAE

Georgia’s adult education programs serve individuals with barriers to employment, particularly those with low levels of literacy and English Language Learners. Each of Georgia’s adult education programs is responsible for coordinating and ensuring its students receive supportive services – such as transportation, childcare, counseling, housing, and referrals to other social service providers – which enable them to successfully attend and participate in adult education activities. Some of the main ways programs provide these services are:

- **Career Services Specialists:** Career Services Specialists develop strong relationships with students in order to understand the specific type of supports students need to succeed in the adult education program. They are also responsible for developing strategic partnerships with community and social service agencies to meet these needs.
- **Certified Literacy Community Programs:** Georgia’s Certified Literate Community Program (CLCP) is a network of county-based nonprofit organizations with the mission of combatting low literacy levels in their respective counties. CLCPs support adult education programs and their students by providing funding for supportive services such as childcare and transportation.
- **Distance Education & Flexible Schedules:** Adult education programs meet the needs of individuals living in remote areas or those with other needs by providing distance education opportunities to students, ensuring that classes are available in each county, and offering flexible schedules – such as weekend and evening classes – to meet the needs of all students.

(D) Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Employers

To realize the Governor’s vision and goals for the State’s One-Stop workforce system, Georgia’s required partners continue to elevate business services to the forefront of workforce strategies. While most partners have independent business service units, these teams communicate and coordinate with one another to present a unified array of services to businesses.

Each core partner brings unique programs and strategies to employers, which can be leveraged in partnership with one or more of the other state partners. Examples of the services provided to employers by each of the core partners are provided below.

GDOL Business Services Unit

Placement of BSU Regional Coordinators across the state one-stop system reflects an emphasis on employer-driven service delivery, and access to a market-driven staff dedicated to fulfilling the needs of Georgia employers. Regional Coordinators manage the Job Readiness Program (SWAT), Career Expos, Customized Recruitment Services, Regional Summits, the Employer Committee, and coordinate with other programs administered through the Georgia one-stop system. Other BSU staff also devote their efforts towards developing and maintaining relationships with employers, regionally-identifying talent pools for target industries, identifying employer talent requirements and matching the talent with hiring needs. More information on GDOL's BSU, including a list of services provided can be found in Appendix A.

OWD Business Services Team

OWD offers a number of programs aimed at connecting with and providing workforce solutions to employers across the State. The OWD Business Services team is designed to connect with employers, engage them in a dialogue concerning their future workforce needs, and deliver solutions appropriate to those specific needs. Through the work and support of LWDA Business Services staff, OWD may be able to leverage one or more of the core programs authorized under Title IB of WIOA, including work-based learning strategies, such as On-the-Job Training, Incumbent Worker Training, Work Experience, or Transitional Jobs. The OWD Business Services team also works closely with the OWD Apprenticeship to utilize Registered Apprenticeships where possible and appropriate.

TCSG, OAE

Each adult education program is required to offer at least one Integrated Education & Training (IET) opportunity for their students. IET provides students with adult education, training, and workforce preparation activities concurrently, with the goal of helping students obtain jobs in regionally in-demand industries. Adult education providers partner directly with industry-specific training providers to develop and implement their IETs – ensuring that each IET equips students with the specific skills they need to succeed in that occupation. Some examples of current IETs include those that prepare adult students to become certified nursing assistants, phlebotomists, and construction workers.

GVRA

The GVRA/VR Employment Services Team collaborates with the core programs, including one-stop partners, in support of individuals with disabilities securing competitive integrated employment. Staff members interact with businesses to identify specific employer workforce needs and to provide employers with qualified candidates to meet those needs. GVRA/VR Employment Services also interfaces with employers to create opportunities for individuals with disabilities, such as on-the-job training and work based learning. Additionally, staff provide education and training to businesses, such as the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities, job accommodations, disability awareness and federal contractor requirements. The goal is to increase employer interest and for more businesses to hire individuals with disabilities.

(E) Partner Engagement with Educational Institutions

Engagement of Adult Services with Educational Institutions

The State's primary mechanism for creating a job-driven education and training system is through the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), which often utilize the USG and TCSG system institutions, among other providers on the State's ETPL. These institutions will continue to work collaboratively with other core programs and partner agencies to provide comprehensive, wraparound services to program participants.

The Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) administers Title II AEFLA funds to eligible organizations to provide adult education and family literacy activities. This structure creates a unique opportunity for Georgia's technical colleges to participate in the workforce development system, particularly as it pertains to adult education. Currently, adult education providers engage technical colleges in several ways, including: (a) utilizing technical college instructors to develop and implement IET opportunities, (b) promoting dual enrollment for adult education students, and (c) guiding and supporting adult education students in transitioning to training and postsecondary education at any of Georgia's technical colleges. In addition, Georgia is currently developing and piloting alternative high school equivalency (HSE) options, such as a Career Plus HSE where students can earn their HSE and a technical college credential simultaneously.

Engagement of WIOA Services with Educational Institutions

The One-Stop delivery system works closely with TCSG, USG, and other educational institutions across the state. These partnerships enable each LWDA to provide customers with a large amount of educational offerings, providing true customer choice as prescribed in the law. All education providers are listed on the State's ETPL, which is hosted on the WorkSource Georgia Portal that all LWDA staff and potential customers are able to view. The state actively maintains the ETPL as discussed in Section VI(b)(3).

Engagement of Vocational Rehabilitation Services with Educational Institutions

GVRA partners with local education agencies in the provision of transition services for students and youth with disabilities. Working with students and youth with disabilities supports the goal of ensuring employment opportunities for all citizens as well as providing a skilled workforce for employers. GVRA continues to participate with all school systems in the provision of supported employment services, pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) and/or VR funded and provider delivered transition services.

To complement the utilization of the technical college system, Georgia will further leverage relationships with educational institutions by enhancing GVRA/VR services in schools. GVRA/VR provides support to eligible students in their pursuit of achieving their post-secondary academic and vocational training (including those thriving in an inclusive post-secondary education program).

(F) Partner Engagement with Other Education and Training Providers

In order to build a robust workforce development system, the State constantly seeks to increase the offerings for participants and meet the needs of employers. To accomplish this, OWD seeks to identify

non-traditional education providers, including non-profit and for-profit offerings that meet the eligibility requirements. LWDAs are charged with identifying providers and presenting their applications to the ETPL; however, OWD also assists with the identification process. When OWD finds potential new offerings, the offerings are proposed to the LWDAs through many different venues, including monthly calls, webinars, conferences, and meetings.

OWD also endeavors to avoid unnecessary policy hurdles that would prevent LWDAs from adding providers to the ETPL. The application process has been streamlined, and is readily available on the WorkSource Georgia Portal. OWD's ETPL Specialists interact frequently with eligible providers and interested providers to ensure a smooth process for inclusion on the State's ETPL. These specialists also facilitate conversations and help to problem solve with LWDAs when issues arise. To increase the use and understanding of the ETPL, OWD has provided multiple training sessions as part of the WorkSource Georgia Academy. These sessions review ETPL eligibility, policy changes, navigating the WorkSource Georgia Portal to access the ETPL application, best practices, and more. These training resources are available on OWD's website for all partners and local staff to access.

Additionally, the State also facilitates partner engagement through the work of the State Workforce Development Board. Currently, the TCSG Commissioner serves on the SWDB, in addition to an Adult Education representative, as well as a community-based organization representative whose programs are included on the ETPL. Their perspective, in addition to the business representatives and other mandated board seats, is beneficial for ensuring a robust workforce system that is both customer-focused and employer-driven. The inclusion of these individuals allow the SWDB to bridge the gap between all users of the workforce system.

Additionally, each adult education program is required to offer at least one Integrated Education & Training (IET) opportunity for their students. IET provides students with adult education, training, and workforce preparation activities concurrently, with the goal of helping students obtain jobs in regionally in-demand industries. To strengthen the quality of IETs and ensure that they adequately prepare students for careers, adult education programs partner directly with education and training providers to develop a Single Set of Learning Objectives (SSLOs). SSLOs align the adult education and workplace preparation content needed for students to succeed in the training portion of the IET. The education or training provider then delivers the training component of the IET.

(G) Leveraging Resources to Increase Educational Access

TCSG offers several avenues for Georgians to access the workforce development system. Specifically, TCSG offers Technical College Certificates (TCCs) in a variety of in-demand industries and occupations. Georgia's HOPE Career Grant provides free tuition to eligible dually-enrolled adult education students to participate in eligible TCC programs. Once an adult education earns their GED or high school equivalency (HSE), they may be eligible for further tuition support through the HOPE Grant, HOPE Career Grant, or the HOPE GED Grant, which provides a one-time \$500 award that can be used towards tuition, books, or other educational costs at any eligible postsecondary institution.

In addition, since many of Georgia's adult education programs are operated by technical colleges, they receive in-kind support – such as classroom and office space, training support for Integrated Education & Training (IET), and administrative staff – from technical colleges.

(H) Improving Access to Postsecondary Credentials

Georgia's adult education programs provide students access to postsecondary credentials through the following activities:

- **Career Services Specialists:** Career Services Specialists support students in learning about and pursuing postsecondary education and credentials.
- **Dual Enrollment:** Adult education students can be dually-enrolled in adult education classes and programs, such as Technical College Certificate (TCC) Programs offered through the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG).
- **Integrated Education & Training (IET):** Through IET, adult education students have the opportunity to earn industry-recognized credentials. Many of these credentials are stackable, which enables students to advance their careers by earning additional credentials, licenses, or certifications specific to the occupation or industry the IET prepared them for.
- **High School Equivalency (HSE) Options:** Currently, Georgia is expanding and piloting additional HSE options. One of these options is Career Plus HSE, which will allow students to combine previously-earned high school credits, completed portions of the GED® exam, and technical college credentials to receive a HSE diploma.

While these services and programs are administered by TCSG's Office of Adult Education (OAE), OWD is strategically partnered with OAE to ensure Title I funds are utilized in the best method possible to support adult education efforts across the state in assisting recipients with gaining and improving access to post-secondary credentials. For example, Title I funds are being utilized in the IET and HSE pilots mentioned above to cover the costs associated with technical education and industry-recognized credential attainment for adult education participants. Furthermore, OWD works closely with OAE and other adult education partners in helping identify credentials that are industry-recognized and that are portable and stackable. To assist with this process, OWD developed the "Post-Secondary Credential Attainment Decision Guide" to help LWDA's and adult education program providers determine if a post-secondary training program meets the WIOA definition and intent of a recognized credential.

Additionally, Georgia continues to work to grow the State's apprenticeship program and has utilized the services of both TCSG and USG to provide the mandated classroom component of apprenticeship training. The OWD Apprenticeship Team actively works to inform employers about the availability and benefits of Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) to meet their needs. The OWD Apprenticeship Team has accomplished this through a statewide "road show" to discuss the Registered Apprenticeships opportunities and expand these offerings across the state. Both TCSG and USG have provided flexibility to apprenticeship employers when creating the classroom component. Apprentices are able to enroll in for-credit diplomas, certificates, and degrees or industry recognized credentials.

OWD continues to expand their efforts to further integrate the State's Registered Apprenticeship and WIOA Title I efforts. OWD has conducted numerous trainings with LWDA's and TCSG's apprentice-related staff members at the 22 technical colleges across the state to better inform and educate them on the ways in which Title I funds can be used to support RAPs. Currently, Title I funds are being used

in several LWDA through the use of ITAs to cover the RTI costs associated with RAPs. Furthermore, several LWDA have engaged in business services partnerships to develop OJT and IWT contracts with employers to support the use of RAPs in their operations. The target of OWD in the near future is enhanced training for LWDA regarding the combined use of ITAs in conjunction with OJT to maximize the potential impact of Title I funds in assisting RAPs, as well as the use of Customized Training (CT) contracts to assist employers whose needs may not be a proper fit for OJT or IWT.

(l) Coordinating with Economic Development Strategies

As workforce development is economic development, the State continues to coordinate with the economic development arms of state agencies and statewide economic development organizations, such as the Georgia Department of Economic Development, TCSG Economic Development, the Georgia Chamber of Commerce, and the Georgia Economic Developers Association, among others. The inclusion of these groups in the work of WIOA ensures that strategies are employer-driven and engage business leaders in opportunities to develop best practices. The State will continue to work with businesses and promote the workforce services available. WorkSource Georgia's continuous efforts to serve Georgia's business and industry allows the agency to place participants in transformational and sustainable careers. The State's determination to integrate service and delivery to employers ensures a strategic approach to assist collaborative partners in overcoming workforce challenges and plan for the workforce of the future. Additionally, the State has provided a number of professional development opportunities to frontline business services staff in order to improve services to employers and advance their interactions with economic development entities. These professionals continue to promote the use of WIOA work-based learning service and the State will continue to identify opportunities for continuous improvement to serve Georgia's business and industry.

At the local level, LWDBs include a local economic development representative, either from a city or county economic development department within the region, or as a representative from the local chamber of commerce. Similar to the partnerships at the state level, the inclusion of these individuals in the workforce system ensures that all parties are cross-trained in the opportunities available through the workforce system. Additionally, the WorkSource Georgia Sector Partnerships at the local level includes local economic development representatives as an integral part of the process.

Finally, local adult education providers can collaborate with the Technical College System of Georgia's Office of Economic Development to provide the workforce training component of Integrated Education & Training (IET) programs. These partnerships enable local providers to offer IET programs that will prepare students for regionally in-demand occupations as identified by the local workforce development board(s) (LWDB) in which they serve students.

(b) State Operating Systems and Policies

(1) State Operating Systems

(A) Coordinated Implementation

The State's core partners currently utilize independent systems for their program's case management and reporting activities. Through the direction of the data integration working group, the core partners are developing a plan to integrate their current, independent systems.

TCSG, OWD

The WorkSource Georgia Portal (the Portal) is an online system used by OWD and LWDA staff for WIOA participant registration, case management, and reporting. The Portal can also be used to provide participants with labor market information. System reports enable state staff to make informed decisions when developing policies and procedures. For example, staff can use the system's LMI capabilities to identify emerging industries in a LWDA and then run a report to see if the workforce needs for occupations in that industry are being addressed by current participants in the same LWDA. The system is also able to track participants for non-WIOA grants.

TCSG, OAE

OAE supports the implementation of the State's strategies through the Georgia Adult Learners Information System (GALIS). GALIS is a web-based, real-time data system that collects and maintains all of the data elements essential for reporting WIOA-required performance outcomes.

All grant-funded local adult education providers are required to enter programmatic data into GALIS, including, but not limited to: student information, required demographic indicators, OAE and National Reporting System (NRS) approved assessment results, attendance hours, class sites, course offerings, personnel information, and professional development activities. Providers must also enter data related to WIOA adult education and literacy activities such as family literacy, Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education, workplace literacy, English language acquisition activities, and Integrated Education and Training.

OAE's Policy and Procedure Manual contains written policies for data management that all providers must follow, including data collection requirements for participants, data quality guidance, and data entry deadlines. OAE also develops GALIS data standards to ensure the consistency and integrity of the data. GALIS users have restricted access to certain features depending on their tier. OAE offers annual GALIS and data management training opportunities to local providers. Each local provider also has a designated data manager who provides training and technical assistance to local users on GALIS and data management.

Employment Services

GDOL utilizes the Georgia Workforce System (GWS) and Employ Georgia (E) for data collection and reporting. GWS and EG have a variety of data elements that allow for unique tracking of all participants including information related to demographics, employment status, customer service plans, barriers to employment, employer-searchable resumes, etc. These systems capture all data and outcomes necessary to achieve progress on the State strategies including, but not limited to, project assignment, participation dates, incremental employability goals, education and training completion with credential information, employment details and outcomes, and other public benefits are among the data collected within these systems to support the State plan.

In addition to these systems, the Internet Tax and Wage system (ITW) allows for a centralized, electronic collection of UI tax data that assists in outcome reporting. Both state and national wage information is updated quarterly to provide earning records and other employment information such as Industry type.

GDOL collects, analyzes, and publishes a wide array of information about the state's labor market. This information provides a snapshot of Georgia's economy, job market, businesses, and its workforce. Data on jobs and workers, including labor force, employment and unemployment, industrial growth, occupational trends, and wage rates, are increasingly important to remaining competitive in the global marketplace. This data is available at the State and local workforce area level via the Georgia Labor Market Explorer at: <https://explorer.gdol.ga.gov/vosnet/Default.aspx>.

Self-Service Kiosk

In 2019, the Self-Service Kiosk (SSK) application was successfully implemented at two (2) Career Centers in the Metro Atlanta area; future plans include implementing the SSK in additional Career Centers across the state over the next two (2) years based on customer needs.

The SSK, an internally developed application that runs on a tablet utilizing mobile technology, was implemented as a result of observed levels of high customer traffic and long wait lines in the Career Centers. The SSK application allows the customer to quickly enter their unique identification information, identify if the customer has a scheduled appointment/training, and if so, automatically check the customer in, or allow the customer to select the desired service and rapidly complete the check-in process.

The SSK application also includes a feature to identify Veterans for priority check-in and immediate service. In addition, the SSK application check-in process can track resource computer usage including documentation of services provided to each customer automatically via the kiosks. Customers selecting a Resource Center service (Job Search, Resume Building, and Online Applications) upon check-in may now immediately proceed to the Resource Center eliminating the wait to check-in at the Career Center's front desk.

Improving traffic flow within all Career Centers and streamlining customer access to GDOL resources, implementation of the SSK improves service delivery through:

- Reduction of queue times - customers previously had to endure an average 10-minute wait before they could be checked in by a staff member. After the SSK was implemented, wait times to check in were reduced to less than 1 minute per person
- Improved tracking of delivery services – the SSK allows documentation of more than 3000 services that were not previously captured, allowing GDOL to receive credit for services documented

- Improvement of resource utilization of GDOL staff – the SSK allows customers to check themselves in unassisted, thus allowing staff to free up approximately 25% of their time each day from checking in customers to providing valuable services

Distance Learning Program

GDOL will implement the DLT Program in eight (8) rural Georgia Career Centers and provide Interactive Audio Video Conferencing technology through advanced telecommunications.

The selected Career Centers will be equipped with the technology, including video conferencing, computer hardware and software, audio and video equipment (including interactive audio/ video equipment), computer network components, telecommunication terminal equipment, data terminal equipment, and necessary inside wiring. The grant will also fund instructional programming and technical assistance and instruction for using the system.

This technology equips GDOL to provide customers and staff in rural counties access to the latest training and information via the use of video technology to address the needs of individuals who currently have little to no access to critical training and enrichment opportunities. The selected Career Centers involved in the grant program provide comprehensive workforce services to 26 Georgia counties. The DLT program will facilitate improved services to our customers, GDOL staff, and LWDB customers and staff in rural counties, as well as increase productivity within the agency. It will also allow students in rural locations to access live remote training. This effort will ensure these communities have access to the necessary skillsets for the jobs in the community at present, as well as those jobs that the future may bring.

Online Services

GDOL serves employers through its web site at <http://dol.georgia.gov/employers> by providing access to valuable, accessible information. Items accessible include publications and links to additional resources. GDOL online services allow businesses to file quarterly tax and wage reports and make payments, change their address, participate in the State Information Data Exchange System (SIDES) and SIDES E-Response, submit job postings, and apply for the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC). All parties involved in the youth work permit process (i.e., youth, employers, and issuing officers) can complete their requirements online.

The website advertises career expos, employer seminars, and other events to the community, and provides access to a variety of labor market information resources, including Georgia Labor Market Explorer, and pertinent information for businesses, including the ability to download posters required of all employers. Also, the newly-designed website includes a responsive design for better viewing on any mobile device, as well as suggested search and translation options on every page.

GDOL provides an array of resources, services and information in as many social media formats as possible to reach the most businesses and job-seeking customers. The department continue to

maintain its presence on Facebook, You Tube, Twitter and RSS Feed, and is developing smart phone applications for real-time labor market information and job matching services.

GVRA

GVRA currently utilizes state operating systems that are consistent with other state agencies. Specifically, all human resource and financial information is maintained through the PeopleSoft system, which serves as the primary operating and data system for GVRA. GVRA/VR recently transitioned to the Alliance case management system (AWARE). GVRA/VR has a WRIS agreement and is in the process of developing a SWIS agreement for data exchange.

(B) Data Collection and Reporting Processes

TCSG, OWD

All participant information is collected using the WorkSource Georgia Portal. System logic enables participant eligibility to be accurately determined and verified. Case managers are also able to track services provided throughout participation and outcomes are identified at the culmination of participation. With a plethora of canned and ad-hoc reports, local and state staff can note participant characteristics, monitor program progress, and stay on top of performance outcomes.

OWD and GDOL have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding to facilitate the sharing of information on several levels, such as:

1. Matching Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Wage Record Information System (WRIS) wage data of participants enrolled in the Portal. OWD provides GDOL with a wage match file, which GDOL returns populated with wage information. OWD then prepares and transmits a quarterly WIASRD file to GDOL, who runs the file through the USDOL/ETA E-DRVS on behalf of OWD to check for possible errors and required edits, and provides OWD with the detailed results. OWD corrects any edits as required, returns the file to GDOL, who submits and certifies the file through the USDOL/ETA EBSS on OWD's behalf.
2. Matching Wagner Peyser and Trade services received by OWD participants. Using the same wage match file provided by OWD as described above, GDOL provides OWD with a file identifying any Wagner Peyser and Trade services received by OWD participants within a quarter, inclusive of the date(s) of service.
3. GDOL provides LWDAs with limited transactional access to the GWS system, for direct inquiry related to Wagner Peyser, Trade Services activities, and Georgia wage data, etc.

The State is working toward an integrated data management system through the efforts of the Data Management Working Group. It is realized that the processes for integration will be implemented overtime. The Data Integration Working Group worked with Georgia Tech Research Institute (GTRI) to identify existing data system linkages between core partners, assessed each core partner system in order to develop an architecture to allow for system integration, identified the options for integration from that system evaluation, then as a group determined the best route to take for integration. The working group and GTRI have implemented Phase 1 of the data integration project and are now able to identify participants who are co-enrolled across Core Partner programs.

TCSG, OAE

Grant-funded local adult education providers are required to enter all programmatic data into GALIS in a timely fashion. If students come to adult education providers through the one-stop system, they must have OAE and National Reporting System (NRS) approved assessment scores to enter into GALIS for WIOA accountability purposes. As such, GALIS serves as an electronic record of students' activities and accomplishments in adult education. GALIS also integrates data matches from Navigator (the state's high school equivalency management system), the National Student Clearinghouse, and the Georgia UI database from the GDOL on an ongoing basis.

OAE uses the GALIS system to generate federally-required reports for the NRS for Adult Education, as well as additional reports at the local and state-level for program monitoring and improvement. Reports provide information on a variety of data, including but not limited to: student demographics, OAE and NRS approved assessment performance, measurable skill gains, high school equivalency attainment, employment, and postsecondary education.

GDOL

GDOL utilizes a robust, centralized data collection system and has extensive experience with Federal Grant reporting. Georgia's EG and mainframe GWS systems are designed to meet all federal reporting requirements as well as to track each Wagner-Peyser, Unemployment Insurance, Trade, Veterans, and Agricultural participants through all service components. Integration of the systems also provides the ability to combine data with the full array of programs noted above, providing an opportunity to share and analyze data on common participants.

EG and GWS have thousands of individual data elements allowing for unique tracking of all participants, including information related to demographics, employment status, customer service plans, barriers to employment, employer-searchable résumés, services rendered, etc. These systems provide the ability to track participants from initial assessment through the employment follow-up period.

Through the use of the above, GDOL has successfully submitted all federally-required USDOL-ETA Wagner-Peyser, Veterans, Trade and Agriculture reports over the past two decades. GDOL has also successfully completed all related, federally-required data validation and report validation since USDOL began requiring such actions in 2003. The EG and GWS systems allow for immediate validation of all data validation elements where GDOL's systems serve as a data source, as outlined by USDOL-ETA each year. These systems are frequently reviewed to ensure they meet all compliance standards for data and report validation.

GVRA

Currently, GVRA/VR's primary data collection and report system is AWARE an electronic case management system, and the data collected is specific to individuals served through the VR Program. This data management system is not integrated with any other core partner.

(2) State Policies

One-Stop System Policies & Guidance

OWD outlines one-stop operator policies in its State Policy Manual (PM), WIG LS-19-015, and WorkSource Academy training resources. These resources outline the structure and function of one-stops in the state of Georgia. These resources are hosted on OWD's website (<https://tcsge.edu/worksource/resources-for-practitioners/policies-guidance/>) and are available to LWDA's so that local staff are aware of the State's guidelines and expectation regarding one-stop centers.

OWD Policy Manual

Pursuant to Section 3.1 of the Policy Manual (PM), Georgia's system is a customer-focused system created by WIOA. It is intended to help jobseekers find in-demand jobs and to assist businesses in finding skilled workers. In Section 3.1 PM, it outlines the goals of the one-stop system, the principles of one-stop delivery, and the five titles included in WIOA. The PM also elaborates on the roles of parties in the one-stop system, including one-stop operator, the required and optional one-stop partners, definitions and requirements of comprehensive and affiliate one-stop sites.

In describing the one-stop operators, the PM explains that operators are responsible for general operation of the One-Stop centers as outlined in 29 U.S.C. and 20 C.F.R. Overall operation of the one-stop center requires entering into MOUs and IFAs with partners, direction of service flow, planning and monitoring center operations, and coordination with other service providers in the area. The one-stop operator is responsible for establishing a strategic operations plan with a specified mission and goals. The operator must ensure that the center is customer-focused and that it provides integrated and seamless service delivery. The operator must ensure it provides core services at the one-stop as specified in U.S.C. § 2864 (d)(2), and that the center and the services are accessible to all customers including individuals with disabilities. The next section of the PM lists the required and optional one-stop partners as described in WIOA.

The PM describes the requirements of Comprehensive One-Stop Centers. It explains that there must be at least one comprehensive center within each LWDA. In this section the PM lists the core services that the comprehensive center must provide, as defined in U.S.C. § 2864 (d)(2). There are additional programs and activities that One-Stop Centers must provide for, and those are listed in this section of the PM. Next the PM describes the qualifications and requirements of Affiliate One-Stop Centers. Included in 3.1 "One Stop System" are the expectations for seamless service delivery and the requirements of the one-stop certification process.

Per 20 CFR 678.500, adult education providers, as core WIOA partners, enter into an MOU with the LWDB(s) in the LWDA they serve students. Each MOU specifies how the adult education program: (a) will provide services through the one-stop, (b) fund a proportionate share of the infrastructure costs, and (c) how the one-stop will refer individuals to the adult education program.

Workforce Implementation Guidance Letters

In addition to the State Policy Manual, OWD has also issued further guidance in the form of Workforce Implementation Guidance (WIG) Letters, which are intended to function similar to Training and Employment Guidance Letters (TEGL) issued by USDOL. With the regard to one-stop system guidance, OWD issued WGI LS-19-015 in November of 2019. This WIG, titled One-Stop Certification Guidelines,

provides guidance regarding the minimum criteria for the certification of comprehensive and affiliate one-stops throughout Georgia for PY20 and PY21. This WIG provides background on the American Job Center network and explains that the SWDB, in consultation with the LWDBs and CLEOs, worked to develop these criteria. It also lists the categories of WorkSource Georgia's One-Stop Certification, which are used to evaluate the one-stop for effectiveness: customer flow of services, MOUs, operational details, WorkSource Georgia branding identifier, customer satisfaction, continuous improvement, and accessibility and equal opportunity certification. This WIG also provides information explaining how the One-Stop system is intended to function. This section includes explanations and/or descriptions of components of the One-Stop system, including MOUs and IFAs, comprehensive sites, affiliate sites, specialized sites, Wagner-Peyser co-location, technical college campus site, mobile units, definitions of "access" and "access points." Finally, LS-19-015 provides certification instructions and explains the process for LWDBs to complete one-stop certification for each location under consideration as either a comprehensive or affiliate site. The guidance states that sites must be certified by the LWDB in order to utilize their locally-negotiated infrastructure cost agreements. The WIG includes attachments that further detail the following: partner presence; accessibility and equal opportunity certification; comprehensive one-stop certification; and affiliate one-stop certification.

OWD also reissued guidance about Local Service Delivery Guidelines in WIG LS-19-017 in January of 2020, which provides clear guidelines to LWDA's for development of a complete and compliant MOU to govern the local one-stop system.

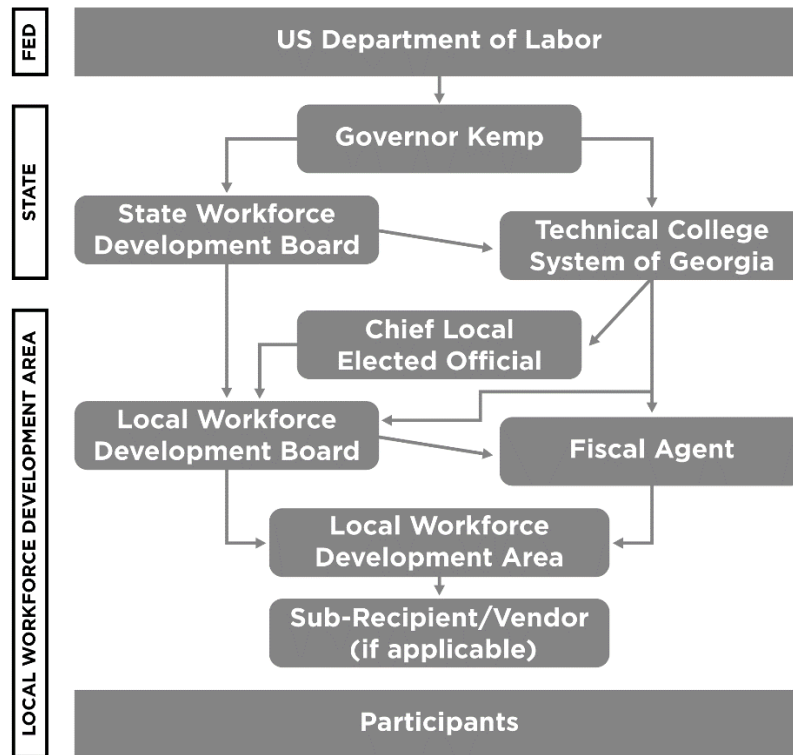
WorkSource Georgia Academy Trainings

The WorkSource Georgia Academy, the training arm of OWD, incorporated training curriculum for all LWDA's and partner agency staff on the One-Stop System at the 2019 WorkSource Georgia Academy conference. These presentations are available on the WorkSource Georgia website. Presentations included: One-Stop System 101, which was presented by OWD and the Georgia Department of Labor; One-Stop Operations Panel: What Partners Wish They Knew, which included representation from all one-stop operators in the state; and One-Stop Certification, which corresponded with WIG LS-19-015 and elaborated on certification guidelines.

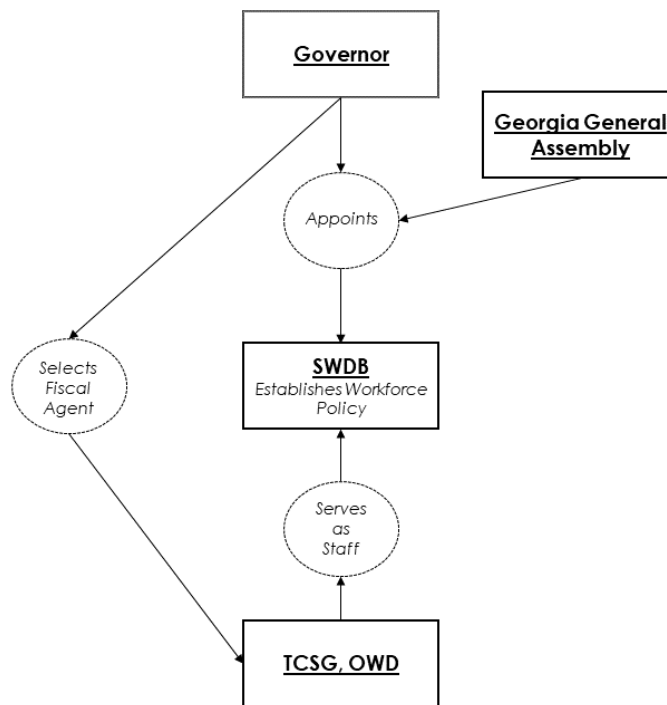
(3) State Program and Board Overview

(A) State Agency Organization

On July 1, 2018, the Governor transferred the fiscal and administrative responsibility of WIOA Title I from the Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD) to the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG). TCSG's OWD serves as the WIOA fiscal recipient and also provides support, information, and guidance to both the Governor and SWDB. The graphic below illustrates the flow of funds and authority in the administration of WIOA from USDOL all the way to the participants served in the LWDA's.

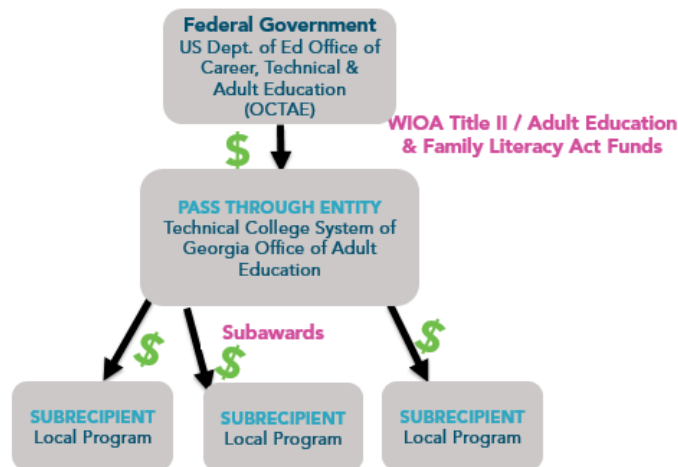


OWD serves as staff to SWDB by providing support and detailed research that enables SWDB to make informed policy decisions. The graphic below illustrates the state’s governance system with regard to WIOA, which is mirrored the structure of the State’s 19 LWDA. Local Elected Officials (LEO) in those LWDA come together to elect a CLEO, in accordance with their LEO bylaws. The CLEOs are responsible for choosing the fiscal agent, which can be a city government, county government, or regional commission, in accordance with state policy. The CLEOs are also responsible for appointing the LWDB, in accordance with WIOA and OWD regulations.



TCSG, OAE

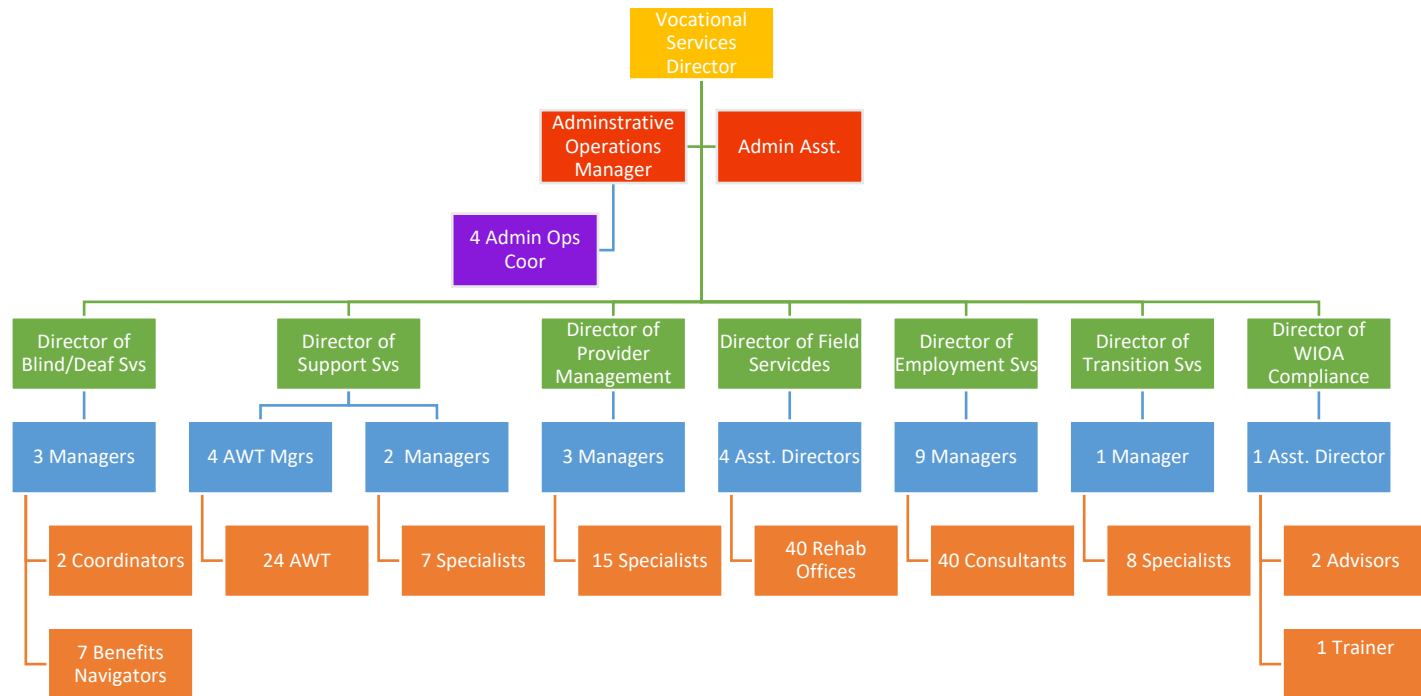
The Technical College System of Georgia’s Office of Adult Education is the State’s pass-through entity for WIOA Title II funds. OAE is responsible for administering funds to eligible adult education providers and overseeing subrecipient program performance. OAE provides funding to eligible local entities for the provision of adult education services through a competitive Request for Application process.



OAE’s state office is comprised of the Assistant Commissioner and a team of directors that oversee the following areas: Accountability, Community Outreach, High School Equivalency, Instructional Services, Professional Development and Transition Resources, and Research and Impact.

GVRA

GVRA/VR's current structure is illustrated in the graphic below.



(B) State Board

The membership of the SWDB is as follows:

Name:	Entity:	WIOA Requirement:
Brian P. Kemp	Governor, State of Georgia	Governor
Mark Butler	Commissioner, GDOL	Wagner-Peyser
Greg Dozier	Commissioner, TCSG	WIOA
Cayanna Good	Asst. Commissioner, Adult Education	Adult Education
Shawn Ryan	Executive Director, GVRA	Vocational Rehabilitation
Robyn Crittenden	Commissioner, DHS	SNAP, TANF
Wendell Dallas	Atlanta Gas Light & Chattanooga Gas	Business Representative
Jay Cunningham	Superior Plumbing	Business Representative
Phil Sutton	Kubota	Business Representative
Chuck Newman	Batson Cook	Business Representative
Stuart Countess	Kia	Business Representative
Mike Dudgeon	Hirez	Business Representative
Charis Acree	Well Star	Business Representative

Theresa Fisher	Southwire Company	Business Representative
Ben Copeland	Patten Seed Company	Business Representative
Joe McDermott	Delta	Business Representative
Cade Joiner	Shred-X	Business Representative
Dell Keith	Wayne County Chamber	Business Representative
Joe Yarbrough	Carpet and Rug Institute	Business Representative
Kevin Jackson	Enviro Vac	Business Representative
Ayanna Howard	Zyrobotics	Business Representative
Jerald Mitchell	Atlanta Beltline	Business Representative
Marcia Dixon	Flexsteel Industries	Business Representative
Karen Viera	Church's Chicken	Business Representative
Eric Hughes	Colony Bank	Business Representative
Mark Wilson	Langdale Industries	Business Representative
Alan Schuetze	Carroll Daniel Construction Company	Business Representative
Evelyn Olenick	Phoebe-Putney Memorial Hospital	Business Representative
Ames Barnett	Barnett Southern Corporation	Business Representative
Tom Cook	FlexTecs North America	Business Representative
Buddy Harden	Harden Pharmacy Consultants	Business Representative
Susan Andrews	Harris County Commissioners	Local Government
Randy Toms	City of Warner Robins	Local Government
Kellie Brownlow	Alliance Board, Boys and Girls Club	Youth Representative
Sam Dasher	Jefferson County School System	Youth Representative
Mike Long	Georgia Board of Education	Youth Representative
Chris Tobiasson	Atlanta Ironworks JAC	Labor Representative
Randy Beall	Atlanta & North GA Building Trades	Labor Representative
Chuck Little	Atlanta Electrical Contractors Assn.	Apprenticeship
Mike Roby	Veterans Services	CBO
James Wilburn	VET ²	CBO
Stanley Cartwright	Perdido Bay Tribe Foundation	CBO
Frank Ginn	Georgia Senate, District 47	State Senate
Pending	Pending	State House

The active collaboration between SWDB, OWD, and the State's one-stop delivery system is the key component of workforce development in Georgia. This collaboration begins with the Governor, who is responsible for the appointment of the SWDB members. SWDB's duties include the development of a statewide strategic plan, which establishes the four-year strategy for the Statewide Workforce Development System. SWDB is also responsible for assisting the Governor with additional functions designated by WIOA which are listed below:

- Strategic Functions
 - Developing and implementing the state plan and performance measures
 - Developing career pathways strategies
 - Developing/expanding strategies for partnerships in in-demand sectors/occupations
 - Developing and aligning policies
- System Capacity Building
 - Developing strategies to support staff training and awareness
 - Disseminating best practices
 - Developing and continuously improving the one-stop delivery system
 - Supporting effective local boards
- System Alignment and Effective Operations
 - Developing strategies for aligning technology and data systems
 - Developing LWDA allocation formulas
 - Developing a statewide LMI system
 - Developing policies and guidance on one-stop partner roles and resource contributions

SWDB is required to comply with federal and state conflict of interest policies and sunshine provisions. The federal conflict of interest policy states that a member of SWDB may not vote on a matter regarding the provision of services by such member or a measures that would provide financial benefit to such a member or his/her immediate family. A state board member may not engage in any other activities determined by the Governor to constitute a conflict of interest as specified in the SWDB bylaws, and must sign the SWDB bylaws to satisfy the State's conflict of interest policy. SWDB must also comply with federal and state sunshine provisions. These federal and state regulations require SWDB to make available to the public, at regular intervals, all information regarding their activities.

SWDB meets at least four times a year and at such other times as the chairperson determines or as provided by the rules of the board. A member of the board can designate another person to attend meetings of the board on such person's behalf. Such designee may participate in the activities and discussions of the board, but cannot have a vote in matters before SWDB.

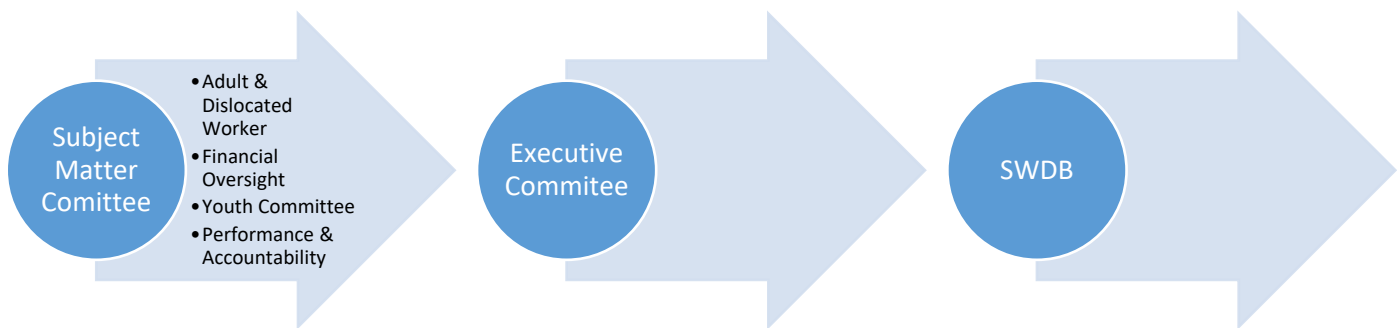
Before actions are voted on by the SWBD, the SWDB committees vet them. There are currently four subject matter committees that also meet quarterly and SWDB members are assigned by the SWDB chairperson to serve. The following are the current subject matter committees: Adult & Dislocated Worker Committee, Financial Oversight Committee, Youth Committee, and Performance & Accountability Committee. Each of these committees also have two or more LWDA directors who serve as advisors and an OWD staff person who coordinates the meetings and performs tasks related to research.

- Adult & Dislocated Worker Committee: The Adult & Dislocated Worker Committee is charged with the development of policy and programs that benefit the State's Adult and Dislocated Worker population.
- Youth Committee: The Youth Committee is charged with the development of policy and programs that benefit the State's Youth population.

- Financial Oversight Committee: The Financial Oversight Committee is charged with the development of the budget and financial policy regarding WIOA funds.
- Performance & Accountability Committee: The Performance & Accountability Committee is charged with utilizing performance data to help drive the decisions before the SWDB, the development of policy regarding the one-stop system governance, as well as review of ETPL and sanctions appeals.

Once an action is vetted by the appropriate subject matter committee, it is placed on the agenda of the SWDB Executive Committee. This committee’s membership is made up of the chairperson, vice-chairperson, and the committee heads. The chairperson may also appoint any other SWDB member to the Executive Committee if deemed necessary. The Executive Committee takes up the actions of the subject matter committees and votes to add the actions to the SWDB full board meeting. When necessary, the Executive Committee can act on behalf of SWDB. However, in most circumstances, a motion will go before a subject matter committee, the Executive Committee, and the full board before it is adopted.

SWDB Decision Making Flow Chart:



The chairperson and vice-chairperson of SWDB are appointed by the Governor based upon recommendations from individuals in the business community. The members of the board serve three (3) years terms as established by the Governor and continue to serve at the discretion of the Governor, except for the member of the House of Representative and the member of the Senate, who continue to serve at the discretions of the Speaker of the House and the Lieutenant Governor, respectively. SWDB adopts bylaws to guide its proceedings. Each member of SWDB, who is not otherwise a state officer or employee, is authorized to receive reimbursement for reasonable, necessary travel expenses incurred in the performance of his or her duties as a member of the board, provided that such funds are available and such reimbursements are allowable under federal law. Should funds not be available or allowable for this purpose, such members will serve without reimbursement.

SWDB works to coordinate policies and resources with other state agencies and LWDBs. The inclusion of key stakeholders in the membership of SWDB allows for the governing body to align such policies and resources across the state. The following state agencies have permanent memberships on SWDB: GDOL, TCSG, GVRA, and GDVS. The representatives from these organizations give valuable insight into state programs, initiatives, and the writing of the state plan. Two members of the Georgia Legislature also sit on SWDB. They give valuable insight into the direction of the legislature and keep the board up to date in key areas of interest.

(4) Assessment and Evaluation of Programs and One-Stop Program Partners

(A) *Assessment of Core Programs*

TCSG, OWD

In addition to the assessments of the workforce system described in Section II(b)(4), LWDA, as well as regional planning areas, were assessed utilizing factors identified and described in their local and regional plans, as well as assessments utilizing core performance indicators and data validation. The assessments were included as a portion of the One-Stop Certification process and will continue to be employed on a yearly basis.

The factors to be assessed included, without limitation, the following:

- Whether or not the LWDA successfully executed an MOU with all core partner programs and are the programs aligned in providing seamless services to customers?
- Whether or not the LWDA engaged employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations?
- Whether or not business and organized labor representatives on the LWDB contributed to the development of business needs strategies and partnerships?
- Whether or not the LWDA strengthened/coordinated workforce development programs and economic development?
- Whether or not the LWDA facilitated access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and through other means?
- Whether or not the LWDA, working with core partners, expanded access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment?
- Whether or not the LWDA, working with core partners, facilitated the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs?
- Whether or not the LWDA procured or provided successful models for youth workforce development activities, including activities for youth with disabilities?
- Whether or not the LWDA implemented initiatives, such as incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, utilization of effective business intermediaries and other business services and strategies designed to meet the needs of employers in the corresponding region in support of the business service strategy?

TCSG, OAE

The Office of Adult Education (OAE) uses the Georgia Adult Learners Information System (GALIS) system to generate federally-required reports for the National Reporting System (NRS) for Adult

Education, as well as additional reports at the local and state levels for program monitoring and improvement. Reports provide information on the state performance accountability measures described in section 116(b) of WIOA. OAE uses these reports, combined with the methods detailed below, to assess each program's quality, effectiveness, and improvement.

- **Grant Program Support Coordinators:** OAE has a team of four Grant Program Support Coordinators (GPSC) that provide technical assistance and support to local programs. Specifically, GPSCs regularly monitor program data to assess each program's progress toward meeting established statewide and program-specific performance benchmarks. GPSCs then provide tailored support, technical assistance, and training to programs to ensure continuous program improvement.
- **Risk Assessment & Monitoring:** Per 2 CFR § 200.331, OAE conducts an annual risk assessment on its providers. This risk assessment evaluates each provider's risk of noncompliance with both fiscal and programmatic federal and state statutes, regulations, and the grant award terms and conditions. OAE uses the risk assessment results to determine which programs to monitor as well as the type of monitoring visit the program will receive. Programs can receive a virtual or in-person monitoring visit in following areas: (a) fiscal, (b) instruction, programming & performance, and (c) data, assessment and intake.
 - OAE then uses a comprehensive monitoring process in which a team of OAE staff review and analyze program performance data, review documents, conduct pre-monitoring surveys, interview staff, students, and partner organizations, and observe classes and other activities. OAE then synthesizes the data it collected during the visit and provides the program with a Program Summary Review Form that outlines findings, areas for improvement, and commendations. If needed, OAE will place the program on a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) to address areas of noncompliance or a Program Improvement Plan (PIP) to address areas for programmatic improvement. The program then receives support from OAE's staff, including but not limited to the Director of Accountability, the Director of Instructional Services, and the program's respective GPSC, in addressing the findings and areas for improvement as well as meeting the requirements of the CAP or PIP.
- **Program Improvement Plans:** At the beginning of each state fiscal year, OAE places programs that did not meet their performance targets in the prior year on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). The PIP requires programs to:
 - Reflect on areas where they may be experiencing challenges, such as retention, teacher accountability, training and professional development, and data analysis;
 - Identify, using data, key issues and their root causes;
 - Develop a plan and timeframe to address those key issues;
 - Establish a program improvement team that includes the program administrator, the data manager, the lead instructor, the program's GPSC, as well as any additional members; and
 - Schedule monthly PIP meetings with the program improvement team to review data, discuss instructional strategies, and assess the ongoing outcomes of those strategies.

In addition, programs on a PIP receive ongoing support from OAE staff in the form of tailored professional development on data, assessment, and instructional design, and regular coaching and feedback from their GPSC.

GVRA

GVRA/VR continues to evaluate its performance under the new common performance measures. Goals are established statewide with local accountability. As GVRA/VR negotiates its federal performance goals, plans of action will be taken to improve or enhance performance. As noted previously, GVRA/VR is examining its organizational structure, processes and procedures and current staffing patterns required to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities. After this analysis is complete, a major organizational transformation will occur to improve performance outcomes.

GDOL

GDOL will use the negotiated performance goals (See Section II(b)(3)) for assessment, and has not developed any additional performance measures. GDOL assessments will evaluate programmatic activities based on WIOA negotiated performance goals. Monitoring will appraise Entered Employment Rates, Retention, and Median Earnings of participants served in the workforce system. In addition, program evaluations will measure the effectiveness of:

- Programmatic service delivery
- Priority of Service delivered to customers with barriers to employment
- Services to customer with disabilities and language barriers
- Case Management effectiveness
- Customer referrals to local workforce areas for training
- Customer satisfaction (Employer & Participant)
- Quality of referrals to employers
- Accessibility plans
- Services provided to customers through the electronic labor exchange systems
- Resource sharing partnerships/agreements
- Overall evaluation of services delivered in the Career Center and One-Stops

(B) Assessment of One-Stop Program Partner Programs

The assessment of one-stop partner programs is key to ensuring their compliance and alignment with federal, state, and local regulations and guidelines. While each State agency evaluates its subrecipients of WIOA funds for unique criteria further detailed in Section II(b)(4) and according to the core performance indicators, each partner approaches these monitoring activities with the Governor's strategic vision and goals for the WIOA program as a whole. The State of Georgia makes use of many activities to assess the successful provision of workforce services; and the activities discussed below all play a role in ensuring that the state is able to make continuous and quality improvements in adhering to federal and state regulations, providing quality services to the workforce system customer, and meeting federal and state outcome expectations. In addition to the activities detailed below, representatives from the core partner agencies (at the State level) meet monthly to discuss and

evaluate current projects and progress in alignment with the vision and goals outlined in this State Plan.

The State ensures the overall effectiveness of the workforce development system through yearly, onsite monitoring of each Local Workforce Development Area to promote continuous system improvement. As federal, state, and local guidance is released constantly, onsite monitoring ensures that LWDA's maintain up-to-date, compliant service delivery structures and practices. Onsite monitoring consists of policy and system reviews, which determine an LWDA's compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and policies. Additionally, onsite monitoring evaluates the local MOU(s) to ensure smooth and compliant implementation of the agreement amongst all one-stop partners in the LWDA. For example, local MOUs are evaluated for appropriate negotiation processes, required provisions (program service delivery, EO provisions, duration and review, partner roles and responsibilities, etc.), and necessary signatures. After that initial review, MOUs are evaluated annually to ensure effective implementation and that all partners are adhering to the agreed upon terms. To further assess job centers across the State and implementation of the required partner programs, the State has developed several tools to ensure compliance with the guidance issued for WIOA implementation and to identify potential deficiencies in the system. These tools evaluate the workforce activities both at a structural level to ensure effective systems and policies are in place, as well as at the individual level to ensure programs and services are being appropriately delivered. State staff utilize these tools, among others, to review One-Stop Certification and Re-certification, One-Stop Operator Procurement, One-Stop Memorandums of Understanding, and Infrastructure Cost Sharing Agreements. These tools allow State staff to evaluate adherence to service delivery requirements, accessibility, and appropriate partner presence, in addition to system capacity and implementation and effectiveness of partnerships.

The SWDB receives frequent updates regarding the monitoring process throughout the year, and is annually presented a final monitoring summary detailing the results of these evaluations. The report highlights areas where further guidance or assistance may be necessary. Many policies, guidance letters, and technical assistance efforts result from the issues and best practices identified during this annual review and directly contribute to Georgia's consistent, continuous improvement of its workforce system.

(C) Previous Assessment Results

The tables below provide the assessment results for the last two program years (PY17 and PY18) for Title I. As evidenced by the figures, the State is consistently meeting the negotiated performance outcomes for nearly all of the measures. This is a result of active technical assistance, continuous training on the use of the WorkSource Georgia Portal, and year-round monitoring of LWDA performance.

OWD utilizes the WorkSource Georgia Portal to store participant information and to enroll WIOA participants. The system collects information which can be utilized by LWDA case managers and management to provide systems reports on LWDA performance. LWDA's can produce reports on hard-to-serve populations, as well as pre-determined performance measure achievement. This self-assessment by LWDA's is encouraged and the Portal is used extensively by OWD for performance

monitoring. The Data and Information Team monitors performance year-round, and LWDAs are given an opportunity to renegotiate their performance levels if they are under-performing based on special and/or unforeseen circumstances. OWD staff also take a proactive stance and make every effort to intervene early, if quarterly performance data suggests that an LWDA is struggling with a measure. This type of support ensures that program design changes can be made in time to rectify issues and ensure final performance measure expectations are met. As many States have experienced, Youth can be a difficult population to serve. Georgia has experienced this as evidenced by the Youth Credential Rate, which is the only measure on which the State has underperformed in the past two years. However, due to additional technical assistance and evaluations of Youth program design, Georgia improved upon that measure between PY17 and PY18. The State will continue these efforts, in particular evaluating and improving Youth services, to ensure that all performance measures are met or exceeded.

TCSG, OWD

PY17		Actual	Negotiated Rate
Q2 Entered Employment Rate	Adults	84.1%	73.0%
	Dislocated Workers	87.5%	77.0%
Q4 Entered Employment Rate	Adults	83.3%	72.0%
	Dislocated Workers	89.1%	76.0%
Q2 Median Earnings	Adults	\$6,364	\$5,249
	Dislocated Workers	\$8,583	\$5,603
Credential Attainment Rate	Adults	81.6%	69.0%
	Dislocated Workers	77.4%	70.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	Adults	18.5%	Baseline
	Dislocated Workers	7.5%	Baseline
Q2 Entered Employment/Education/Training Rate	Youth	74.9%	65.5%
Q4 Entered Employment/Education/Training Rate	Youth	76.9%	65.5%
Q2 Median Earnings	Youth	\$2,665	Baseline
Credential Attainment Rate	Youth	55.4%	70.5%
Measurable Skill Gains	Youth	30.5%	Baseline

PY18		Actual	Negotiated Rate
Q2 Entered Employment Rate	Adults	84.2%	76.0%
	Dislocated Workers	87.0%	78.0%
Q4 Entered Employment Rate	Adults	83.2%	70.0%
	Dislocated Workers	85.5%	75.0%
Q2 Median Earnings	Adults	\$6,775	\$4,500
	Dislocated Workers	\$9,360	\$5,000
Credential Attainment Rate	Adults	71.3%	40.0%
	Dislocated Workers	73.1%	50.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	Adults	30.1%	Baseline
	Dislocated Workers	17.4%	Baseline
Q2 Entered Employment/Education/Training Rate	Youth	78.3%	60.0%
Q4 Entered Employment/Education/Training Rate	Youth	77.2%	60.0%
Q2 Median Earnings	Youth	\$3,052	Baseline
Credential Attainment Rate	Youth	63.1%	72.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	Youth	38.7%	Baseline

TCSG, OAE

During the preceding two-year period, the Office of Adult Education (OAE) negotiated targets for the Measurable Skill Gains performance indicator and collected baseline data for the remaining performance indicators. The table below displays the previous assessment results for the last two program years (PY) with complete sets of data:

Performance Indicator	PY17 Negotiated	PY17 Actual	PY18 Negotiated	PY18 Actual	PY19 Negotiated	PY19 Actual
Employment 2nd Quarter after Exit	Baseline	39.96%	Baseline	40.88%	Baseline	TBD
Employment 4th Quarter after Exit	Baseline	N/A	Baseline	40.70%	Baseline	TBD
Median Earnings (2nd Quarter after Exit)	Baseline	\$3,683	Baseline	\$3,756	Baseline	TBD
Credential Attainment Rate	Baseline	N/A	Baseline	43.38%	Baseline	TBD
Measurable Skill Gains	53.00%	52.88%	56.00%	53.40%	57.00%	TBD
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Baseline	N/A	Baseline	N/A	Baseline	N/A

Based on the assessment results, OAE plans to develop key local reports that allow programs to disaggregate performance data at the local level, monitor performance regularly, and track progress towards benchmarks. OAE will also continue to monitor performance indicators and career services data throughout the year to inform technical assistance and support for local programs. OAE will place programs failing to meet annual benchmarks on Performance Improvement Plans at the start of each year. OAE's Instructional Services and Professional Development & Transition Resources teams will also provide targeted technical assistance and training on effective instructional strategies for National Reporting System (NRS)-approved assessments.

GVRA

GVRA/VR is assessed by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). As data for the new common performance measures is submitted, RSA will determine a baseline and GVRA/VR leadership will develop further performance goals. VR is strategically evaluating its baseline measures to determine strengths, weaknesses and needed process changes. For the VR program, these indicators are not applicable for PY 2020 and PY 2021; however, they will be applicable for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

GDOL

In addition to utilizing USDOL-ETA negotiated performance goals for program assessment, GDOL also utilizes an analysis of key data indicators to assess the effectiveness of its reemployment activities.

Prior to drafting our WIOA Title III Wagner Peyser planned activities for PY2020-21, we examined data elements such as (but not limited to) those reflected below. They represent the various spectrums of our labor exchange system, i.e., how many job seeker customers are engaging our system, how many are availing staff assisted versus self-services, how many employer customers are engaging our system, etc.

Although conditions in the economy provided an increasing abundance of job openings through PY17-18, our workforce system was faced with serving job seekers having significant barriers to employment and requiring intense labor exchange services. This population includes individuals who have limited skills and training, may have background challenges preventing them from being seamlessly placed in employment, have a disability, are homeless, or have had long term dependence on other government benefits.

As a result, the state recognized that often these customers take longer to place and unfortunately in some cases still experienced challenges sustaining employment, which could negatively impact employment measures at the 2nd and 4th quarter after exit. The state renewed its collaboration with other workforce partners, such as DHS-Department of Family & Children Services, Department of Juvenile Justice and Vocational Rehabilitation to customize services for some of their identified customer population who have significant barriers to employment as there remains a great need for reemployment services.

The Employ Georgia (EG) web-based labor exchange system was also enhanced, with an anticipation of an increase in job seeker accounts – and an increase of resumes developed through the system to be displayed for employers to review as they seek skilled workers in PY19.

During PY17 & 18:

- Job Seeker Customers Registering Accounts in EmployGeorgia were 197, 439 and 164,878 respectively.
- Job Seeker Customers Served were 190,465 and 235,747 respectively.
- Employer Customers Registering Accounts in EmployGeorgia were 4,740 and 3,385 respectively.
- Employer Job Postings Displayed in EmployGeorgia were 167,395 and 172,068 respectively.
- Employer Job Openings in EmployGeorgia were 454,533 and 586,995 respectively.
- Referrals to Employer Job Openings were 348,075 and 440,000 respectively.

GDOL also expanded reemployment activities and employment services strategies, thereby increasing job seekers' abilities to reconnect to the workforce. Collaborating with UI to offer customized reemployment services through the RESEA strategies, GDOL provides a structured plan of employability to long-term unemployed job seekers and has shown to significantly increase their ability to get a job. These expanded efforts targeted those most likely to exhaust their benefits as well as all transitioning veterans receiving unemployment compensation, as Georgia has identified many in this population as having more barriers to reemployment.

During PY17 & 18:

- Referrals to RESEA were 4,200 and 9,849 respectively.
- RESEA Completion Rates were 89% and 89% respectively.

Our assessment revealed that Georgia had achieved the lowest average UI duration average in the nation for the twenty-fourth consecutive quarter (7.9 weeks through PY18, and anticipate to maintain this ranking through PY19 and beyond.

During PY17 & 18:

- Average UI Duration Rate was 8.3 (*) Weeks and 7.9 (**) Weeks respectively.

(*) Lowest in the nation for 20 consecutive quarters / (**) Lowest in the nation for 24 consecutive quarters.

Furthermore, as a result of assessing PY17-18 customers facing significant challenges, GDOL sought to become an authorized Ticket-to-Work Employment Network provider, to better assist that particular population.

Even with all of the above, our previous assessment has revealed that many job seeker customers can also at times benefit from receiving remote services, either to ease transportation barriers or simple ease of use. As a result, Georgia is expanding its ability to avail critical self and staff-assisted services remotely.

Regarding other previous assessment of an evaluation study activity occurring primarily in PY17-18, Georgia was one of only ten states awarded a three-year \$15 million grant by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, via a Georgia DFCS grant application co-written by GDOL. Upon award, Georgia DFCS, selected GDOL to administer the ten-county project titled Georgia SNAP Works 2.0, who in turn selected three local WIOA LWDA's to participate as partners: Atlanta Regional Commission, Coastal Workforce Services and DeKalb Workforce Development.

For evaluation purposes, 2,500 individuals were randomly selected to be in the pilot enhanced services group, and an equal number for the control regular services group. Those in the enhanced services group received coordinated case management services through an integrated system based on a medical HMO.

GDOL primary case managers worked closely with secondary case managers (specialists in partner organizations), each applying their respective expertise to meeting the needs of participants and sharing information via a centralized system. A mix of strategies that supported rapid attachment to employment, included:

- Three-tiered participant assessment
- Employment plan development
- Education and training
- Job search

- Intensive case management
- Community partner support services
- Rehabilitative services
- Employability workshop

This multiple strategy approach which concluded direct comparative services in PY18, was intended to reach individuals with a variety of barriers related to chronic unemployment, such as low skills or limited work experience.

The following career pathways were selected: manufacturing, warehousing, transportation, medical, automotive, building maintenance and welding. In all of the selected areas, these industries have numerous training and job opportunities for a variety of backgrounds, interests and barriers.

The goal of the grant study was to:

- Increase the number of SNAP work registrants who obtain unsubsidized employment
- Increase the earned income of work registrants
- Reduce the reliance of work registrants on public assistance
- Provide a comparative analysis between the ‘treatment’ and ‘control’ groups, to gauge the effectiveness of the collaborative HMO treatment program design

Initial Unemployment Insurance wage matching indicates not only have an over 50% of participants obtained employment one quarter after their referral, but the same number has maintained employment for up to ten quarters (2.5 years) later. An analysis of employment and wage outcomes will continue for all evaluation participants during PY’s 2020-21

During PY17 & 18:

- Georgia’s WP employment rate in the 2nd quarter after exit was 70.4% and 70.05 respectively.
- Georgia’s WP employment rate in the 4th quarter after exit was 70.1% and 70.9 respectively.
- Georgia’s WP median earnings in the 2nd quarter after exit was \$7,682 and \$5,251 respectively.

All of the above previous assessments and resulting actions are anticipated to increase Georgia’s Wagner Peyser performance outcomes in PY20-21.

(D) Evaluation

Georgia has a commitment to maintaining its status as the best state in which to do business. Part of this status is having a workforce trained and ready to do the jobs that employers demand. The workforce system will continuously assess its core programs and evaluate them on their effectiveness and efficiency. Some examples of these assessments include; constant monitoring of local and state performance measures, the State Workforce Development Board’s Performance & Accountability Committee, and annual programmatic, compliance, and financial monitoring. In addition to

compliance evaluations conducted through the annual monitoring process, OWD evaluates the efficiency and effectiveness of programs through desk reviews, technical assistance trainings, and monthly interactions with LWDA leadership and staff via teleconference. OWD seeks to continuously improve the one-stop delivery system by providing assistance to LWDBs, one-stop operators, one-stop partners, and providers with frequent WorkSource Georgia Academy trainings. These efforts assist OWD in monitoring the quality of programs and partner relationships, in addition to compliance with local, state, and federal policies and regulations, by ensuring information is disseminated throughout the system and additional guidance is given, as necessary. OWD identifies and disseminates information on best practices relating to business outreach, partnerships, and service delivery strategies to enable LWDBs to meet and exceed negotiated local levels of performance, sustain fiscal integrity, and achieve other measures of effectiveness (i.e., customer satisfaction, confidence from community partners, etc.). Many of the topics covered in these trainings and evaluated through desks reviews are identified by the monitoring process or are requested by local staff.

OAE actively participates in the Secretary of Education's national evaluations of adult education. OAE also evaluates its mid-year and end-of-year progress towards meeting WIOA performance indicators, the State's workforce development system vision and goals, TCSG's strategic plan measurable objectives, and internal strategic planning goals set by OAE staff. OAE analyzes both quantitative and qualitative data to evaluate overall performance. OAE also works with the TCSG Research division and has partnered with the Adult Literacy Research Center housed at Georgia State University to research adult learner outcomes in Georgia.

(5) Distribution of Funds for Core Programs

(A) For Title I Programs

(i) Youth Activities

Youth Funds- The standard allocation formula gives equal weight to the following three formula factors:

- 33.3% - Relative number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in each LWDA, compared to the total number of unemployed individuals in all areas of substantial unemployment in the State;
- 33.3% - Relative excess number of unemployed individuals in each LWDA, compared to the total excess number of unemployed individuals in the State; and
- 33.3% - Relative number of disadvantaged youth in each LWDA, compared to the total number of disadvantaged youth in the State.

Note: Georgia has no LWDAs with rural concentrated employment program grants.

Note: If LWDA composition remains the same, the LWDA is guaranteed to receive an allotment percentage that is not less than 90% of the average allocation percentage for the prior two years.

(ii) Adult and Training Activities

Adult Funds- The standard allocation formula gives equal weight to the following three formula factors:

- 33.3% - Relative number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in each LWDA, compared to the total number of unemployed individuals in areas of substantial unemployment in the State;
- 33.3% - Relative excess number of unemployed individuals in each LWDA, compared to the total excess number of unemployed individuals in the State; and
- 33.3% - Relative number of disadvantaged adults in each LWDA, compared to the total number of disadvantaged adults in the State.

Note: If LWDA composition remains the same, the LWDA is guaranteed to receive an allotment percentage that is not less than 90% of the average allocation percentage for the prior two years.

(iii) Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Activities

Dislocated Worker Funds- Funds are allocated according to the six federally mandated factors, and three additional state-developed factors. The factors and their weights are as follows:

- 40% - Number of individuals who received unemployment insurance with earnings, for the most recent 24-month period;
- 5% - Number of unemployed individuals in excess of 6.5% of the civilian labor force for the most recent 24 months;
- 10% - Number of individuals who received unemployment insurance who were from firms that were part of the Mass Layoff Statistics data for the latest two years;
- 10% - Number of individuals employed in industries that have experienced a decline in employment of 5% or greater over the last two years;
- 2.5% - Number of individuals employed as farmers or ranchers according to the most recently available census data;
- 2.5% - Number of individuals who collected unemployment for 15 weeks or more for the last 18-month period;
- 10% - Number of individuals employed in manufacturing for the last 18-month period;
- 10% - Number of individuals employed in retail and wholesale trade for the last 18-month period; and
- 10% - Number of individuals enrolled in WIOA dislocated worker training services during the prior program year.

Note: If LWDA composition remains the same, the LWDA is guaranteed to receive an allotment percentage that is not less than 90% of the average allocation percentage for the prior two years.

(B) For Title II

(i) Multi-Year Grants and Contracts

OAE launched its competitive, multi-year Request for Application (RFA) process in late January/early February 2020. Per 34 CFR § 463.23 – 24, eligible entities with demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy activities can apply for the following grant opportunities:

Grant Opportunity	Funding Source(s)	Allowable Activities
General Adult Education Grant	WIOA Sections 231 and 225	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Basic & Secondary Education • Corrections Education

	State Matching Funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> English Language Acquisition Activities Family Literacy Integrated Education & Training Workplace Preparation Activities
Integrated English Language & Civics Education (IELCE) Grant	WIOA Section 243	Integrated English Language & Civics Education in combination with Integrated Education & Training

To demonstrate effectiveness, applicants must submit a completed demonstrated effectiveness table that includes quantitative data related to their effectiveness in the following areas:

- Improving the skills of eligible individuals who have low levels of literacy in reading, writing, mathematics, English language acquisition, and other subject areas relevant to the services contained in the application; and
- Obtaining outcomes for participants related to employment, attainment of secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and transition to postsecondary education and training.
- Applicants must meet the minimum threshold in each area to be eligible to apply. OAE will only review applications for applicants that demonstrate effectiveness.

Grant applications are due in April 2020. Upon receipt, a team of external reviewers will review and score applications from eligible providers using the General Adult Education, IELCE, Corrections, and Family Literacy rubrics. Specifically, the rubrics require reviewers to evaluate the quality of each application based on the following sections and considerations outlined in WIOA Section 231(e).

Application Structure	
Section	WIOA Consideration(s)
Program Overview	1, 4, 13
Staffing	9
The Student Experience	11
Instructional Plan	5, 6, 7, 8, 10
Partnerships	4, 10, 11
Past Effectiveness	2, 3
Data, Outcomes & Continuous Improvement	Required information per Section 232(4)
Budget	Required information per section 232(1)
Family Literacy Supplement	
Corrections Supplement	

In addition, per WIOA Section 231(e)(4), the state will consider the extent to which each eligible provider's application demonstrates alignment with: (a) the proposed activities and services and the strategies and goals of their respective LWDB's local plan, and (b) their respective one-stop partner's activities and services. To help the state assess alignment between an applicant's plans and their local workforce development board's (LWDB) local plan, LWDBs will review the applications of any applicants proposing to serve individuals within that local workforce development area (LWDA) using the Local Workforce Development Board Feedback Sheet. Through this process, LWDBs can provide feedback on how the applicant could better align their services with the local plan. OAE will consider the LWDB feedback as part of consideration four in determining the extent to which the applicant's proposed activities align with the LWDB's local plans and the one-stop provider's activities.

OAE will award funds through a funding formula that is based on enrollment, with additional dollars per student awarded for providers serving students in Section I and II rural counties as designated by the Office of Rural Health Policy (<https://www.hrsa.gov/sites/default/files/hrsa/ruralhealth/resources/forhpeligibleareas.pdf>), and negotiated with awarded providers. Both general adult education grants and IELCE grants are for a four-year period, from July 2020 to July 2024. However, all funded programs will submit a continuation grant application each spring. OAE will review the continuation grant applications, as well as adjust the funding allocations based on the availability of state and federal funds and each provider's annual enrollment and ability to meet their performance targets.

(ii) Direct and Equitable Access

Per WIOA Section 231(c), OAE will ensure that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply and compete for grants as well as use the same grant announcement process and application process for all eligible providers. Specifically, to accomplish these objectives, OAE will:

- Publish the grant announcement, along with information about the grant technical assistance day, in each Georgia county's official legal organ newspaper, as well as on TCSG's website and social media;
- Host a technical assistance day for all eligible providers prior to opening the application. OAE will also record the technical assistance day and post the recording on its website so that all eligible providers have access to the information, even if they were unable to attend the technical assistance day in person; and
- Answer applicant questions directly on TCSG's website in a public forum, so that all applicants have access to the answers.
- In addition, OAE will use the same application form and process for all eligible providers applying for a general adult education grant and the same application form process for all eligible providers applying for an IELCE grant.

(C) Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation

GVRA/VR is considered a Combined Program. As such, GVRA operates under one agency that serves all individuals with disabilities in the state. Therefore, there is no distribution of funds between two agencies.

(6) Program Data

(A) *Data Alignment and Integration*

(i) Interoperable Management Information Systems

Core partners in Georgia currently have separate, agency-specific data systems to handle case management and reporting. At this time, these systems do not exchange data in real time with other core partner systems. However, the data integration working group, with the assistance of GTRI, has completed Phase I of a multi-phased process to integrate the data systems of the core partners. This initial phase allows for each core partner to identify co-enrolled participants so that the partners may correctly report such enrollments in their respective Federal quarterly and annual reports. Phase II of this process will allow for partners to identify co-enrollments in real time instead of quarterly and work for this phase is currently underway.

(ii) Integrated Data Systems

At this time, these systems do not exchange data in real time with other core partner systems. However, the data integration working group, with the assistance of GTRI, has completed Phase I of a multi-phased process to integrate the data systems of the core partners. This initial phase allows for each core partner to identify co-enrolled participants so that the partners may correctly report such enrollments in their respective Federal quarterly and annual reports. Phase II of this process will allow for partners to identify co-enrollments in real time instead of quarterly and work for this phase is currently underway.

(iii) One-Stop Partner Technology and Data System Alignment

Efforts to integrate data reporting across the core partners has been a focus of the State of Georgia through the last State Plan cycle and will continue to be until full integration is accomplished. As mandated under WIOA, the State has worked the last four years to become fully compliant with co-location requirements of all One-stops and affiliate sites. An iterative process was utilized to analyze the service delivery structure in each LWDA to determine the most strategic integration of services across core partners (and beyond, where feasible) to better deliver federal workforce services. Progress has been made with the integration of financial and administrative processes across core partners; however, this remains the most challenging to address. The State is working diligently to fully integrate data reporting efforts, and seeks to develop a technology platform that can accommodate and synchronize the existing disparate data management systems currently utilized in the State.

(iv) Performance Accountability Reports

TCSG, OWD

In addition to quarterly reports distributed to LWDA's, OWD staff work with LWDA staff throughout the year to ensure success, identifying and addressing any areas where performance is not meeting expectations. Data on performance is shared constantly with the SWDB Performance & Accountability Committee, as well as local workforce boards. Any recommendations on performance measures identified through these venues will be taken into account.

TCSG, OAE

The Georgia Adult Learners Information System (GALIS) serves as an electronic record of students' activities and accomplishments in adult education. GALIS also integrates data matches from Navigator (the state's high school equivalency management system), the National Student Clearinghouse, and the Georgia Unemployment Insurance database from the Georgia Department of Labor on an ongoing basis.

OAE uses the GALIS system to generate all federally required reports for the National Reporting System for Adult Education under section 116, performance accountability system. To support data integration, all core programs and one-stops must use OAE and National Reporting System (NRS) approved assessments to collect measurable skill gain data consistently across programs.

GVRA

GVRA/VR uses the Alliance AWARE data system for case management and federal reporting. At this time, the system does track co-enrollment for quarterly reporting purposes.

(B) Assessment of Participants' Post-Program Success

TCSG, OWD

OWD and the LWDA's utilize UI wage records as well as follow-up services and supplemental data to record outcomes aligned with the WIOA performance measures. The local areas offer follow-up services to individuals who have completed the program which allows the system to receive feedback from participants on the services they received, training they participated in and any successes or opportunities for improvement. Monitoring performance outcomes enables the system to adjust or reinforce its efforts as needed.

TCSG, OAE

OAE's GALIS system is set up to conduct regularly scheduled data matches with Navigator, National Student Clearinghouse, and the Georgia Unemployment Insurance database from the Georgia Department of Labor to assess the progress of participants who are exiting from adult education programs and entering, persisting in, and completing postsecondary education, or entering or remaining in employment.

(C) Use of Unemployment Insurance (UI) Wage Record Data

Through EG and GWS data collection and wage matching, GDOL provides quarterly reports to local career centers on their progress toward achieving negotiated performance goals on common measures. Through contractual agreement with TCSG, GDOL also provides federal reporting services for the latter. This reporting capability also extends to grant and/or partner sub-levels, either by canned or ad hoc reporting generated by the State or authorized partner staff.

GDOL currently manages the state UI program and makes UI wage information available to state partners, as the law allows, for employment and wage-related outcome identification for federal performance standards. Under WIOA, this information will be made available, as the law allows, to the core partners so that performance can be captured.

OAE's GALIS system conducts regularly scheduled data matches with the Georgia Unemployment Insurance database from the Georgia Department of Labor – enabling it to utilize quarterly UI wage records for performance accountability.

(D) Privacy Safeguards

All core partners that will provide and/or share data in order to execute federal program requirements will do so under a signed MOU to ensure the security of sensitive information. All core partners will agree to follow all applicable federal, state, and local laws pertaining to confidential information. Each partner will ensure that the collection and use of any information that contains personally identifiable information will be limited to purposes that support the programs and activities described by the relevant MOU's.

The core partners will follow all applicable federal, state and local laws as well as any signed MOUs. In addition, there are written policies and procedures to safeguard the confidentiality of all personal information by following the requirements of CFR 34: 361.38. These policies and procedures include the following:

- All information regarding applicants and clients developed or purchased by the Program shall be held confidential;
- Confidential information is only released in accordance with state law, federal law or program policy and is exempt from the Georgia Open Records Act (O.C.G.A. 50-18-76) and from third party discovery in litigation (O.C.G.A. 9-11-34);
- Information shall be used only for purposes directly related with the administration of the vocational rehabilitation program;
- All applicants and clients are informed of their right to request removal or amendment of misleading or inaccurate information from their case file;
- Each applicant/client file shall be clearly labeled as CONFIDENTIAL
- All applicants/clients and/or their representatives shall be informed of these policies and procedures in their mode of communication, including the need to collect personal information and the policies governing the use of the information;
- Any medical, psychological or other information deemed harmful to the client shall not be released directly to the applicant/client;
- Third party information shall never be released unless a third party release has been obtained;
- Any information released shall be stamped with a property and confidentiality stamp;
- Information may be available to the applicant/client with the written consent of the applicant/client;
- Information may be released to another program or authority for its program uses with the written consent of the client; however, if the information is deemed harmful to the client, it shall only be released when assurance is received that the information will not further be released to the applicant/client;
- Information may be released without the written consent of the applicant/client in an emergency situation to protect the applicant/client or others when the applicant/client poses a threat to his/her safety or the safety of others;

- Information may be released without the written consent of the applicant/client in response to investigations involving law enforcement except when expressly prohibited by federal or state laws;
- Information may be released without the written consent of the applicant/client as mandated by judicial order;
- Information may be released for an approved audit, evaluation or research only for purposes directly connected with the administration of the program or for purposes which would significantly improve the quality of life for individuals with disabilities and only when confidential assurances have been met.

GVRA/VR follows all applicable laws and has written policies regarding confidential information as outlined in CFR § 361.38

OAE's Policy and Procedure Manual contains written policies for data management that all programs must follow, including data collection requirements for participants and privacy safeguards. GALIS users have restricted access to certain features depending on their tier. The GALIS database team also regularly performs security updates. OAE and all local programs are required to protect confidential information in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Students must provide written consent for their records and the disclosure of information, and programs develop processes for students to withdraw their consent.

(7) Priority of Service for Veterans

VPL 07-09 and its corresponding TEGL 10-09 discuss Implementing Priority of Service (POS) for Veterans and Eligible Spouses in all Qualified Job Training Programs funded in whole or in part by the U.S. Department of Labor. The VPL and TEGL explain that veterans and eligible spouses are eligible for priority of service.

VPL 07-09, TEGL 10-09, and Title 20 of the CFR, Section 1010 define veterans and eligible spouses and explain the provision of priority of service for covered persons (i.e. veterans and eligible spouses) over non-covered persons for the receipt of employment, training, and placement services under a qualified job training program, funded in whole or in part by the Department of Labor.

TEGL 10-09 states, "Under this definition, the term 'veteran' means a person who served at least one day in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable. Active service includes full-time Federal service in the National Guard or a Reserve component. This definition of 'active service' does not include full-time duty performed strictly for training purposes."

U.S. Code Title 38, Chapter 42, Section 4215(a) states an eligible spouse of means one of the following:

- Any veteran who died of a service-connected disability
- Any member of the Armed Forces serving on active duty who, at the time of application for priority of service, is listed in one or more of the following categories and has been so listed for a total of more than 90 days
- missing in action
- captured in line of duty by a hostile force, or

- forcibly detained or interned in the line of duty by a foreign government or power
- Any veteran who has a total disability resulting from a service-connected disability, as evaluated by the Department of Veterans Affairs
- Any veteran who died while a disability, so evaluated, was in existence

Priority of Service informational signage is posted in the lobby, at each of the local career centers to bring awareness to all customers who may be veterans or eligible spouses. POS brochures are also made available in the designated resource area or at the main front counter, that highlight and explain POS.

When a customer enters the One Stop, they complete their registration which includes the GDOL-3404, Veterans/Eligible Spouse Priority of Service Information Sheet. Individuals who classify themselves as a veteran, or eligible spouse during registration, are initially identified as being eligible for POS, placed on a designated POS log for immediate verification and priority access to services. Wagner-Peyser staff verify that all registration information is complete and immediately explain the provisions of priority of service for covered persons.

Upon POS information being provided, staff further review the Veterans/Eligible Spouse Priority of Service Information Sheet (GDOL- 3404 form) with the individual to determine if they are eligible to receive Individualized Career Services, often referred to as Case Management. Wagner Peyser staff will “warm handoff” the Veteran/Eligible Spouse to a DVOP Specialist for these services.

The veteran or eligible spouse must meet the criteria for having a Significant Barrier to Employment (SBE) or be designated as a special population. VPL 03-14, including Changes 1 and 2, and the companion TEGL 19-13 define the criteria for having SBEs and provide expansion and clarification of SBEs.

Significant Barriers to Employment (SBEs) include:

- A special disabled or disabled veteran
- Homelessness
- A recently-separated service member who at any point in the previous 12 months has been unemployed for 27 weeks or more
- An offender who has been released from incarceration
- Lacking a high school diploma or equivalent certificate
- Low-income

Special Populations include:

- Veterans aged 18-24
- A Transitioning Service Member (TSM) in need of intensive services
- A wounded, ill or injured service member receiving treatment at Military Treatment Facilities or Warrior Transition Units, as well as the spouses and family caregivers of such wounded, ill or injured service members
- Vietnam-era veterans

Wagner-Peyser (WP) staff provide services to veteran customers who do not identify a Significant Barrier to Employment. Veterans may also receive reemployment services from the GDOL through the UI Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program. RESEA provides customized workforce services, including reemployment orientation, individualized career assessment, and job search assistance.

In addition, GDOL's EG system, described throughout the plan, provides specialized services to job seekers who are veterans. Conventional approaches to veterans' job placement are normally based on USDOL's Military Occupational Classification-Standard Occupational Classification (MOC-SOC) crosswalk which maps each military occupation to its civilian equivalent. However, these mappings are very literal, do not account for market demand, and fail the majority of service members whose combat occupations have no civilian equivalents. EG's Focus Career Explorer uses a proprietary crosswalk of military and civilian occupations to ensure that every veteran receives matches for in-demand civilian jobs, including those whose military occupations do not have civilian equivalents (e.g., infantry). EG has undertaken a detailed review of each of the nearly 10,000 MOC's to identify matches based on corresponding high-demand careers at a variety of levels – for each specific MOC, for similar MOC's, and overall.

(8) Addressing the Accessibility of the One-Stop Delivery System for Individuals with Disabilities

Georgia's One-Stop delivery system is focused on ensuring universal access across its workforce system. The State and its local partners maintain compliance with the provisions of WIOA Section 188, which require programmatic and physical accessibility. Through monitoring performed at both the state and local levels, Georgia ensures that all One-Stops are in compliance with Section 188 of WIOA, the ADA, and other applicable regulations. Individuals who seek to utilize Georgia's workforce system can expect facilities, whether physical or virtual, to meet federally mandated accessibility standards. In addition, the State maintains a Non-Discrimination Plan (NDP), formally called the Methods of Administration (MOA), which details how compliance with WIOA Section 188 will be maintained. The NDP is a "living" document, which ensures current federal regulations and directives are implemented at the state and local level as quickly as possible.

Each of the State's core program administrators monitor for compliance independently. OWD, acting as the administrator of Title I-B, monitors for WIOA Section 188 compliance across Georgia's nineteen LWDA's. GVRA, the administrator of VR (Vocational Rehabilitation), coordinates physical accessibility across the service delivery system through its "ADA Checklist for Readily Achievable Barrier Removal," and the "Checklist for Existing Facilities." GDOL, the Wagner-Peyser administrator, provides services from its career centers and monitors them for ADA compliance through their "Checklist for Facility Maintenance Responsibilities under the ADA." Generally, local Equal Opportunity Officers are responsible for resolving any discrepancies found during monitoring.

Per federal law, each LWDA must appoint a local Equal Opportunity Officer who is responsible for ensuring local WIOA Section 188 compliance. Local Equal Opportunity Officers are responsible for informing senior staff of applicable federal regulations and ensuring all programs and activities are implemented in compliance. Additionally, local Equal Opportunity Officers collect and resolve local grievances and complaints as needed. Local Equal Opportunity Officers actively liaises with the State's

Title I-B Equal Opportunity Officer and USDOL's Civil Rights Center to remain current on regulatory updates and guidance. They are then responsible for circulating new information locally and ensuring it is properly implemented.

Additionally, to ensure programmatic accessibility practices are effectively implemented, the OWD Strategic Populations Team provides robust technical assistance and guidance to designated One-Stop points of contact within the nineteen LWDA's. Specifically, the Strategic Populations Disability Services Lead provides technical assistance and guidance to address the programmatic needs of individuals with disabilities.

One-Stop designated points of contact within the nineteen LWDA's will be provided training on topics such as customer self-identification of disabilities, outreach and engagement of customers who have self-identified, resource mapping with disabled customers to attain employment goals. Training will be delivered on a quarterly basis in partnership between the Disability Services Lead and subject matter experts within the disability arena such as American Dream Employment Network, Georgia Tools for Life, and Disability IN (formerly US Business Leadership Network). Training will be delivered in a hybrid format, combining in-seat, web-conferencing, and self-directed videos. Lastly, OWD in Georgia will continue to utilize Workforce GPS for ongoing training. An example of this is an upcoming training which focuses on serving disabled customers, forming partnerships for services and employer engagement for disabled customers. LWDA points of contact will be invited to attend this online seminar.

Georgia's Office of Workforce Development is an administrative employment network through the American Dream Employment Network. Currently, two LWDA's – specifically Northeast Georgia and Atlanta Regional Commission – have signed Memorandums of Understanding to expand the OWD's Employment Network for customers with disabilities and beneficiaries of Social Security benefits. The selected points of contact for the LWDA's will be provided EN (Employment Network) specific training by the Disability Services Lead and subject matter expert partners on a monthly and quarterly basis in a hybrid format. Trainings will focus on (1) the benefit of financial sustainability by incentivizing employment; (2) embedding outreach and engagement efforts into the existing orientation and intake activities of the LWDA's; and (3) assisting customers to understand their access to post-employment resources and work incentive benefits.

One-Stop facilities currently vary in the type of assistive technology available to customers. Specific types of technology may include computer terminals in the lobby area equipped with software, hardware and physical accommodations as listed below:

- Visually impaired or legally blind accommodations such as:
 1. JAWS text-to-speech software
 2. MAGic magnifier software
 3. OpenBook software
 4. NuEyes Pro R7
 5. Magni Pros 3X Ultra Bright page magnifier
 6. Colorblind glasses

- Hearing impaired or legally deaf accommodations such as:
 1. Purple virtual interpreter services
 2. Voice magnifier for telephone
 3. Interpretype C2.0 basic system
 4. Pocket talkers
 5. Speakers

- Physical disabilities accommodations such as:
 1. Varidesk ProPlus 36 electric
 2. Ourlink Smart Plugs
 3. Logitech K400 Plus wireless touch keyboard and built-in touchpad
 4. Ergonomic handheld trackball mouse
 5. Laser ergonomic 5-button trackball
 6. Flamingo Buddy mic and headset

- Learning disability accommodations such as:
 1. WYNN software for individuals with low literacy and writing abilities

As an added means of expanding programmatic accessibility, GVRA, as a core partner, will be leaned upon to share their professional expertise to support the local One-Stop operators with assistive work technology related services for individuals with disabilities. Additional supports in this area may include assistive technology assessments and trainings for staff within local One-Stop locations which (1) focus on a specific disability such as JAWS software for blind/ visually impaired customers or virtual interpreter services for deaf/ hearing impaired customers; (2) demonstrate how to offer access to assistive technology equipment using a more universal design model; (3) provide basic information on how to use the equipment. These supports are intended to remove programmatic barriers and increase accessibility at the One-Stops across the 19 LWDA's.

Separately, as a component of one-stop certification, the State collects a business plan from each LWDA which details how a new one-stop will satisfy accessibility requirements and the provisions of WIOA Section 188. In order to be certified, each comprehensive One-Stop must satisfy the requisite federal criteria. This process ensures universal access to programmatic services and facilities are maintained across the state.

GVRA, when requested, assesses physical accessibility of the service delivery system based on the ADAAA Accessibility Guidelines.

To facilitate expanding programmatic accessibility at the local One-Stop, GVRA provides assistive work technology related services for eligible individuals with disabilities. Additional supports delivered, as requested, to the One-Stop locations may include: assistive technology assessments and trainings for staff that focus on disability awareness, providing services using the universal design model, and basic information on how to use assistive technology equipment. These supports are intended to remove programmatic barriers and increase accessibility at the local level One-Stops as well as across the 19 LWDA's.

(9) Addressing the Accessibility of the One-Stop Delivery System for Individuals with Limited English Proficiency

Any entity administering WIOA programs and activities shall ensure that no individual is discriminated against based on national origin. The regulations governing the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of WIOA consider discrimination on grounds of national origin to include treating an individual “adversely because they (or their families or ancestors) are from a particular country or part of the world, because of ethnicity or accent (including physical, linguistic, and cultural characteristics closely associated with a national origin group), or because the recipient perceives the individual to be of a certain national origin, even if they are not.”⁹ Further, recipients shall take reasonable steps to ensure that each limited English proficient (LEP) individual served or encountered is adequately informed about the services available to them and able to participate in the program or activity.¹⁰ Georgia’s agencies responsible for administering the programs funded under WIOA continue to ensure that LEP individuals are provided meaningful access to all services and programs.

Georgia’s one-stop center operators and one-stop delivery system partners comply with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of WIOA and continue to provide programmatic access to all individuals, including those with LEP. All one-stops shall provide notice to LEP individuals that interpretation and translation services are available upon request. In some local area’s one-stops, where a significant proportion of LEP individuals seek services, language identification cards may be used to assist LEP individuals in identifying their primary language. If an LEP individual is determined eligible for services, the staff is instructed to document in the WorkSource Georgia Portal. The State’s system tracks what language assistance was provided and may be necessary for continued participation. The information stored in the WorkSource Georgia Portal and the State tracking system is secure, and the participant’s LEP remains confidential.

More robust LEP services are routinely provided in local areas that serve significant LEP populations. Bilingual staff proficient in speaking and interpreting the most commonly identified non-English languages are typically accessible on-site to assist customers with getting the services they need. If bilingual staff is unavailable on-site, One-Stop staff members are instructed to use GDOL’s Multi-Lingual Directory. The Multi-Lingual Directory personnel is then able to immediately assist the LEP individual in accessing services. In addition, the GDOL contracts with the Language Line, which provides interpreter services in over one-hundred languages to assist LEP customers. Absolute Interpreting Service Inc. and Latin Americans Translators Network (LATN), which offer sign language assistance, are additional resources available to staff.

OAE is equipped to provide English language acquisition services and other adult literacy activities to LEP individuals when they are referred to adult education. Programs offering English language acquisition services receive ongoing targeted professional development and support from the OAE Professional Development and Transition Resources team. Programs must use OAE and NRS-approved assessments for English Language Learners to monitor learning and support LEP students. The OAE also holds a competitive Request for Application process to determine Integrated English Literacy and Civics

⁹ Regulation 29 C.F.R. § 38.9(a)

¹⁰ Regulation 29 C.F.R. § 38.9(b)

Education (IELCE) programs throughout the State. IELCE programs assist immigrants and other LEP individuals through instruction in literacy, English language acquisition, citizenship responsibilities, rights, civic participation, and workforce training.

IV. COORDINATION WITH STATE PLAN PROGRAMS

The State created a working group to plan and coordinate the writing of the State Plan. The working group was comprised of different members of the workforce system, including GDOL, TCSG, and GVRA. Additionally, the group sought feedback from the state's local workforce development areas and business representatives through members of SWDB.

Upon release of the Unified and Combined State Plan Requirements, the working group met to discuss which type of plan to submit. A Unified State Plan was decided upon and recommended to the Governor. The group was then tasked with writing and developing various sections of the plan. During the writing process, TCSG staff assisted each agency partner with writing, formatting, and editing support. Once complete, each group submitted their sections, which were then combined to create the first version of the Unified State Plan. This version went before the State Workforce Development Board Executive Committee, and the committee approved it on January 17, 2020.

Upon approval, the plan went out for public comment on January 17, 2020, on the TCSG site for 30 consecutive days. During the public comment period, the SWDB met and reviewed the plan extensively. The meeting was facilitated by an independent entity and was open to the public and feedback was gathered and considered. After the 30-day period, the plan came down, and submitted comments were organized into sections and taken to the working group for review. Each working group discussed their relevant comments and determined whether the comments warranted a change in the State Plan, or if they should be responded to individually. Once the group made changes, the responses were compiled and re-written into a new version of the State Plan. These changes along with all of the comments were submitted to the State Workforce Development Board Executive Committee for final approval on February 21, 2020. The committee approved the final plan, and the document was sent to TCSG staff for submittal.

V. COMMON ASSURANCES

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Unified State Plan Assurances

Common Assurances (for all Core Programs):

The State of Georgia hereby certifies the following:

1. The State has established a policy identifying circumstances that may present a conflict of interest for a State Board or local board member, or the entity or class of officials that the member represents, and procedures to resolve such conflicts;
2. The State has established a policy to provide to the public (including individuals with disabilities) access to meetings of State Boards and local boards, and information regarding activities of State Boards and local boards, such as data on board membership and minutes;

3. The lead State agencies with optimal policy-making authority and responsibility for the administration of core programs reviewed and commented on the appropriate operational planning elements of the Unified or Combined State Plan, and approved the elements as serving the needs of the populations served by such programs;
4. (a) The State obtained input into the development of the Unified or Combined State Plan and provided an opportunity for comment on the plan by representatives of local boards and chief elected officials, businesses, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, the entities responsible for planning or administering the core programs, required one-stop partners and the other Combined Plan programs (if included in the State Plan), other primary stakeholders, including other organizations that provide services to individuals with barriers to employment, and the general public, and that the Unified or Combined State Plan is available and accessible to the general public; (b) The State provided an opportunity for review and comment on the plan by the State Board, including State agency official(s) for the Unemployment Insurance Agency if such official(s) is a member of the State Board;
5. The State has established, in accordance with WIOA section 116(i), fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that may be necessary to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for, funds paid to the State through allotments made for the core programs to carry out workforce development activities;
6. The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with uniform administrative requirements in this Act, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the uniform administrative requirements under WIOA section 184(a)(3);
7. The State has taken the appropriate action to be in compliance with WIOA section 188, Nondiscrimination, as applicable; 130
8. The Federal funds received to carry out a core program will not be expended for any purpose other than for activities authorized with respect to such funds under that core program;
9. The State will pay an appropriate share (as defined by the State board) of the costs of carrying out section 116, from funds made available through each of the core programs;
10. The State has a one-stop certification policy that ensures the physical and programmatic accessibility of all one-stop centers with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA);
11. Service providers have a referral process in place for directing Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) to DVOP services, when appropriate; and
12. Priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses is provided in accordance with 38 USC 4215 in all workforce preparation, development or delivery of programs or services funded directly, in whole or in part, by the Department of Labor

VI. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR CORE PROGRAMS

(a) General Requirements

(1) Regions and Local Workforce Development Areas

(A) Local Workforce Development Areas and Regions in the State

Each existing LWDA was required to reapply for LWDA designation status in 2015, following the transition to WIOA. The strategic configuration of an LWDA must align with regional economic development activities, and better support the execution and implementation of sector strategies and career pathways. Aligning the 19 LWDAs to the existing 12 State Service Delivery Regions allows the State to fulfill WIOA requirements while supporting the continued alignment of service delivery to regional needs. In Appendix C, the current LWDA structure (denoted numerically) overlays the State Service Delivery Regions (denoted by color). The regions with their respective LWDAs are as follows:

Region 1: Northwest Georgia

Region 2: Georgia Mountains

Region 3: City of Atlanta, Cobb County, DeKalb County, Fulton County, Atlanta Regional

Region 4: Three Rivers

Region 5: Northeast Georgia

Region 6: Macon-Bibb, Middle Georgia

Region 7: Central Savannah River Area, East Central Georgia

Region 8: Lower Chattahoochee, Middle Flint

Region 9: Heart of Georgia

Region 10: Southwest Georgia

Region 11: Southern Georgia

Region 12: Coastal

(B) Local Area Designation Process

WIOA sets forth specific requirements for initial LWDA designation. In order to meet the requirements, the LWDA must represent an area which was, for the purposes of the Workforce Investment Act, recognized as an LWIA and for the two years preceding the date of enactment of WIOA, performed successfully, and sustained fiscal integrity. The criterion “performed successfully” means that an LWDA met or exceeded the common measure levels of performance for the last two consecutive program years. The criterion “sustained fiscal integrity” means that the USDOL Secretary has not made a formal determination that the grant recipient or the administrative entity of the LWDA mis-expended funds during the last two program years. Any LWIA, which applied for LWDA

designation and satisfied those three requirements, was officially recognized as an LWDA for the first two program years of WIOA. All LWDA's filled out the required documentation and were approved by SWDB on April 30, 2015. There have not been any significant changes since the approval in 2015. Appendix C displays the current LWDA structure.

As part of Georgia's plan for implementing WIOA provisions, the State developed a policy for assigning LWDA's to designated regions. The designated regions do not replace the existing LWDA structure but provide additional coordination and oversight to help align service delivery under WIOA. USDOL identified several primary factors for states to consider in their regional designation process, including regional consistency among the State's labor market, regional economic development areas, population centers, occupation and industrial composition, employment location quotients, geographic boundaries, commuting patterns, education levels, and labor force conditions.

In 1998, the Georgia General Assembly (OCGA § 50-4-7) formally established 12 State Service Delivery Regions for delivering state services to local units of government and citizens and setting common state agency regional boundaries (excluding health and mental health districts). The current 12 State Service Delivery Regions are divided in a manner that takes into account population centers, occupation and industrial composition, employment location quotients, geographical boundaries, commuting patterns, economic trends, and industrial needs across counties. The 12 State Service Delivery Region model is leveraged by several state agencies, including GDEcD, GDOL, TCSG, and Regional Commissions, each of which are key partners under WIOA. OWD proposed utilizing the 12 State Service Delivery Region model as the Workforce Region model, citing the factors provided in the NPRM for determining region boundaries. The 12 State Service Delivery Region is supported by data that mirrors the 20 CFR factors, and it was logical to propose the pre-existing regions be designated as workforce regions in a further effort to integrate and streamline service delivery under WIOA.

To facilitate an informed, robust discussion, OWD distributed guidance to CLEOs and LWDB members regarding proposed region designations and requested time to speak with interested parties. In the guidance, OWD reiterated WIOA's region composition restrictions and the need to create regions from LWDA's that share labor markets and have similar service delivery profiles.

Due to the new duties and responsibilities assigned to regions, the guidance further detailed the State's expectations moving forward. The expectations for an increased regional service delivery focus between LWDA's within the same region and further engagement between workforce system partners within regions were detailed. Subsequent discussions with CLEOs and LWDB members resulted in OWD providing further clarity on the designation process and future expectations regarding regions.

(C) Local Area Designation Appeals Process

OWD designated all LWDA that requested designation. Future areas seeking to be designated or re-designated as an LWDA may follow the appeals process below if their request is denied:

1. An appeal must be delivered via electronic or certified mail to the OWD SWDB liaison within 15 days after notification of the decision;
2. The appeal must be in writing and contain specific grounds upon which the appeal is sought;
3. The Executive Committee of SWDB has 60 days to review the appeal. Once the members have reviewed the appeal, the chairperson may call a vote on the merits of the appeal; and,
4. The SWDB Executive Committee vote is final unless the Governor vetoes the decision.

(D) Determinations for Infrastructure Funding Appeals Process

The State developed and issued detailed One-Stop negotiation guidance, which included a section on appeals. The appeals process for the application of the State Infrastructure Mechanism can be found in detail in WIG LS-19-017 Local Service Delivery Guidelines, which is hosted on OWD's website. It outlines the possible grounds on which a required partner program may make an appeal, as defined by federal regulation.

(2) Statewide Activities

(A) State Policies and Guidance

OWD, in coordination with SWDB, develops and maintains the OWD Policy Manual. This document is hosted on the TCSG website, <https://tcsgeu/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/11.14.19-SWDB-Approved-PP.pdf>. All substantial changes made to the guide are reviewed and approved by SWDB. In order to inform LWDA of changes made to the document and other announcements, OWD conducts a monthly call with LWDA Directors and other staff. Changes to the document are discussed and the minutes for these calls are distributed to the LWDA.

In order to better disseminate information relating to the WIOA transition, OWD created the Workforce Implementation Guidance Letter (WIG). WIGs were designed to replicate USDOL TEGs. WIGs are created by OWD staff and enable staff to provide standardized technical assistance to LWDA on Federal and State laws, regulations, and policies. The WIGs are distributed via an electronic mailing list and are hosted on the OWD website. All current WIGs can be found on the TCSG website, <https://tcsgeu/worksource/resources-for-practitioners/policies-guidance/>.

At the direction of SWDB, OWD is constantly striving to improve the quality and accessibility of technical assistance. Each LWDA, has two assigned technical assistance representatives from OWD, a programmatic and financial technical assistance representative. The programmatic technical assistance representative is available for questions concerning policy, program design, board structure, and participant

recruitment strategies, and a financial representative is available for questions concerning drawdowns, procurement, and cost allocation plans.

It is the goal of OWD is to facilitate a robust technical assistance and training environment for the 19 LWDA's. Through the Workforce Georgia Academy, OWD conducts webinars and hosts in-person trainings and conferences on a variety of topics. The State has also begun to record and catalogue these and future trainings via an online library which provides LWDA staff and LWDB members with ongoing access to these resources. This resource can be found on the TCSG website, <https://tcsgeu/worksource/resources-for-practitioners/worksource-georgia-academy/>.

OWD also recently implemented an online helpdesk for LWDA technical assistance requests and other formalized communication. The helpdesk allows for OWD staff to organize and timely respond to request from all 19 LWDA's. The helpdesk is hosted on the TCSG website, <https://tcsgeu/worksource/resources-for-practitioners/helpdesk/>.

(B) Governor's Reserve and Rapid Response

WIOA funds reserved by the State as a part of the Governor's set aside are managed by OWD. These funds are largely utilized for the statewide administration and oversight of WIOA activities to achieve the Governor's goal that OWD serve as a convener of partners to meet the workforce needs of Georgia employers.

In addition, the State has leveraged a portion of the Governor's set aside to gather information to inform the direction of the workforce system and create career pathways. For example, the State utilized some of these funds to obtain current job openings and real-time labor market information to assist the state and LWDA's in aligning the available labor force with short-term and long-term demand occupations.

The Governor's set aside has also been a vital resource in cultivating successful sector partnerships across the state. As of December 2019, all 12 regions are actively engaged in developing and executing sector partnerships. This funding has and will continue to enable local areas to invest in the development of strategic relationship building and project development, which contributes greatly to the development of seamless career pathways that meet the needs of local economies.

Georgia also promoted innovative programs and supported strategies which provided opportunities for targeted populations, including, but not limited to, Veterans, Formerly Incarcerated Individuals, Out-of-School Youth, and individuals experiencing homelessness. These programs utilized proven practices to connect individuals with the workforce system. For instance, WorkSource Heart of Georgia has created a veteran's program for pilots. This program helps transitioning veterans obtain their commercial pilot's license on an accelerated track by leveraging previously earned skills and experience on the job as a military professional. WorkSource Northeast Georgia has collaboratively invested in a mobile welding lab, which eliminates mobility barriers for

many participants and employers which reside and work in the area's largely rural region. Furthermore, many local areas have utilized set aside funds to explore opportunities to train re-entering citizens with trade skills. Each one of these efforts allows Georgia to continue to face challenges of a tightened labor pool by training individuals previously unable or not in the position to participate in the labor market.

Finally, state set aside funds support required activities, such as annual evaluations of the workforce system and Rapid Response activities. In support of the Governor's vision to enhance the quality of services to businesses, the State has transformed its Rapid Response model and placed greater emphasis on early detection and layoff aversion strategies. The key to this structure has been the development of strategic relationships and partnerships within each LWDA and across planning regions that can provide timely intelligence on opportunities with employers.

Rapid Response

Georgia's State Rapid Response services have been subcontracted by OWD to GDOL. GDOL's Rapid Response team is responsible for receiving all WARN notifications and distributing them to other partners as necessary. GDOL, in close coordination with OWD and LWDAs, serves as the convener of these partners and helps coordinate the response activities for all separation events. Additionally, OWD records the separation details in the online case management system so that dislocated workers can be identified by their separation event and tracked as they receive workforce services. This allows the State to quickly identify opportunities for employers looking for specific skill sets or occupations by referencing previous events with individuals who have transferable skills.

While GDOL is responsible for convening the appropriate partners for each event, the LWDAs play a pivotal role in responding quickly and effectively. Regardless of how the notice arrives to the state Rapid Response Team, once it has been entered into the case management system, the notice is forwarded to a local Rapid Response representative and the response activities begin. The state and local coordinators will contact the employer and schedule a time to explain all available workforce services. The state Rapid Response Coordinator will then help convene partners to meet with the employer and create a plan of services to meet both the employers' and separating employees' needs. Through discussion with the employer, the State may offer strategies which include:

- Shared work/short-term compensation
- Assistance with filing Unemployment Compensation
- Assistance with filing Trade petitions, if applicable
- Information on retraining/upskilling opportunities
- Job search workshops
- Financial literacy and planning workshops

The team of partners works with the employer throughout the process and provides follow up at the conclusion to determine if any further intervention is necessary.

Most of these services made available to employers are in response to an immediate separation event. Additional opportunities may be discussed with employers when there is adequate time and opportunity for layoff aversion efforts. The foundation of Georgia's layoff aversion strategy is activities which gather information and build partnerships. The State focuses on exploring and sharing labor market information which may predict opportunities for intervention in the workforce system. It then utilizes this information to engage in outreach through multiple partners, such as GDOL's BSU and GDEcD, to engage businesses in workforce discussions. These conversations reveal opportunities for the State and LWDA's to intervene in offering strategies such as IWT to help businesses upskill workers to become more productive or to learn new technologies. Georgia has also had success leveraging upcoming separation events as a talent base to fill job openings with other businesses seeking skilled talent by hosting job fairs and recruitment events in coordination with the employer of separation.

Per the contract with OWD, GDOL's Workforce Solutions Division (WS) has primary responsibility for administering these services, in close cooperation with GDOL's Business Services Unit (BSU), GDOL's AJC/Career Centers, GDOL's Unemployment Insurance Division (UI) and the WIOA Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs). LWDA's provides training to those who need additional or enhanced skills in order to re-enter the workforce. Dislocated workers may also obtain income support and help in finding suitable employment, Unemployment Insurance and employment services at GDOL AJC/Career Centers.

Within GDOL, Unemployment Insurance, Workforce Solutions, AJC/Career Center and Business Services work together in order to provide comprehensive services to dislocated workers in Georgia. The coordinated efforts of this team ensure that unemployment claims are processed quickly; qualified, job-ready workers are directed to job opportunities; and training and other services are provided in a timely manner through LWDA's and service providers.

GDOL staff works closely with State and local education agencies, community and economic development agencies, public assistance agencies, labor organizations, post-secondary institutions, literacy providers, rehabilitation services, and other agencies and organizations in order to provide coordinated comprehensive services to dislocated workers.

Specific collaborative approaches are developed in each area by the AJC/Career Centers and the LWDA's. These may include joint planning, participation on community councils, regular meetings with community agencies, newsletters or publications about dislocated worker services, referral systems and other approaches designed to expedite the individual's return to the workforce.

When addressing the needs of dislocated workers, careers centers are primarily responsible for the provision of core services for:

Job ready dislocated workers who require minimal assistance with their job search in order to return to suitable employment. These services may include but are not limited to assessment, employment counseling, self-service, testing, job development, job search assistance, labor market information, workshops and résumé preparation.

Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) concentrate on:

Non- job ready dislocated workers who need more extensive training in how to find and obtain a job and/or those who need retraining due to the absence of transferable skills or of available suitable employment. This training may be provided through local technical schools or other training providers or by employers through “on-the-job” or customized training.

Georgia’s WARN Notification process in summary will include the following initial staff engagement (but not be limited to):

- Proactively contacting employers when becoming aware of possible RR events
- Educating employers on Rapid Response WARN, and Trade
- Coordinating a coalition of partner agencies for an Employer Meeting
- Facilitating an Employer Meeting and determining services to be rendered
- Coordinating and facilitating employee information sessions
- Facilitating specialty workshops
- Providing local and statewide Labor Market Information along with job opportunities
- Providing resources for job search, AJC/Career Centers, partner agencies, etc.

The sequence of service delivery is as follows:

1. WARN (or Early Warning) Notice Receipt – Notification to TCSG & GDOL Leadership
2. Pre-Employer Meeting
3. Employer Meeting
4. Employee Information Session
5. Employee Job Fair (Optional – Part of Service Delivery)
6. Employee Transition Ctr (Optional – Part of Service Delivery)
7. Service Delivery of Unemployment Insurance, Labor Exchange, Trade, WIOA Title I, etc., services

The team of partners work with the employer throughout the process and provide follow up at the conclusion to determine if any further intervention is necessary.

Participating employer types to be identified under an early warning system who may be in need of layoff aversion services generally fall in three categories:

1. Faltering companies
2. Companies facing unforeseen circumstances or impacts (through no fault of their own), and
3. Companies affected by Natural Disasters.

Georgia's Early Warning System will include (but not be limited to) analysis of the following:

- A. Unemployment Insurance partial claims
- B. Employer job order trends
- C. Employer annual and quarterly financial information, as available
- D. Labor market information and local economic trends
- E. Daily attention to business journals and news outlets, related social media sites, etc.
- F. Feedback from employer customers and suppliers
- G. Routine engagement with local Workforce Development Boards, chambers of commerce, economic development leaders, SHRM meetings, state, regional, and national education conferences, etc.
- H. Internal automated alerts of five-plus claims from one company

The goal is to minimize disruptions associated with job loss and to get workers back to work as quickly as possible. USDOL mandates and GDOL carries out on behalf of OWD, a comprehensive approach to identifying, planning for and responding to layoffs, to include:

- A. Informational and reemployment services for workers
- B. Solutions for businesses in transition (growth and decline)
- C. Convening, facilitating, and brokering connections
- D. Strategic planning, data gathering, and analysis

The State Rapid Response team actively engages a consortium of supporting entities that can assist with providing business retention services, offer advice and coaching on profitability, operations and financing, provide employee training, etc. This includes asset mapping for layoff aversion intervention.

Intervention services that could be brought to bear to avert a lay-off or closure include strategic planning and business model shifting; operations and cost management efficiency; new market and product development assistance; employee job description and salary structure redesign and assistance with acquiring new equipment, training grants, loans and guarantees, financial restructuring and incumbent worker training.

(C) Rapid Response: Responding to Disasters

While growing successful partnerships is at the center of the State's Rapid Response layoff aversion strategy, these same relationships and connections provide the foundation for a successful response when disaster strikes. Unforeseen and unpredictable, natural disasters can become extraordinarily damaging in the long run if

there is no plan in place to respond to the loss of jobs or industry in the affected region. Partnerships and planning are vital to identify how the workforce system can continue to function and provide key resources to the recovery of an affected region.

In the event of natural disasters, the Rapid Response team leverages its flexibility and mobility to assist in recovery efforts. The State prepares for natural disasters by following the direction and warnings of the State's emergency management officials, the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency (GEMHSA). The State relies on advanced planning and communication so that all resources are immediately available upon declaration of an emergency situation. These plans may be enacted when the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), or GEMHSA issue an emergency declaration resulting from natural disasters. When this declaration is made, OWD serves as the initial point of contact and works collaboratively with GDOL to coordinate emergency workforce services for the affected region. The State may provide a number of services in support of temporary Disaster Recovery Centers including, but not limited to, Disaster Unemployment Assistance, WIOA training, or temporary work in recovery efforts. When advance notice of a potential disaster becomes known in advance, (i.e., an approaching storm, and impending large closure, etc.), GDOL will facilitate:

The Rapid Response team maintains a list of emergency contacts for state and federal partners, including FEMA, to connect the workforce system with overall recovery efforts. As the initial point of contact, the Rapid Response team will coordinate with local workforce development areas, core partners, and state and local staff which may assist in working with dislocated workers to find temporary or full-time employment during recovery efforts.

Each LWDA has operating plans in place to continue activities in the event of natural disasters, including operational plans to function without the use of technology. State partners have similar contingency plans in place to resume normal services as quickly as possible, such as the filing and processing of unemployment compensation. OWD has established relationships with the Regional ETA office and continues to serve as the designated signatory to complete and file National Dislocated Worker Grants (DWG) in the event that additional assistance would be required to serve a significant number of dislocated individuals. Finally, OWD can leverage mobile units from regions across the state to set up temporary offices in the affected region in order to provide improved access and services to individuals whose employment have been impacted by natural disasters.

Georgia continues to build on identified best practices around disaster planning. The State continues to look for ways to support enhanced State and local policies around disaster planning by expanding its network of partners and annual local staff training, among other goals. Additionally, the State continues to proactively working with LWDA's

to explore investments to enhance their individual plans in areas of need that have been identified in the past.

(D) Rapid Response: Trade Adjustment Assistance

GDOL works closely with OWD when layoffs and business closings occur, including those with a foreign trade impact for which Trade petitions are submitted to USDOL. GDOL TAA staff promote a seamless array of activities from the initial phase of a Trade-certified layoff through ongoing services provided to Trade customers. All Trade customers are entitled to Rapid Response and employment services, which are provided consistent with the process for all layoff notifications.

Based on the nature of the layoff, early-intervention services provided by Rapid Response may include discussions with employers about TAA before a petition is filed. Once a petition is filed, TAA staff notify partners such as the LWDA and Career Centers that the petition has been filed. If USDOL certifies the petition, TAA secures an affected worker list from the employer and notifies the workers and partners who provide services to dislocated workers. TAA coordinates and facilitates worker orientations to inform the workers about the benefits and services they may receive as well as the eligibility requirements associated with each benefit, including co-enrolling with those programs. The worker orientations often include LWDA representatives to provide guidance on demand occupations and available training in the LWDA. GDOL staff assist workers with TAA registration and filing UI claims. If the number of affected workers is small, or if there are workers who are unable to attend the group orientation, they can visit a nearby GDOL Career Center to be served.

All participants are offered Trade case management services and information and access to the full array of Trade services including:

- Training, including remediation, occupational, OJT, customized and apprenticeships
- Income Support
- Wage supplements
- Health Coverage Tax Credit (to help pay health insurance premiums)
- Job search assistance
- Relocation allowances
- Comprehensive and specialized skills assessments
- Individual service plans to set employment goals and strategies
- Career Counseling
- Labor market and financial aid information
- Other services customized for harder-to-serve dislocated workers

Participants register in Employ Georgia (EG), the GDOL online registration system, which provides them the opportunity to develop a resume and access thousands of job

opportunities listed by employers. Trade services are tracked in GDOL's GWS and reported quarterly to USDOL.

Beyond responding to individual petitions, the State has taken a proactive approach to advancing TAA in all aspects. To this end, GDOL shares and TCSG obtains, reviews and disseminates the list of Trade filings and the status of certifications to all LWDAs. OWD staff participated on USDOL technical assistance calls and continues to participate on a TAA regional work-group to best utilize Trade data and information as a tool for bolstering service delivery to dislocated workers. OWD has specifically included TAA staff as a central element within its State's capacity building objectives.

(b) Adult and Dislocated Worker Program Requirements

(1) Work-Based Training Models

Georgia offers a variety of work-based learning (WBL) services, which benefit both participants and companies. These models allow employers to be reimbursed for the loss of productivity which may occur when hiring and training individuals with barriers to employment. WBL allows employers to customize training offered to future and current employees based on the tasks and the functions required of the job-for-hire. These programs also provide an opportunity to participants to learn transferable skills that lead to employment and future advancement.

On-the-Job Training (OJT) is the most widely utilized service offered to employers by LWDAs. Local areas work with business leaders in their community to determine the need for OJT. Georgia's LWDAs and OWD's Business Services Team work collaboratively to create streamlined and supportive services to participating employers. OJT assists the employer by paying for a portion of an employee's wages during their training period. OJT can support large scale hiring while ensuring that a company is able to properly train their employees.

Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) is increasingly being leveraged across the state as a layoff aversion strategy as well as an opportunity to retain, retrain, and upskill existing employees. In partnership with LWDAs, Georgia utilizes IWT to upskill workers who are at risk of losing their employment should they not receive appropriate training. The State will continue to expand the network and resources available to employers who may be facing closures or layoffs due to workforce challenges.

The State will also continue to utilize IWT in a proactive manner in order to increase the competitiveness of both employers and employees. Participants in IWT will receive training leading to new skills, better positions, and/or higher salaries while employers will cultivate a more competitive and productive workforce. LWDAs are able to utilize a portion of their Adult and Dislocated Worker funds to provide this training method. Priority for these opportunities will continue to be given to employers, who by participating in the service, will be able to serve unemployed individuals by backfilling the entry- or lower-level positions vacated by trained incumbent workers.

Customized Skills Training (CT) is designed to meet the special requirements of an employer or group of employers by allowing them to tailor and design work-based skills training. For each participant, the employer develops a training plan and measurable goals that determine the method by which the training is provided. CT is intended for the hire of new employees who are WIOA eligible. This opportunity is ideal for employers who are seeking resources to assist with training offered by a provider not included on the ETPL. The training activity may take place at the worksite or in a classroom setting, which may be provided by the employer or an intermediary. Georgia continues to explore opportunities to best aid employers with this service.

Work Experience (WEx) activities continue to play a vital role in state youth program offerings, providing enrolled youth an up-close look into the world of employment. Participants learn skills specific to the jobs that they are working in as well as soft skills that can be applied everywhere. WEx services also allow adults to gain valuable on-the-job experience. A WEx activity can be utilized for adults that have little to no work experience or who have not been gainfully employed for a long period of time. The WEx activity allows these participants to learn valuable skills and fill their resume with current employment experience which enables them to better market themselves to future employers.

Transitional Jobs (TJ) are also a beneficial service to employees and employers. TJ is especially helpful for individuals with multiple barriers to employment that may not be quite prepared for other WIOA programs. TJ programs allow employers to be reimbursed for up to 100% of the wages paid to that individual, in order to incentive a company taking a chance on someone and helping them receive significant work experience for their resume. Unlike OJT, TJ does not require the employer to commit to hiring that individual at the completion of the program. Participating individuals may need additional experience and assistance before they are ready to be employed long-term. The source of income and work experience earned with a TJ can alleviate many barriers individuals may be experiencing such as housing, mental health services, transportation, child care, and more. OWD will continue to work with organizations within the continuum of care who work for individuals experiencing homelessness and other significant barriers as well as partner with companies who are willing to assist in assisting this demographic. WIOA is a vital resource in closing the service gap experienced by individuals with significant barriers. TJ serves as a stop gap measure and propels individuals on a path of long-term success.

OWD understands the importance of high-quality WBL programs that lead to participants receiving an industry-recognized credential, a stable and sustainable living wage, sufficient benefits offerings, and manageable work demands & environment. Therefore, the State continues to encourage LWDBs to strongly consider these factors when deciding which programs to approve and fund. The companies providing the best outcomes for their new or existing employees should take priority in receiving funding. OWD also strongly encourages the development and use of career pathways, especially

when working with priority populations, such as individuals with disabilities, individuals experiencing homelessness, and individuals transitioning from incarceration. Entry-level jobs may not be the end goal; however, they (and the use of programming such as TJ just mentioned above) are often a necessary first step for many when beginning their journey toward self-sufficiency.

(2) Registered Apprenticeship

Registered Apprenticeships are a top priority for OWD. As a proven training model to best meet the needs of businesses and provide long-term sustainable career opportunities for individuals, apprenticeships are the ideal workforce development tool to address the diverse challenges faced by the public workforce system. Consequently, OWD is investing significantly in the expansion and strengthening of Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) throughout the state. OWD has assembled a four-person Apprenticeship Team in the State office to assist employers and partners across the state with establishing new RAPs. This team is designed to engage business partners, serve as the intermediary for the businesses to the USDOL Office of Apprenticeship and other essential workforce and education partners, and help eliminate the complexity and intimidation that is often associated with the RA process. OWD currently has two federal apprenticeship grants, the American Apprenticeship Initiative (AAI) Grant and the Apprenticeship State Expansion (ASE) Grant. OWD is currently working to fully utilize both AAI and ASE to enhance the presence of RAPs throughout the state.

Furthermore, in coordination with OWD's Business Services Team, the State is investing in training, guidance, and technical assistance to the business services staff in each region to equip them to better assist with the creation of new RAPs and to better understand how to fully utilize WIOA funds to support the creation and sustainability of RAPs. This training includes the proper utilization of ITAs, OJT, IWT, and CT funding to assist individuals and businesses participating in RAPs. The State has already developed several resource guides to assist with these efforts; however, additional guides, workshops, and technical assistance will be offered in the coming years to further assist regions with the utilization of WIOA to develop more RAPs. The full integration of the public workforce system and Registered Apprenticeships is essential to the long-term success of the State's vision and goals.

(3) Training Provider Eligibility Procedure

WIOA requires the Governor, through the Technical College System of Georgia's Office of Workforce Development (OWD), to establish criteria, information requirements and procedures regarding the eligibility of providers of training services to receive funds under Section 122(b) of WIOA.

WIOA emphasizes informed customer choice, job-driven training, program performance and continuous improvement. The quality and selection of training programs is vital to achieving these core principles. The State Eligible Training Provider/Program List (ETPL),

including performance and cost information, is publicly available online through OWD's website with a searchable database to serve all significant populations groups.

OWD's responsibilities include:

- Establishing eligibility criteria, information requirements and procedures which identify the roles of the State and LWDBs in determining the eligibility of providers and programs to receive funds through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs);
- Developing and maintaining the State ETPL including initial and continued eligibility and performance and cost information reporting;
- Ensuring programs meet eligibility criteria and performance levels, including accuracy of the information;
- Removing programs that do not meet established criteria or performance levels, at the direction of the applicable LWDBs;
- Working with the SWDB to take appropriate enforcement actions against providers that intentionally provide inaccurate information or substantially violate WIOA requirements;
- Providing a secondary appeals process through the SWDB when providers have exhausted the applicable LWDB's appeal process;
- Disseminating the State ETPL, including performance and cost information, to the general public and the LWDBs throughout the State; and
- Administering and maintaining the State's mechanism to contact all Registered Apprenticeship programs of their automatic eligibility on the State ETPL, in concert with the USDOL Office of Apprenticeship (OA).

LWDBs responsibilities include:

- Determining initial eligibility of entities providing training programs and considering the possible termination of providers due to submission of inaccurate eligibility and performance information or a substantial violation of WIOA requirements;
- Working with OWD to ensure sufficient numbers and types of providers of training services exist, including providers with expertise in assisting adults in need of adult education and literacy activities;
- Ensuring the dissemination and use of the State ETPL, including formats accessible to individuals with disabilities;
- Requiring additional criteria and information from providers to become eligible in that local area, if desirable; and
- Setting higher levels of performance than those required by OWD as criteria for local programs to become or remain eligible to provide services in the local area, if desirable.

Training Providers and Programs subject to ETP Requirements

Eligible Training Providers (ETP) are entities that make available programs which are eligible to receive WIOA funds for adults and dislocated worker participants who enroll in training programs through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs). ITAs may also be utilized for WIOA youth funds to provide training for older, out-of-school youth ages 18-24. To be eligible to receive training funds, the ETP shall be one of the following:

- Post-secondary education institutions that provide a program which leads to a postsecondary credential;
- Entities that carry out programs registered through the National Apprenticeship Act (Registered Apprenticeship programs);
- Other public or private training providers, which may include: community-based organizations, joint labor-management organizations, pre-apprenticeship programs and occupational/technical training;
- Eligible providers of adult education and literary activities, if combined with skills training; or
- Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs), if they meet the conditions of WIOA sec. 107(g)(1).

Eligible Programs of Training Services

A training services program is defined as one or more courses or classes or a structured regimen that leads to an industry recognized certificate or credential, a certificate of completion of a registered apprenticeship, a license recognized by the state or federal government, an associate or baccalaureate degree, a secondary school diploma or its equivalent, employment or measureable skill gains toward such a credential or employment.

Not all allowable types of training services are subject to the requirements of the training provider provisions. Contracts for services may be utilized instead of ITAs only when one or more of the following five exceptions apply and the LWDB has fulfilled the consumer choice requirements of 20 C.F.R. § 680.340:

- When the services provided are OJT, CT, IWT, transitional employment, internships, paid or unpaid WEx;
- When the LWDB determines that there is an insufficient number of eligible providers in the local area to accomplish the purposes of a system of ITAs. The determination process must include a 30-day public comment period and be described in the local plan;
- When the LWDB determines that there is a training program of demonstrated effectiveness offered in the area by a community-based organization or another private organization to serve individuals with barriers to employment. The LWDB must develop criteria (as noted in 20 C.F.R. § 680.320) to be used in determining

demonstrated effectiveness, particularly as it applies to individuals with barriers to employment;

- When the LWDB determines that it would be most appropriate to contract with an institution of higher education or other eligible provider of training services in order to facilitate the training of multiple individuals in in-demand industry sectors or occupations, provided that the contract does not limit customer choice;
- When the LWDB is considering entering into a pay-for-performance contract and the LWDB ensures that the contract is consistent with § 683.510 of this chapter or
- When an LWDB may provide training services only if it submits a request to the State for a waiver. The proposed request should be made available to eligible training providers and the general public for public comment no less than 30 days. Public comments must be included with the request. The request will include: evidence that there are an insufficient number of eligible provider of such a program of training services to meet local demand, information that the board meets the requirements for an eligible training provider under WIOA Section 122, and information that training will prepare participants for an in-demand industry sector or occupation in the local area.

Training Providers eligible before the WIOA transition period

Automatic approval of higher education institutions (TCSG and USG institutions) or NFJP grantees is not permitted under WIOA. TCSG and USG providers were assessed for continued eligibility on June 30, 2016 and will be assessed biennially under WIOA.

Initial Eligibility for New Training Providers or Providers submitting New Programs

New Training Providers/Programs

All ETPs that were not previously approved as eligible under WIA (except Registered Apprenticeship programs) must submit the required information to be considered for initial eligibility under WIOA. Under WIOA, ETPs may receive initial eligibility for only one year for an ETP-specific program. For potential ETPs seeking initial eligibility, verifiable program-specific performance information must be provided.

WIOA requires that programs, not ETPs, be approved for ITAs. Therefore, potential ETPs must submit an application for each course of study or program.

Potential ETPs submitting initial eligibility applications should submit training program applications directly to a LWDB. Training program applications will be reviewed and evaluated by an LWDB. If the program application is approved by an LWDB, the program is submitted to OWD for review, approval and placement on the State ETPL.

Program applications need only be made with one LWDB for possible inclusion on the State ETPL. Once approved for placement on the State ETPL, an approved program is available to all Georgia LWDBs and cooperative States.

A generic application and instructions can be accessed at www.WorkSourceGAPortal.com Information regarding LWDBs is also available on the website. Additionally, some LWDA's have additional, more stringent eligibility requirements. If a potential ETP is within that LWDA, the potential ETP must meet the LWDA's more stringent eligibility requirements. Potential ETPs should check with their LWDB to ascertain application requirements for information specific to that LWDA.

The current State ETPL can be accessed at: www.WorkSourceGAPortal.com

An Applicant must provide the following:

- i. A detailed description of each training program – Provide information that the program is a high quality program, which can include information related to training services that lead to a recognized post-secondary credential, or a wage more than 150% of the Georgia self-sufficiency wage, or successful outcomes across all population groups;
- ii. Performance information for each training program will include:
 - Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit;
 - Employment Rate 4th Quarter after Exit;
 - Median earnings in the 2nd Quarter after Exit;
 - Credential Attainment Rate; and
 - Measurable Skills Gains.
- iii. Describe in detail applicant's partnerships with business;
- iv. Describe the recognized post-secondary credential attained after training completion;
- v. Describe how the training program(s) aligns with in-demand industries and occupations;
- vi. Applicant must also comply with the following to be considered for inclusion on the State ETPL:
 - a. Applicant must have been in business for at least six months prior to the initial application and must have a current business license or proof of active compliance with the Secretary of State Corporations Division;
 - b. Training programs must be available to the general public, have published catalog price structures;
 - c. Training facilities must comply with ADA requirements for accessibility and reasonable accommodation;
 - d. Each training program must have proven outcomes and have successful program completions and training-related employment for at least five students per program;
 - e. Applicant must be current on all federal and State taxes (Must supply certification from accounting/tax firm of current tax standing regarding federal and State taxes, including Unemployment Insurance taxes);
 - f. Applicant must be in statutory compliance with the laws of the State related to operation as a training education institution. Proprietary

colleges or schools operating in Georgia are required by the Nonpublic Post-Secondary Educational Institution Act of 1990 to have a certificate of authorization from the NPEC before beginning operation or advertising in the state;

- g. Applicant must provide documentation of current accreditation/authorization;
- h. Applicant must not have been found at fault in criminal, civil or administrative proceeding related to its performance as a training or educational institution. Must disclose any pending criminal, civil or administrative proceeding as either a defendant or a respondent;
- i. Applicant must disclose any and all conflicts of interest with State or LWDB staff or board members including, but not limited to family ties (spouse, child, and parent), fiduciary roles, and employment or ownership interests in common; and
- j. All applications must include a current federal tax identification number.

<u>STUDENTS PAST PERFORMANCE INFORMATION – past 12 months period</u>	<u>Minimum Standard</u>	<u>Definition</u>
Must pass two of five measures		
Employment Rate 2 nd Quarter after Exit	<u>70 %</u>	The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program. For Title I Youth, the indicator includes percentage of participants in education or training activities the 2 nd quarter after exit
Employment Rate 4 th Quarter after Exit	<u>60 %</u>	The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program. For Title I Youth, the indicator includes percentage of participants in education or training activities the 4 th quarter after exit
Median Earnings 2 nd Quarter after Exit	<u>\$11.50</u>	The median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the 2 nd quarter after exit

Credential Attainment Rate	<u>60 %</u>	The percentage of participants enrolled in education or training program (excluding OJT and customized training) who attain a recognized postsecondary credential or secondary school diploma within 1 year after program exit
Measurable Skill Gains	<u>20 %</u>	The percentage of participants who, during a program year, are in education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skills gains towards such a credential or employment

LWDAs must develop a Pre-Award Checklist to be conducted prior to recommendation for a Provider/Program inclusion on the ETPL. The Checklist should include an on-site visit to assess compliance with ADA accessibility and reasonable accommodations. The Data and Information Team may conduct yearly random assessments of this process.

Local Workforce Development Boards may require additional information or may set additional standards which may be higher than the State standards.

Currently approved ETPs proposing new training programs

Approved Training Providers proposing new training programs shall follow the following procedure in order to qualify for one year of initial eligibility. Approved Training Providers seeking initial eligibility for a new program shall provide the LWDB a narrative application, which must include the following verifiable program specific performance information:

1. Provide information on a substantially similar training programs (in the same industry) indicating whether that program satisfied the following indicators of performance:
 - a. Unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit;
 - b. Unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit;
 - c. Median earnings;
 - d. Credential attainment; and,
 - e. Measurable skill gains.
2. A descriptive narrative with information on the proposed training program’s ability to satisfy the following indicators of performance:
 - a. Unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit;
 - b. Unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit;

- c. Median earnings;
 - d. Credentials attainment; and,
 - e. Measurable skill gains.
3. Information concerning whether the provider is in a partnership with business. This could include information about the quality and quantity of employer partnerships;
 4. Information that addresses alignment of the training services with in-demand industry sectors and occupations, to the extent possible.
 5. LWDBs must re-verify that the Approved Training Provider's proposed new program complies with the following to be considered for one-year inclusion on the State ETPL:
 - a. Approved Training Provider must have been in business for at least six months prior to the initial application and must have a current business license or proof of active compliance with the Secretary of State Corporations Division;
 - b. Training programs must be available to the general public and have published catalog price structures;
 - c. Training facilities must comply with ADA requirements for accessibility and reasonable accommodation;
 - d. Approved Training Provider must be current on all federal and State taxes (Must supply certification from accounting/tax firm of current tax standing regarding federal and State taxes, including Unemployment Insurance taxes);
 - e. Approved Training Providers and Programs must be in statutory compliance with the laws of the State related to operation as a training education institution. Proprietary colleges or schools operating in Georgia are required by the Nonpublic Post-Secondary Educational Institution Act of 1990 to have a certificate of authorization from the NPEC before beginning operation or advertising in the state;
 - f. Approved Training Provider must provide documentation of current accreditation/authorization;
 - g. Approved Training Provider must not have been found at fault in criminal, civil or administrative proceeding related to its performance as a training or educational institution and must disclose any pending criminal, civil or administrative proceeding as either a defendant or a respondent;
 - h. Approved Training Provider must disclose any and all conflicts of interest with State or LWDB staff or board members including, but not limited to family ties (spouse, child, and parent), fiduciary roles, and employment or ownership interests in common; and,
 - i. All applications must include a current federal tax identification number.

All information detailed above shall be reviewed and verified by the LWDB, in a manner detailed in a local policy, to determine whether or not the proposed program shall be granted initial, one-year eligibility.

At the conclusion of the initial year, the program shall provide such required data as outlined and detailed below for the State to determine whether the program shall remain on the ETPL or be removed.

Each required measure's data shall be collected and submitted by the LWDA. The Approved Training Provider may continue enrolling WIOA-funded students into the initially approved program until such time as the State issues a determination regarding continued eligibility and subsequent placement on the ETPL. After receiving the program's data from the Local Workforce Development Area, the State shall perform its review of the program. If the necessary data is not received by the State in a timely manner, the Program shall not receive continued eligibility or be placed on the ETPL.

The program must satisfy the following factors in order to be determined eligible for placement on the ETPL:

1. The program must enroll at least ten (10) students during the twelve-month initial eligibility period, and;
2. The program must satisfy two or more of the six factors identified in the table below. If the program fails to satisfy either of the two requirements listed above, the Approved Training Provider's program under review will be removed in accordance to section 4.4.7 (II).

<u>STUDENTS PAST PERFORMANCE INFORMATION – past 12 months period</u>	<u>Minimum Standard</u>	<u>Definition</u>
Must pass two of five measures		
Employment Rate 2 nd Quarter after Exit	<u>70 %</u>	The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program. For Title I Youth, the indicator includes percentage of participants in education or training activities the 2 nd quarter after exit
Employment Rate 4 th Quarter after Exit	<u>60 %</u>	The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from

		the program. For Title I Youth, the indicator includes percentage of participants in education or training activities the 4 th quarter after exit
Median Earnings 2 nd Quarter after Exit	<u>\$11.50</u>	The median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the 2 nd quarter after exit
Credential Attainment Rate	<u>60 %</u>	The percentage of participants enrolled in education or training program (excluding OJT and customized training) who attain a recognized postsecondary credential or secondary school diploma within 1 year after program exit
Measurable Skill Gains	<u>20 %</u>	The percentage of participants who, during a program year, are in education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skills gains towards such a credential or employment

Registered Apprenticeship Programs

Automatic Eligibility

Under WIOA, all Registered Apprenticeship (RA) programs that are registered with the USDOL Office of Apprenticeship (OA) are automatically eligible to be included on the State ETPL. RA programs are not subject to the same application and performance information requirements nor subject to a period of initial eligibility as other ETPs because they go through a detailed application and vetting procedure to become a registered apprenticeship program sponsor with USDOL/OA.

All RA programs are informed of their automatic eligibility of inclusion on the State ETPL and will be provided an opportunity to consent to inclusion, before being placed on the State ETPL. In collaboration with the Georgia OA Director, the State has implemented a mechanism to contact all RA programs within the State regarding inclusion on the State ETPL. Based on the RA program listing provided by OA, a letter is sent from the State notifying the RA sponsor of their eligibility of inclusion on the State ETPL. OWD works with Georgia OA Director, on a semi-annual basis to collect information (to populate the State ETPL) on newly OA Registered Apprenticeship programs. Information required to

populate the State ETPL includes: occupations; name/address of program sponsor; name/address of instructional provider if different from the sponsor; and method and length of instruction.

Performance

There are no WIOA performance requirements for RA programs and RA programs are not required to provide ongoing reports to the State or LWDBs. OWD works in concert with the OA to encourage voluntary reporting of performance information. RA programs must remain registered and in good standing with the OA to remain on the State ETPL. OWD will work in concert with the OA to verify registration status. LWDBs may not impose additional criteria, information or reporting requirements on RA programs. Additionally, if an LWDB has a local ETPL, RA programs should be included and should be noted as ‘in-demand occupations’. If an issue arises, LWDBs should contact OWD’s Apprenticeship Team for assistance.

Continued Eligibility

RA programs must remain registered and in good standing with the OA to remain on the ETPL. RA program sponsors appearing on the State ETPL will remain there as long as the program is registered or until the program sponsor notifies the OWD that it no longer wants to be included on the State ETPL, however, RAs may be removed if determined to have intentionally supplied inaccurate information or to have substantially violated any provision of Title I of WIOA (e.g., civil rights of discrimination violations), or the WIOA regulations, including 29 C.F.R. part 38. An RA program whose eligibility is terminated due to intentionally supplying inaccurate information or substantially violating WIOA provisions will be terminated for not less than 2 years and is liable to repay all youth, adult, and dislocated worker training funds, if received during the period of noncompliance.

If instances of substantial violation are reported to OWD, OWD will work in concert with the OA to make the determination of ineligibility. The opportunity for an appeal and hearing is described in the ETPL Appeal Procedures.

Semi-annual review includes verification of the registration status of RA programs and removal of any RA programs that are not currently registered or do not wish to continue as ETPs. Although RA programs are not required to provide ETP Performance reports, voluntary reporting of performance information is encouraged under WIOA regulations and outcomes for WIOA participants in WIOA funded RA programs must be included in the State’s annual performance report. WIOA § 116 (d)(2)

Continued Eligibility Procedures

This section addresses procedures for continuing eligibility for ETPs previously approved under WIA that are transitioning into WIOA and newly ETPs under WIOA. ETPs

previously approved under WIA are subject to the application procedures for continued eligibility as of June 30, 2016.

New ETPs that were determined to be initially eligible under WIOA will be subject to the application procedure for continued eligibility after their initial year of eligibility expires.

WIOA Sections 116 and 122 and 20 C.F.R. § 680 detail the continuing eligibility criteria that States must take into account. However, until data from the conclusion of each WIOA performance indicator’s first data cycle is available, the State has set minimum performance criteria. Once ETPs have two years of performance outcomes using the WIOA performance indicators specified in WIOA Section 116, the State will utilize the WIOA performance indicators for continuing eligibility.

Review of Minimum Performance Outcomes Required for Continued Eligibility

NOTE: To be utilized until WIOA performance data is available.

For the Transition Year, ETPs were not required to complete a Continued Eligibility Application. For a program to remain eligible to receive ITA funds for new enrollments after June 30, 2016, the State utilized data available through the Worksource Georgia Portal (WGP) to compare program level performance outcomes against established minimum State standards, covering the preceding program year. Programs with an enrollment of at least 10 students were evaluated for continuing eligibility.

In addition to the evaluation of performance information for the past program year, for those programs not meeting performance for the past program year, an additional evaluation reviewed performance for the previous two program years to ascertain if failing to meet performance standards occurred in the past.

If approved, a program’s continuing eligibility will extend until the biennial WIOA performance measurement review. If not approved, an ETP will be notified by OWD that the program will be removed from the State ETPL. The LWDA in which the program resides will also be notified.

<u>ALL WIOA STUDENTS PAST PERFORMANCE INFORMATION – Preceding program year</u>	<u>Minimum Standard</u>	<u>Definition</u>
Must pass two of five measures		
Employment Rate 2 nd Quarter after Exit	<u>70 %</u>	The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from

		the program. For Title I Youth, the indicator includes percentage of participants in education or training activities the 2 nd quarter after exit
Employment Rate 4 th Quarter after Exit	<u>60 %</u>	The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program. For Title I Youth, the indicator includes percentage of participants in education or training activities the 4 th quarter after exit
Median Earnings 2 nd Quarter after Exit	<u>\$11.50</u>	The median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the 2 nd quarter after exit or within one year after exit from the program
Credential Attainment Rate	<u>60 %</u>	The percentage of participants enrolled in education or training program (excluding OJT and customized training) who attain a recognized postsecondary credential or secondary school diploma within 1 year after program exit
Measurable Skill Gains	<u>20 %</u>	The percentage of participants who, during a program year, are in education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skills gains towards such a credential or employment

LWDBs may set additional standards which are higher than the state standards. An LWDB may remove a program of training services from the local ETPL (Not the State ETPL) for failure to meet those higher, local standards.

Performance data is tracked through OWD's data management system; however, ETPs may be asked to provide additional continuing eligibility information.

Use of Quarterly Wage Records

WIOA requires the use of quarterly wage record information in measuring the progress of State adjusted levels of performance. The use of participants' social security numbers and other sensitive information necessary to measure the participants' through quarterly wage record information is authorized by WIOA. OWD reserves the right to request participants' information from the ETP, if necessary. OWD assures ETPs that any participants' social security number transmitted and resulting UI Wage File data will be: used only to prepare aggregate program performance reports as required under WIOA; not disclosed in any personally identifiable form; safeguarded while OWD is in possession of the same; and destroyed when no longer needed for the purposes of complying with WIOA. In addition, disclosure of personally identifiable information from an education record must be carried out in accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), including the circumstances related to prior written consent.

Per TEGL 39-11, "personally identifiable information and other sensitive information are required to be protected. Therefore, any transmission of such information shall be encrypted using a Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) 140-2 compliant and National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) validated cryptographic module. For further information, reference FIPS PUB 140-2."

Notice of Denial of Eligibility or Removal

The LWDB who originally approved the program's inclusion to the ETPL shall be responsible for making ETP removal determinations under the following conditions:

- a) Supplying inaccurate information (If inaccurate information regarding a program is intentionally supplied to a LWDB or OWD.)
 1. If instances of intentionally supplying inaccurate information are reported to OWD, the LWDB shall submit a recommendation for ETP removal to OWD. Upon receiving a determination of ineligibility from the LWDB, OWD will remove the ETP from the ETPL.
 2. The ETP may be excused if the inaccurate information was supplied unintentionally, but the burden for proving the inaccurate information supplied was unintentional rests with the ETP.
 3. If warranted, a termination of eligibility will occur and will remain in effect for a minimum of two years.
- b) Substantial violation
 1. If a LWDB determines that an ETP has substantially violated any requirements under WIOA (e.g., civil rights or discrimination violations), including failure to provide timely and accurate information for the ETP report and for initial and continued

eligibility, or other State or federal laws, regulations or requirements, then the LWDB shall notify OWD of the determination of ineligibility. Upon receiving a determination of ineligibility from the LWDB, OWD shall remove the ETP from the ETPL.

2. Repeated failures to submit information and a failure to cooperate with the WLDB will be considered in the determination of whether a “substantial violation” occurred. “Substantial violation” may be construed to be one or more egregious violations in a short period of time or numerous minor violations over a longer period of time.
3. With regard to a violation of the submittal of timely and accurate information for the ETP as well as initial and continued eligibility, the LWDB shall take into account exceptional circumstances beyond the ETP’s control, such as natural disasters, unexpected personnel transitions, and unexpected technology related issues.
4. A termination of eligibility will occur and will remain in effect for a minimum of two years for all substantial violations.

c) Removal for failure to meet performance standards

1. If an ETP’s program fails to meet minimum established State established performance levels set for continued eligibility, the program must be removed from the State ETPL.
2. An ETP/ ETP program may reapply under the initial eligibility criteria if they can provide documentation of successful performance attainment with all students prior to the next program year. During that time the former ETP should take the opportunity to evaluate program design performance of non-WIOA students.
3. Reapplication procedures may begin with a LWDB no earlier than 90 days preceding the beginning of the one-year exclusion period.
4. If the LWDB program evaluation indicates that there have been successful performance outcomes of all students, the program may be added to the State ETPL no earlier than one year from the date of removal.

d) Other Removals

1. If an ETP loses its license or accreditation of its accrediting body.

2. If an ETP's program is inactive (no activity within three program years), the ETP's program will be automatically removed and the provider (program) will have to re-apply using initial eligibility procedures.

e) Repayment

An ETP's program whose eligibility is terminated under the above conditions shall be liable for repayment of funds received during the period of noncompliance.

If an ETP's program is terminated or removed from the State ETPL, the LWDA should assure timely assistance to participants who may be affected. Depending on the nature of the violation, WIOA participants may be allowed to complete the programs, or may transfer and enroll in other training programs.

If it is deemed by a LWDB that training received by a WIOA customer did not adhere to program information as marketed by the ETP, consequences levied upon the ETP may include: (1) additional training to the aggrieved customer at no cost; and/or (2) a refund to the fiscal agent of amounts paid; and/or (3) debarment from the State ETPL.

ETPL Appeal Procedure

These procedures are designed to provide guidelines for filing and resolving Appeals made by an ETP. In the event that an ETP seeks to file an Appeal, it must do with the entity whose action the ETP disputes. For example, in the event that an ETP is removed from a specified LWDB, the ETP must file an Appeal with the LWDB in accordance with LWDB's policies. Once an ETP has filed an Appeal with the LWDB, received a written resolution, and is dissatisfied with the LWDB's resolution, the ETP may file second level appeal with the SWDB. Conversely, in the event that an entity is denied designation on the State ETPL, or if the ETP or is removed from the State ETPL, the ETP may file an Appeal directly with the SWDB.

Local Appeal Procedures

TEGL WIOA NO. 41-14(11)(b) requires LWDBs to establish an Appeal procedure for ETPs to dispute a denial of eligibility from the ETPL. Such procedures must allow for an attempt to resolve the dispute informally, provide an opportunity for a hearing, and require written resolution within 60 days of the filing date of the Appeal. They must also notify the ETP of its right to file a Second Level Appeal with the State.

SWDB Procedures for Second Level Appeals of LWDA Resolutions

An ETP may file a second level appeal of a LWDB resolution directly with the SWDB so long as the following criteria are satisfied:

1. The ETP has completed an ETPL Appeal form;
2. The ETP attaches the LWDB's Written Resolution and any other pertinent information to the Appeal form; and
3. The Appeal is filed with the SWDB no later than 30 days from the date the LWDB issued its written resolution.

The ETP shall have the option of requesting a hearing in the event that the Second Level Appeal cannot be resolved informally. In the event that a hearing is requested in writing, it will be conducted in accordance with the procedure set forth below. The SWDB ruling on all Second Level Appeals shall be final.

OWD Procedures for Appeals of denial or removal of an ETP from the State ETPL

An ETP may file an appeal directly with the SWDB in the event that the ETP is denied eligibility or is removed from the State ETPL. In order to Appeal, the ETP must satisfy the following criteria:

1. The ETP must complete an ETPL Appeal form;
2. The ETP must include all other pertinent information; and
3. The ETP must file the Appeal no later than 30 days from the date that the ETP is denied eligibility or is terminated from the State ETPL.

The ETP shall have the option to request a hearing in the event that the Appeal cannot be resolved informally. In the event that a hearing is requested in writing, it will be conducted in accordance with the procedure set forth below. The SWDB ruling on all Appeals shall be final.

Hearing Procedure for State and Local ETPL Determination Appeal

As required by WIOA, every ETP shall have the opportunity for a hearing for any Appeal that is filed. A request for a hearing must be made in writing by the ETP, preferably at the time the Appeal is initially filed. However, an ETP may file a written request for a hearing within sixty (60) days of the date the Appeal was filed. If a request for a hearing is made, then the hearing shall be held as soon as reasonably possible to enable a resolution of the Appeal no later than sixty (60) days from the day the Appeal is filed. The LWDB and the SWDB shall use the following procedures if a hearing is requested:

1. Upon receiving written notice of the ETP's request for a hearing, the LWDB or the SWDB shall respond in writing acknowledging the ETP's request and notifying the ETP of the date of the hearing. Such acknowledgment and notice shall be transmitted to the ETP within ten (10) business days of receipt of the ETP's request. The notice shall include, at a minimum:
 - a. The date of issuance;
 - b. The name of the ETP;

- c. The name of the Respondent against whom the Appeal has been filed (OWD or the LWDB);
 - d. A statement reiterating that the ETP and Respondent may be represented by legal counsel at the hearing;
 - e. The date, time, and place of the hearing, including the name of the hearing officer serving as an impartial party;
 - f. A statement of the alleged violations of WIOA, (This may include clarification of the original Appeal, but must accurately reflect the content of the submitted documentation of the ETP);
 - g. A copy of any policies or procedures for the hearing or identification of where such policies may be found; and
 - h. The name, address, and telephone number of the contact person issuing the notice.
2. The hearing shall be conducted in compliance with federal regulations. At a minimum, the hearing must include:
 - a. An impartial hearing officer selected by the LWDB or SWDB;
 - b. An opportunity for both the ETP and LWDB/OWD to present an opening statement, witnesses and evidence;
 - c. An opportunity for each party to cross-examine the other party's witnesses; and,
 - d. A record of the hearing which the LWDB or OWD shall create and retain.
 3. The hearing officer, considering the evidence presented by the ETP and Respondent, shall issue a written decision which shall serve as the LWDB or SWDB official resolution of the Appeal. The decision shall include the following information, at a minimum:
 - a. The date, time, and place of hearing;
 - b. A recitation of the issues alleged in the Appeal;
 - c. A summary of any evidence and witnesses presented by the ETP and the respondent;
 - d. An analysis of the issues as they relate to the facts; and
 - e. A decision addressing each issue alleged in the Appeal.
 4. The SWDB meets quarterly. State level hearings shall be conducted in accordance with this schedule. To appeal to the SWDB and/or request a hearing, ETPs shall send all communication in writing to the staff liaison of the SWDB Performance and Accountability Committee, Steven Wilson, at SWilson@tcsg.edu.

(4) Priority for Public Assistance Recipients

The State uses its Service Priority for Individualized Services and Training Services policy to implement priority of service throughout its LWDA's to ensure services are provided to these populations. Each year, OWD conducts programmatic monitoring for each

LWDA. During monitoring, OWD staff review a sample of participant case files to determine if the LWDA correctly implemented priority of service for individualized career services and training services. The size of the sample depends on the LWDA's score on the risk assessment. The assessment uses several risk factors, including the number of participants, the size of the LWDA's award, the number of prior year findings, etc. to generate a risk factor internal control range. The range corresponds with high, medium, and low risk, which determines the sample size of participant case files to be reviewed by OWD staff. Each adult case file in the sample is thoroughly reviewed for compliance with the Priority of Service policy.

If an LWDA did not correctly implement priority of service for an adult participant, then OWD will issue a finding to the LWDA, which could lead to disallowed costs. Furthermore, through the corrective action period, OWD will review the LWDA's policies and procedures to ensure the LWDA has the correct information needed to administer priority of service. If any LWDA has a question about priority of service, they can submit their question to OWD's WorkSource Helpdesk, and it will receive technical assistance from a member of the Programs team.

The State's Service Priority for Individualized Services and Training Services Policy can be found in Section 3.2.5 (II) of the State's Policy Manual; a copy of the policy is also below:

"Priority of service is not an eligibility criterion. Priority of service is a means to ensure emphasis providing services to these populations. Priority for adult services must be given to recipients of public assistance or other low income individuals, with added priority for individuals who are basic skills deficient. Priority applies regardless of funding levels. Individualized career services and training services must be given on a priority basis, regardless of funding levels, to:

- i. Public assistance recipients and other low-income adults; and
- ii. Individuals who are basic skills deficient.

Veterans under WIOA § 3 (63)(A) receive priority of service as described in the Jobs for Veterans Act (38 U.S.C. 4215 (2)). Veterans and eligible spouses of veterans who otherwise meet the eligibility requirements for adult programs must receive the highest priority for services. TEGl 3-15 references TEGl 10-09 regarding order of priority for veterans and eligible spouses. Priority must be provided in the following order:

- First, to veterans and eligible spouses who are also recipients of public assistance, are low income individuals, or who are basic skills deficient. Military earnings are not to be included as income for veterans and transitioning service members.
- Second, to individuals who are not veterans or eligible spouses who meet WIOA priority criteria.
- Third, to veterans and eligible spouses who are not included in WIOA's priority groups.

- Last, to individuals outside the groups given priority under WIOA.

While Veterans receive priority through WIOA services, LWDA's and applicable services providers must have a referral process in place for directing Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment to the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program to ensure the most effect provision of services.”

(5) Transfer of Funds

Under WIOA, Georgia allows local workforce development areas to transfer up to 100% of their funding between the dislocated worker and adult funding streams. For consideration of transfers, all LWDA's must submit a written request to OWD via the online helpdesk. The LWDA Director and an authorized signatory of the fiscal agent must both sign all requests. For all requests in excess of 50% of original fund stream being transferred, the LWDB Chair's signature is also required. All requests must contain a narrative section providing an explanation for the need to transfer the funds. Additionally, the OWD Grants Administration staff review the most recently submitted monthly Financial Status Report (FSR) to ensure that the recipient funding stream demonstrates a high level of expenditure and/or obligation. The Grants Administration team provides a copy of the request as well as additional expenditure and obligation data to the OWD Executive Director for final discussion and determination.

All LWDA's who receive approval to transfer funds under WIOA must also submit a transfer effectiveness report as part of the grant closeout package. This report requires LWDA's to provide the estimated impact that the transferred funds had on the LWDA. Current requirements include estimated number of participants impacted by the transferred funds, estimated services provided with the transferred funds, and estimated impact that the funds have on performance measures.

(c) Youth Program Requirements

(1) State Developed Criteria for Awarding Youth Contracts

OWD issued WIG PS 15-009 to the LWDA's on WIOA Youth Provider Selection Criteria, which included the State developed criteria and checklist for awarding youth contracts in compliance with WIOA sec. 123 (<https://tcsgeu/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/9-PS-15-009-YOUTH-PROVIDER-SELECTION-CRITERIA.pdf>). The LWDB must identify eligible providers of youth workforce development activities in the LWDA by awarding grants or contracts on a competitive basis based on the recommendation of the Youth Standing Committee, if they choose to establish a standing youth committee and assign it that function. If such a committee is not established for the LWDA, this responsibility falls to the LWDB.

- LWDA's must include the state plan criteria used to identify youth providers, taking into consideration the ability of the provider to meet the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance for youth programs.

- LWDA must conduct a full and open competition to secure youth service providers according to the federal procurement guidelines in 2 CFR parts 200 and 2900, in addition to applicable state and local procurement laws.
- Where the Local Board determines there is an insufficient number of eligible providers of youth workforce development activities in the LWDA, such as may be the case in a rural area, the Local Board may award grants or contracts on a sole source basis (WIOA sec. 123(b)).

The requirement in WIOA sec. 123 that eligible providers of youth services be selected by awarding a grant or contract on a competitive basis does not apply to the design framework services when these services are more appropriately provided by the grant recipient/fiscal agent. Design framework services include intake, objective assessments, and the development of individual service strategies, case management, and follow-up services. The local plan must describe the design framework for youth programs in the LWDA and how the 14 program elements required in WIOA CFR sec. 681.460 are to be made available within that framework.

Local youth programs must be designed to do the following:

- Provide for an objective assessment of each youth participant that meets the requirements of WIOA sec. 129(c)(1)(A), and includes a review of the academic and occupational skill levels, as well as the service needs of each youth for the purpose of identifying appropriate services and career pathways for participants and informing the individual service strategy;
- Develop, and update as needed, an individual service strategy for each youth participant that is directly linked to one or more indicator(s) of performance described in WIOA sec. 116(b)(2)(A)(ii). This strategy must identify appropriate career pathways that include education and employment goals, considers career planning and the results of the objective assessment, and prescribe achievement objectives and services for the participant; and
- Provide case management of youth participants, including follow-up services.

LWDBs must ensure appropriate links to entities that will foster the participation of eligible LWDA youth. Such links may include connections to:

- LWDA justice and law enforcement officials;
- Local public housing authorities;
- Local education agencies;
- Local human service agencies;
- WIOA Title II adult education providers;
- Local disability-serving agencies and providers as well as health and mental health providers;
- Job Corps representatives; and

- Representatives of other area youth initiatives, including those that serve homeless youth and other public and private youth initiatives (e.g., YouthBuild).

LWDBs must ensure that WIOA youth service providers meet the referral requirements in WIOA sec. 129(c)(3)(A) for all youth participants, including:

- Providing these participants with information about the full array of applicable or appropriate services available through the Local Board, other eligible providers, or one-stop partners; and
- Referring these participants to appropriate training and educational programs that have the capacity to serve them either on a sequential or concurrent basis.

According to WIOA sec. 129(c)(2), LWDBs must make each of the required 14 youth elements described in the section below available to youth participants. According to WIOA sec. 129(c)(3)(C), LWDBs must ensure that parents, youth participants, and other members of the community with experience relating to youth programs are actively involved in both the design and implementation of its youth programs. At least 20% of local Youth formula funds must be used for work experiences, such as summer and year round employment, pre-apprenticeship, OJT, or internships and job shadowing.

Youth Program Proposers must provide the following:

- A detailed description of each program element.
- Past youth performance information (for WIA/WIOA youth providers). Performance information for each training program will include a detailed description of provider partnerships with business partners, and a provider must also:
 - Be in business for at least six months prior to the initial application and have a current business license or proof of active compliance with the Secretary of State Corporations Division;
 - Be current on all federal and state taxes (Must supply certification from accounting/tax firm of current tax standing regarding federal and state taxes, including Unemployment Insurance taxes);
 - Be in good standing with the Better Business Bureau with no outstanding complaints;
 - Not be found in fault in criminal, civil, or administrative proceeding related to its performance as a training or educational institution. Must disclose any pending criminal, civil, or administrative proceeding as either a defendant or a respondent;
 - Disclose any and all conflicts of interest with state or local LWDB staff or board members including, but not limited to, family ties (spouse, child, parent), fiduciary roles, employment or ownership interests in common;
 - Assure that the proposed facility is accessible and that reasonable accommodations are made for provision of services to disabled individuals;

- Include a current federal tax ID number; and
- Not appear on current federal, state, or local debarment and suspension lists.

Aside from the details provided above, OWD created a Youth Contractor Checklist that was distributed to all LWDA's and is documented below.

Youth Contractor Checklist (if provided through competitive procurement or provided as part of the design framework provided by the LWDA)

- Provide an objective assessment for each youth participant that includes academic levels, skill levels, and service needs, for the purpose of identifying appropriate services and career pathways for participants and informing the individual service strategy; Assessment shall include a review of the following: basic skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests, aptitudes (including interests and aptitudes for nontraditional jobs), supportive service needs, and development needs of each participant.
- Develop, and update as needed, an individual service strategy for each youth participant that is directly linked to one or more indicator(s) of WIOA performance. The strategy must identify appropriate career pathways that include education and employment goals, considers career planning and the results of the objective assessment, and prescribe achievement objectives and services for the participant.
- Provide case management of youth participants, including follow-up services.
- Provide referral services for all youth participants, including: providing participants with information about the full array of applicable or appropriate services available through the LWDA, other eligible providers, or one-stop partners; and referring participants to appropriate training and educational programs that have the capacity to serve them either on a sequential or concurrent basis.

WIOA and 20 CFR 681.460 require 14 youth elements, either provided by or through contractors or the LWDA:

Tutoring, Study Skills Training, Instruction and Evidence based Drop-out Prevention and Recovery Strategies;

- Alternative Secondary School Services or Drop-out Recovery Services;
- Paid and Unpaid Work Experiences;
- Occupational Skills Training;
- Education Offered Concurrently with and in the same context as Workforce Preparation;
- Leadership Development;
- Supportive Services;
- Adult Mentoring;

- Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling;
- Financial Literacy Education;
- Entrepreneurial Skills Training;
- Labor Market and Employment Information Services;
- Activities that Prepare for Transition to Post-secondary Education and Training;
- Follow-up Services.

Youth Program Proposers must provide the following:

- A detailed description of each program element;
- Past youth performance information (for WIA/WIOA youth providers);
- A detailed description of provider partnerships with business partners;
- Provider must be in business for at least six months prior to the initial application and have a current business license or proof of active compliance with the Secretary of State Corporations Division;
- Provider must be current on all federal and state taxes (Must supply certification from accounting/tax firm of current tax standing regarding federal and state taxes, including Unemployment Insurance taxes);
- Provider must be in good standing with the Better Business Bureau with no outstanding complaints;
- Provider must not be found in fault in criminal, civil, or administrative proceeding related to its performance as a training or educational institution. Must disclose any pending criminal, civil, or administrative proceeding as either a defendant or a respondent;
- Provider must disclose any and all conflicts of interest with state or local LWDB staff or board members including, but not limited to, family ties (spouse, child, parent), fiduciary roles, employment or ownership interests in common;
- Provider must assure that the proposed facility is accessible and that reasonable accommodations are made for provision of services to disabled individuals;
- Provider must include a current federal tax ID number; and
- Provider must not appear on current federal, state, or local debarment and suspension lists.

(2) Strategies to Serve Out-of-School Youth

OWD recognizes the value of youth and adults gaining strong foundational skills, completing high school equivalence, and earning industry-recognized certificates and degrees in order to gain economic stability and self-sufficiency. WIOA requires that local areas allocate at least 75 percent of their youth expenditures to serve out-of-school-youth. Some of the local areas struggle with OSY recruitment and retention, thus OWD submitted a waiver of the requirement to expend at least 75 percent of funding on OSY population to be lowered to 50 percent for both statewide and local activities (<https://tcsgeu/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/OSY-Waiver-Request.pdf>). ETA approved the requested waiver for Program Years 2018 and 2019 on June 18, 2019. The

LWDAs are currently designing and implementing programming reflective of the new funding limits. OWD will continue to provide technical assistance as the LWDAs take advantage of this flexibility. OWD requires all LWDAs who are not meeting expenditure requirements to submit plans of action. OWD reviewed these plans and provided additional technical assistance to LWDAs when needed. OWD continues to provide technical assistance by increasing the programming available to LWDAs to serve out-of-school youth and informing LWDAs of existing programming.

OWD continues to expand OSY programming, and OWD's relationship with Adult Education within TCSG allows for increased opportunity for innovative options for OSY. Local areas have worked and will continue to work with Adult Education providers to ensure that programming is innovative and responsive to the needs of participants.

One of the ways in which they have done this is through the pairing of high school equivalency services with Work Experience or OJT services. This combination allows a participant to receive wages during their high school equivalency services, while allowing them to gain valuable experience in the workplace prior to the completion of their training. Local areas have worked with providers to include soft skills and workplace training within the classroom component of high school equivalency offerings. These programmatic modifications ensure that the participant will be a more attractive future employee upon receipt of their high school equivalency.

TCSG OAE, in partnership with OWD, has launched a pilot program to expand the current high school equivalency credential options in the state. Currently, Georgia only offers the GED as an accepted high school equivalency credential. After compiling a high school equivalency credential committee with stakeholders from OWD and Adult Education, research was done on how to increase high school equivalency rates in Georgia. There are currently approximately 1.1 million Georgians without a high school diploma or recognized equivalent credential. Adult Education issues about 10,000 GED diplomas each year. The committee decided to pilot alternative pathways for a high school equivalency. In January/February 2020, Georgia will launch a "Career Plus HSE" option at five Adult Education providers that will be sponsored by LWDA funds. For example, the "Career Plus" HSE option will allow individuals to combine previously-earned high school credits, completed portions of the GED exam, and technical college credentials to receive a HSE diploma. By expanding high school equivalency options, LWDAs can target OSY in new and innovative ways.

OWD will focus on reaching youth with barriers to employment directly after high school graduation in order to assist with post-secondary attainment within high-demand occupations. In order for this to be successful, local areas will need to partner with community organizations to identify and engage this population. OWD will encourage partnerships with CBOs and other non-profit organizations, especially those who engage with youth with disabilities, foster youth, and youth who are English language learners. These partnerships will ensure that this population is provided with the resources to

ensure their successful entry into the workplace. The training provided to the youth will focus on the use of career pathways and stackable credentials to promote lifelong learning and upward mobility.

Through the workforce system, OWD will provide youth participants the opportunity to become involved in 14 required youth elements which are listed in the Youth program elements section: (1) Tutoring, Study Skills Training, Instruction and Evidence Based Dropout Prevention and Recovery Strategies can allow a participant to attain their secondary school diploma or a recognized equivalent. (2) Alternative Secondary School Services or Dropout Recovery Services show students alternative learning environments that focus on their skills, abilities, and learning style to prevent them from dropping out of school. (3) Paid and Unpaid Work Experiences are structured learning programs that take place for a specific period. (4) Occupational Skills Training allows participants to become proficient in performing actual tasks and technical functions required by certain occupational fields at all different levels. (5) Education Offered Concurrently with and in the same context as Workforce Preparation integrates training and education. (6) Leadership Development includes the development of positive social and civic behaviors. (7) Supportive Services are in place to allow youth participants to partake in WIOA activities. (8) Adult Mentoring is a 12-month program that matches a youth participant with an adult that will guide the mentee. (9) Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling gives youth participants the opportunity to meet with counselors for career and academic counseling. (10) Financial Literacy Education informs participants of smart financial decisions and habits. (11) Entrepreneurial Skills Training educates youth participants on the skills needed to start and maintain a small business. (12) Labor Market and Employment Information Services provide information about in-demand industry sectors. (13) Activities that Prepare for Transition to Postsecondary Education and Training allows for career exploration and research. (14) Follow-up Services are available to youth participants once they have exited the program.

As participants are deemed eligible and receive orientation services, they will be informed of the services accessible through the one-stop system. For youth participants, this includes the 14 required youth elements listed above. LWDAs will offer these elements to eligible youth participants through the available Youth Training Provider services. The process to offer Youth Training Provider services occurs through a competitive bidding process in which locally-procured youth contracts are awarded.

OWD has a strong relationship with the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ). OWD will utilize this partnership to bridge the gap for youth who have interacted with the justice system in Georgia. OWD and local areas work with youth correctional facilities across the state to ensure that out-of-school youth leaving facilities are given a “warm hand-off” to education and training opportunities. Case managers work with these youths to enroll them in training options and assess their need for additional services. Local areas have worked with facilities, courts systems, transitions centers,

and parole officers to ensure that these youths are given the opportunity to successfully connect to the workforce system.

While WIOA does not require that LWDBs maintain a standing youth committee, as was required under WIA, fifteen of Georgia's nineteen LWDBs currently have such a committee. LWDBs are evaluated every other year to ensure compliance with federally-mandated composition requirements, open meeting requirements, in addition to compliant and effective bylaws and standing committee structure. The Strategic Populations Team will continue working with LWDBs to improve youth service delivery, which includes encouraging the establishment of and engagement with the LWDB's youth committee. In order to consider differences in LWDBs across the state and their current capacity to address youth issues, the State plans to offer targeted technical assistance to those four areas without a youth committee. OWD's Strategic Populations Team has developed a technical assistance roundtable series to provide guidance and assistance to local youth managers and providers to increase dialogue across areas and allow local stakeholders to share concerns, ideas, and questions amongst each other and with State staff.

(3) Youth Program Elements

WIOA-eligible youth are individuals between the ages of 14 and 24, that are either OSY or ISY as defined by WIOA Section 129(a)(1), and meet one of the following additional conditions: Basic skills deficient; English language learner; an offender; homeless, runaway, in foster care or aged out of the foster care system; pregnant or parenting; an individual with a disability; or a person who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment.

Services are provided to eligible youth participants through a network of youth service providers, which are competitively procured by Georgia's 19 LWDBs. Georgia is committed to providing, through LWDBs, the following required youth elements: (1) Tutoring, Study Skills Training, Instruction and Evidence based Drop-out Prevention and Recovery Strategies; (2) Alternative Secondary School Services or Drop-out Recovery Services; (3) Paid and Unpaid Work Experiences; (4) Occupational Skills Training; (5) Education Offered Concurrently with and in the same context as Workforce Preparation; (6) Leadership Development; (7) Supportive Services; (8) Adult Mentoring; (9) Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling; (10) Financial Literacy Education; (11) Entrepreneurial Skills Training; (12) Labor Market and Employment Information Services; (13) Activities that Prepare for Transition to Post-secondary Education and Training; and (14) Follow-up Services.

OWD promotes and encourages the development of pre-apprenticeship programs. Pre-Apprenticeships are designed to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in a Registered Apprenticeship program and are considered to be strong WIOA programs that lead to quality youth performance measures. Pre-apprenticeships are comprised of training and curriculum based on industry practices and provide valuable work

experience. OWD encourages formalized agreements to be executed between the training provider and the Registered Apprenticeship sponsor. This articulation should state the details of the training, including prerequisites, training length, provided credentials, etc. Unlike Registered Apprenticeship, pre-apprenticeships are not certified or approved by the USDOL Office of Apprenticeship.

Lastly, OWD considers YouthBuild and JobCorp as essential partners to the workforce system when creating pre-apprenticeships. These programs provide specific knowledge and resources invaluable to successful youth-focused training programs. Connecting these partner programs to Registered Apprenticeships sponsors builds stronger pathways for youth populations, while simultaneously addressing the growing employer pipeline needs.

In order to become an eligible Youth Training Provider, the entity must first contact the LWDA to apply. LWDAs conduct a competitive bidding process to award locally-procured youth contracts. The statewide youth eligible provider list is a comprehensive list of those locally-procured youth contracts. Once the entity has successfully completed the application process dictated by LWDB policy, the application is then referred to OWD to be included on the statewide youth provider list. The youth training provider list can be found at <https://www.worksourcegaportal.com>.

(4) Requires Additional Assistance

State policy relies on local autonomy to define “requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment” for both ISY and OSY. OWD conducts on-site monitoring of each LWDA to ensure compliance with federal, state, and local requirements. The OWD Programs Team will continue to monitor local policies to ensure adherence to this criterion.

(5) Attending and Not Attending School

“Attending school” is defined under state law as a public, private, or home study program that meets the requirements found in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-690. Georgia compulsory education laws require children between the ages of six (6) and sixteen (16) to attend school. However, for purposes of WIOA, OWD does not consider providers of Adult Education under title II of WIOA, YouthBuild programs, and Job Corps programs to be schools. Therefore, WIOA youth programs may consider a youth to be “not attending school” for purposes of WIOA youth program eligibility if they are attending Adult Education provided under title II of WIOA, YouthBuild, or Job Corps. It is the policy of OWD that student attendance at a post-secondary institution qualifies as “attending school.” OWD issued WIG PS 15-002 on Youth Eligibility and Definitions, which provided guidance for youth eligibility policy creation on the definitions of in-school and out-of-school youth.

(6) Basic Skills Deficient

Georgia defines basic skills deficient as “an individual who is unable to compute or solve problems, read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the

individual's family, or in society satisfies the basic skills deficient requirement for WIOA services." In assessing basic skills, Boards must use assessment instruments that are valid and appropriate for the target population and must provide reasonable accommodation in the assessment process, if necessary, for individuals with disabilities. For an adult, a participant is basic skills deficient if they: (A) lack a high school diploma or high school equivalency and are not enrolled in any secondary education; (B) are enrolled in a Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) program authorized by WIOA and administered by the Education Department (ED); or (C) are reading or writing English, or computing or solving problems at or below an 8.9 grade level, according to a TABE assessment or another standardized assessment pre-approved by OWD.

(d) Single-area State requirements – N/A

(e) Waiver Requests

Out-of-School Youth 75% Expenditure Requirement Waiver

Some of Georgia's LWDA's have experienced struggles with OSY recruitment and retention, thus OWD submitted a waiver of the requirement to expend at least 75 percent of funding on OSY population to be lowered to 50% for both statewide and local activities (<https://tcsgeorgia.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/OSY-Waiver-Request.pdf>). ETA approved the requested waiver for Program Years 2018 and 2019 on June 18, 2019. Because of the late approval of this waiver, the local areas were unable to build programming that reflects the funding change for PY19, due to being in active contracts at the time the approval was received. The LWDA's have already started planning and designing programming for the next program year that is reflective of the new funding limits, and OWD will continue to provide technical assistance and guidance with the implementation of the waiver. OWD acknowledges that our local areas are currently above the 75% OSY funding requirement despite the implementation of the waiver; OWD believes this is due to the late approval of the waiver mentioned above, and hesitance that the extension of the waiver will not be approved. OWD seeks an extension of this waiver, not because locals are going to be delinquent, but because the 75% requirement has made it difficult for our areas to have any substantial ISY programming for youth who are at-risk of being disconnected from the education and training system. Some local areas have had to cease ISY programming altogether. In our high-poverty counties, disregarding ISY programming is a very costly sacrifice. OWD seeks this waiver extension not out of performance necessity, but in pursuit of programmatic flexibility for our local areas who wish to provide quality workforce development services to at-risk ISY.

While OWD recognizes the value and importance of WIOA's heightened emphasis on the alignment of programs that serve OSY in order to ensure they obtain the skills necessary to prepare for educational achievement and workforce participation, it creates an undue burden for our LWDA's who wish to provide quality ISY programming. This is especially burdensome when:

- ISY Work Experience programming is limited as a result of the 75% rule for OSY funds

- LWDA's in Georgia have a successful track record of providing notable year-round work experience programs for ISY; however, many of these same areas are now only able to provide summer work experience for the youth in their service delivery areas, and for some even those programs have received cuts due to decreased funding. This means that fewer ISY are given the opportunity to participate in programs that will ensure youth enter the workforce with an expanded level of employability and soft skills that are necessary to secure entry-level jobs and beyond. Our local areas boast high-quality working relationships with their respective local school districts. These districts have seen a drastic reduction in services provided to ISY. Local educators and school district officials serve on youth committees across our state. The local education officials and the local workforce areas are working in tandem to provide ISY programming. Due to the 75% OSY funding requirement, those programs have been greatly reduced. ISY programming crafted from these important partnerships are paramount to future success of the local and state workforce. Communities have grown to rely on these resources and are disappointed that successful programming is no longer available to their ISY. This eliminates opportunities for early intervention for youth in danger of dropping out and leads to at-risk youth becoming disconnected from an education system and resources that would connect those youth with a high school diploma or equivalent, and a viable career pathway.
- Limited ISY funding creates restrictions for the expansion of Pre-Apprenticeship programs.
 - Georgia is currently the recipient of the American Apprenticeship Initiative (AAI) and Apprenticeship State Expansion (ASE) grants. Through the implementation of these grants, the state has greatly expanded Registered Apprenticeship resources for employers and their prospective workforce. Although the state is interested in expanding pre-Apprenticeship resources, LWDA's have been hesitant due to the lack of ISY funding. As a result, ISY are not given the opportunity to participate in pre-Apprenticeship, and the state is unable to provide the full breadth of apprenticeship opportunities to its citizens. Pre-Apprenticeship programs can provide basic skills, integrated instructional models, and other activities designed to prepare youth with the skills needed to enter into a Registered Apprenticeship.

The desired programmatic outcomes from the implementation of the waiver include:

- Ability for LWDA's to strategically focus their allocated funds on an approach to better serve at-risk youth, while discouraging a disconnection from education institutions. Specifically, among programmatic activities, LWDA's can fund a greater number of year-round and summer WEX activities targeting eligible at-risk ISY. We expect to see a continued increase in graduation rates.

- Opportunity to increase utilization of WIOA to support Pre-Apprenticeship strategies, programs, and participants. The expansion of Pre-Apprenticeship programs will directly lead to a strengthening of the associated Registered Apprenticeship programs throughout the state as well.
- Opportunity to provide support for ISY while equipping them with the academic and technical skills necessary to improve their employability. The expansion of ISY programs will strengthen the talent pipeline for employers, and therefore reduce their training costs and employee turnover.

To accurately assess the efficacy of the 75% OSY waiver in the state, OWD polled LWDA's on their plans should the waiver be extended. First, OWD requested information on how many ISY LWDA's would be able to serve if the 75% OSY waiver extension is granted. Several local areas expressed a current lack of need for utilizing the waiver, and thus see no need for changing their programmatic structure to fit the flexibility of the expenditure requirement afforded by the waiver. The majority of LWDA's indicated that they have a desire to shift their programmatic structure to accommodate more ISY under the expenditure requirement flexibility provided by the waiver. Of the local areas who want to utilize the waiver, some indicated an ability to serve anywhere from 40-100 more ISY per program year. Other areas indicated a desire to shift to 50% ISY.

Next, OWD polled the local areas on how, if the 75% OSY waiver is extended, they will continue providing quality programming to OSY, keeping within the spirit and nature of WIOA. It was a recurring theme amongst responses that since the majority of the caseload is currently OSY, the local areas will not have any issues with maintaining the caseload requirement and will continue to engage the OSY caseload in active services. Of the areas wanting to utilize the waiver, they still insisted that OSY is the priority, and will continue to recruit and provide career pathways leading to training and employment opportunities to those youth who are currently out of school. The locals will ensure emphasis on OSY by increasing their monitoring efforts and engaging their sub-contractors with OSY best practices.

Finally, OWD polled the local areas on specific programmatic changes they planned to implement to take advantage of the 75% OSY waiver. Most of the areas who wish to take advantage of the waiver indicated a desire to increase pre-apprenticeship offerings to ISY. This aligns well with Georgia's State Plan to emphasize pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship offerings throughout the state. Other areas indicated that the current expenditure limitation forces them to offer ISY programming to only a select few counties within their local areas. The flexibility afforded by the waiver would allow them to expand ISY programming to all counties within their regions, creating valuable partnerships with school districts throughout their area. Those local areas expressed a desire to work with available career academies to achieve those pre-apprenticeship goals. Other local areas expressed interest in expanding work-experience opportunities to rural communities while engaging in career planning/college prep with the goal of preparing ISY for self-sufficiency.

Based on valuable local feedback, OWD feels confident that numerous LWDAs would be able to expand ISY programming by utilizing the waiver while simultaneously keeping the emphasis of our youth programs on OSY and maintaining the quality of those programs. LWDAs have indicated a desire to utilize the flexibility provided by the 75% OSY waiver in order to expand ISY offerings, and OWD formally requests an extension on the waiver with this in mind.

Eligible Training Provider Performance Data Collection Waiver

1. Statutory and/or regulatory requirements the State would like to waive:

OWD is seeking an additional waiver of the required collection and reporting of performance data on all students participating in training programs listed on the state's Eligible Training Providers List (ETPL), as outlined in WIOA Sections 116 and 122, and in 20 CFR 677.230, and 680.400 through 680.530. Under WIOA Sec. 116(d)(4)(A) and 20 CFR 677.230(a)(5), Eligible Training Providers must report performance data with respect to all individuals engaging in a program of student (or the equivalent). While OWD recognizes the value and importance of monitoring provider performance, requiring ETPs to produce data on all individuals, instead of just WIOA-funded participants, places an undue burden on ETPs to collect, enter, and report excessive data. This is especially burdensome when:

- ETPs have many students, of whom only a small percentage are WIOA participants; and,
- ETPs do not have the existing staff to perform the required data gathering process, and cannot justify hiring the additional staff.

The current federal requirements are creating a hardship for many training providers, including the technical colleges, resulting in a decreased number of programs being added to the ETPL. This leads to Georgia having a less robust list of training providers; thereby significantly limiting customer choice.

Furthermore, ETPs and OWD are concerned that providing data on all individuals engaging in a program of study (or the equivalent), instead of WIOA-funded participants only, may conflict with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which protects the privacy of student education records. Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student to release any information from a student's education record (34 CFR 99.30). Releasing student information on individuals who are not workforce system participants without the explicit consent may be in violation of federal law and compromise their personally identifiable information (PII). Under this waiver, in collaboration with Local Workforce Development Boards, ETPs will continue to collect and report performance data for all WIOA-funded participants, in accordance with WIOA section 116(d)(4)(A) and as specified in 20 CFR 677.230.

This waiver will assist Georgia in further developing its workforce while continuing to focus on innovative strategies for a demand-driven workforce. Specifically, the strategic goals of this waiver include:

- Reduction of reporting burden of ETPs – Reporting performance data on all individuals engaging in a program of study (or the equivalent) consumes considerable time and

resources. Reducing ETP's reporting requirements to include only WIOA-funded participants would allow ETPs to focus on education and training outcomes.

- Ensure protection of non-WIOA participants' PII – Training providers do not currently have a method to match students with data sources to calculate outcomes, so they are required to submit student data via the WorkSource Georgia Portal to be matched with wage records. This process increases the liability for a potential breach of PII of non-WIOA participants.

The programmatic outcomes from implementation of this waiver include:

- The reduction of the reporting burden fosters a wider variety of training offerings for individuals utilizing Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) via the public workforce system, which creates greater customer choice.
- A wider variety of training programs can lead to lower cost and more robust demand-driven training options.
- Greater utilization of the ETPL by individuals pursuing training via ITAs in Georgia related to jobs that are in-demand, both by employers now and in the future.
- Stronger partnerships and relationships between training providers and the public workforce system.
- Enhanced ability of local boards to respond quickly and efficiently to immediate local job seeker and employer needs.

Annual on-site programmatic reviews will include an evaluation of the impact of the waiver on local programs to ensure programmatic goals and outcomes are being met. Additionally, State staff involved with the administration of the ETPL and performance reporting will periodically examine the effectiveness of this waiver. This strategy ensures that the goals described above, as well as those outlined in the State's Unified Plan, are consistent with established objectives of the law, in addition to federal and state regulations.

2. Actions the State has undertaken to remove State or local barriers:

Currently, no state or local statutory or regulatory barriers exist to implementing the requested waiver extension.

3. Describe the goals, how goals relate to Strategic Plan goals and expected programmatic outcomes.

- Reduction of reporting burden of ETPs – Reporting performance data on all individuals engaging in a program of study (or the equivalent) consumes considerable time and expense. Reducing ETPs' reporting requirements to include only WIOA-funded participants would save considerable time and expense to allow ETPs to focus on education and training outcomes.
- Protecting Consumer Choice – Removing barriers for providers increases the likelihood that they will be willing to apply to become an eligible training provider. More providers and programs means more options for customers to choose from.

4. Evidence the state achieved its goals

The state of Georgia was able to increase the number of new training providers and programs during the waiver period. Before the waiver period, 9 training providers and

88 programs were added during that program year. During the waiver period, 35 training providers and 256 new programs were added to the Eligible Provider Training List.

5. Describe the individuals impacted by the waiver

The reduction of reporting burden on ETPs will have a significant impact on multiple populations of the public workforce system, including, but not limited to:

1. Individuals who access training services in Georgia via ITAs,
2. Georgia OWD staff,
3. Local Workforce Development Boards,
4. American Job Center staff
5. Staff and administrators of ETPs

6. Provide notice to any local board affected by waiver

Concurrent with the submission of this waiver extension request, the state will notify all 19 local Workforce Development Board directors of the state's intent of this request. Upon approval of the waiver, Georgia OWD will issue a Policy Statement notifying all local Workforce Development Boards that this practice will be implemented effective immediately.

7. Ensure comment including local board, business, and labor

Local Workforce Development Boards will be provided a copy of this waiver request and given the opportunity to contact the Office of Workforce Development prior to submission of the State Unified WIOA Plan modification to discuss and have input on the waiver request. All local boards will also have access to the draft Unified Plan and opportunity to comment during the public review and comment period.

8. The State must show evidence that the State met its goals (performance results) for its last waiver approval as well as the following:

- a. *Evidence the ETP data collection and reporting requirements are limiting choice (not enough providers).*
Local areas and training providers voiced their concern and the need for the waiver when requirements were introduced. The ability of some community based proprietary training providers did not have the means to collect the necessary data. By the issuance of the initial waiver this allowed those training providers to remain on the ETPL.
- b. *Discussion of how the State intends to use all student data for the purposes of continued provider eligibility.*

Due to concerns for non-WIOA individuals having to share their SSNs in order to receive UI wage matches, current all student data is aggregated and self-reported by providers for the purposes of continued provider eligibility. In addition to the aforementioned reasons, this waiver is also being requested so the state has more time to develop a safe and secure process for handling SSNs outside of the current Title I case management system so that future provider reports will have properly validated non-WIOA data.

- c. *Discussion of any special circumstances – especially those which would benefit WIOA priority populations, such as the inclusion of tribal community colleges/providers on the ETP*

A wider variety of training programs can lead to lower cost and more robust demand-driven training options. Stronger partnerships and relationships between training providers and the public workforce system. Enhanced ability of local boards to respond quickly and efficiently to immediate local job seeker and employer needs.

- d. *A plan for improving data collection so as to not need the waiver in the future*

The State is working with its ETPL vendor and its current providers to develop a process for the collection of the required elements. While progress is being made the state cannot guarantee it will be able to report non-WIOA student data for PY20.

- e. *As a renewal - Evidence or discussion of how the waiver improves consumer choice (such as how many providers the state was able to add to the list because of the waiver)*

Training providers did not have the reporting burden which in turn fostered a wider variety of training offerings for individuals utilizing Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) via the public workforce system which helped to maintain strong customer choice. Training providers increased from 9 to 35, and new training programs increased from 88 to 165 during the waiver period.

TITLE I-B ASSURANCES

The State of Georgia hereby certifies the following:

Common Assurances:

1. The State has implemented a policy to ensure Adult program funds provide a priority in the delivery of training services and individualized career services to individuals who are low income, public assistance recipients and basic skills deficient;
2. The State has implemented a policy to ensure local areas have a process in place for referring veterans with significant barriers to employment to career services provided by the JVSG program's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist;
3. The State has established a written policy and procedure that set forth criteria to be used by chief elected officials for the appointment of local workforce investment board members;
4. The State established written policy and procedures to ensure local workforce investment boards are certified by the governor every two years in accordance with WIOA section 107(c)(2);

5. Where an alternative entity takes the place of a State Board, the State has written policy and procedures to ensure the alternative entity meets the definition under WIOA section 101(e) and the legal requirements for membership;
6. The State established a written policy and procedure for how the individuals and entities represented on the State Workforce Development Board help to determine the methods and factors of distribution, and how the State consults with chief elected officials in local areas throughout the State in determining the distributions;
7. The State will not use funds received under WIOA Title I to assist, promote, or deter union organizing in accordance with WIOA section 181(b)(7); 168
8. The State distributes adult and youth funds received under WIOA equitably throughout the State, and no local area suffers significant shifts in funding from year-to-year during the period covered by this plan;
9. If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner Peyser services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I;
10. The State agrees to report on the impact and outcomes of its approved waivers in its WIOA Annual Report.
11. The State has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 2900, including that the State will annually monitor local areas to ensure compliance and otherwise take appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance under section WIOA 184(a)(3).

VII. WAGNER-PEYSER ACT PROGRAM (EMPLOYMENT SERVICES)

(a) Employment Service Professional Staff Development

(1) Utilization of Professional Development Activities for Employment Service Staff

Consistent and strategic investment in staff development reflects Georgia's commitment to integrated workforce services. GDOL will continue to utilize state staff as we have done previously, to deliver Wagner Peyser Services as referenced in TEN 13-19 and Wagner Peyser Common Assurances. Employment Services staff of GDOL are trained in both employment services and UI programs, enabling customers to receive seamless services geared to facilitate their return to employment.

Staff complete a structured training curriculum to equip them to provide high-quality services to both jobseekers and business. Training is comprised of intensive interviewing techniques, administering career assessments, accessing and interpreting labor market information, customized service strategies for employers and jobseekers, identifying the potential need for soft skills and skills gap training, developing workforce partnerships,

identifying available supportive services, résumé writing expertise, and counseling to address barriers to employment and to assist with career selection.

Additional staff training is provided in the following areas: strategies for business recruitment events, as well as multiple methodologies to connect qualified jobseekers with employers, providing workforce statistics and prevailing industry wages, guidance on employment laws as it relates to the workplace, UI, FB, the WOTC, and other workforce services. Staff also have access to customer service training to enhance services to jobseekers and businesses. Other staff development activities include:

- Comprehensive online resources on GDOL's website at www.dol.georgia.gov;
- Comprehensive internal online resources at www.theSource.gdol.ga.gov
- Job shadowing for new staff at State and local offices
- Active participation in IAWP (hosting the international conference in 2015)
- Active participation in NASWA
- Active participation in SETA
- Departmental leadership training program through EXCEL, offered through the Carl Vinson Institute of Government at the University of Georgia
- Ongoing assessment of GDOL and partner staff training needs by local GDOL career center managers
- Participation on LWDBs to keep abreast of information on local, State, and national issues; and
- Regular reviews by the STAR team, delivering on-site extensive technical assistance and staff training during site visits, and identifying training needs based on policy changes, new initiatives, etc.

(2) Training and Awareness Strategies

GDOL offers training, technical assistance and support to partner staff who serve local job seekers and employers to ensure that program partners are highly engaged in local and State workforce partnerships that allow for the constant exchange of information on core programs, UI legislation, new workforce training providers, and available programs.

The UI and RO Division of GDOL provides subject matter expertise and technical assistance on UI policies, rules, procedures, and systems to all staff. In the training modules, staff is educated on how to detect, address, and resolve issues that affect UI eligibility. While in-depth training is provided to career center staff managing the UI claims process, an overview of the UI process, including the appeals process, is also available to WIOA and other workforce partners.

In addition to providing UI training, the UI & RO Division provides a dedicated customer service line staffed by experienced benefits analysts who address UI issues, questions and concerns; specify the benefits of ES; and resolve inquiries from WIOA customers. The robust training and partnerships encourage exemplary service delivery to

jobseekers and employers, and create opportunities to identify and/or create new training opportunities as laws and regulations change.

Finally, workforce partners have access to select data elements, such as customer contact information and work history from GDOL. Sharing data between organizations assists staff in providing comprehensive, unduplicated services while eliminating unnecessary trips or contacts for the customer.

(b) State Provision of Information and Meaningful Assistance

The ability to file a UI claim is available at every comprehensive one-stop center. Access and meaningful assistance is critical, whether the customer is in rural Georgia, relies on public transportation, or needs access to the Internet. Assistance is assured through:

- UI orientation provided to every new claimant explaining the full range of workforce services available to help them return to work
- Online access via www.dol.georgia.gov where customers can file electronically from career centers, home, libraries or any other Internet portal
- Dedicated, experienced staff at every one-stop
- Fully staffed resource centers at all career centers, including Internet access, copies, phones, fax and resource libraries
- A dedicated toll-free number for customers filing for UI at one-stops;
- Access points at over 40 one-stops and career centers across the state
- An opportunity for each claimant to access in-person reemployment services as they come to career centers and one-stops to complete the UI filing process
- The use of state-of-the-art EG résumé and job matching service as a requirement for ES registration for claimants
- The availability of staff, technology, language translation services, and written materials in a variety of languages to meet the needs of all customers
- Fully accessible services, online and in person, to serve any customer with a disability
- Joint participation of UI staff with other workforce partners in large layoff events; and
- Daily referrals of customers from workforce partners to UI specialists to ensure that customers have access to all benefits to which they are entitled

(c) Strategy for Providing Reemployment Assistance

All Customers with Georgia's recovering economy, GDOL and partner staff have the opportunity to provide more in-depth services to customers who are most in need and face multiple barriers to reemployment.

Employment services provided with WP funding are available to all individuals eligible to work in the United States – those with jobs looking for better career opportunities; individuals who have lost their jobs; and those seeking employment for the first time. These services form a continuum ranging from self-service online, to group

presentations, to customized one-on-one assistance. Individuals with more specialized needs (e.g., veterans, migrant and seasonal farmworkers) receive customized services to further their career goals.

Per State law, all UI recipients must register for ES, unless a waiver is granted. Georgia continues to run its federal profiling model when job seekers file their UI claims, at which time claimants are made aware of the requirements for reemployment services and the varied services available to them. These services may include: an assessment of skills relative to available jobs; workshops on effective job search, interviewing techniques and résumé development; an overview of multiple self-service employment resources; detailed labor market information related to growth occupations and industries, and wage surveys to assist with decision making; and direct referrals to job training, educational and supportive service opportunities in the community.

Profiling is a federally-mandated program designed to assist UI claimants who may be unlikely to find employment before their benefits are exhausted. The UI claim process links information from intake records and employers' files to assess each claimant's likelihood of finding another job within the period of UI eligibility. Those UI claimants who are least likely to find work quickly receive structured job search services.

The claimant's occupation, job tenure, education, last employer's industry, and the area's unemployment rate are factors used in calculating a percentile score. The higher the score, the more likely a claimant will exhaust benefits before finding work. For workload management purposes, career center managers monitor the number of profiled claimants served each week, and, if necessary, adjust their career center's threshold (minimum score) to ensure that workshops are neither over- nor under-utilized, and that services can be delivered.

All claimants who are identified by the system as meeting or exceeding the career center's threshold and are mandated to participate in required services must complete either a Service Needs Evaluation/Assessment or a Quick Initial Assessment.

Other activities to promote reemployment of UI claimants include claimant access to:

- Information on community resources, labor market information, GED, occupational training, OJT, and support services that make training possible to enhance an individual's ability to return to work
- Integrated workforce services for citizens released from correctional facilities through the Governor's GA-PRI
- An Events tool on the Department's website to allow customers to access hundreds of career fairs, hiring events, and other activities to connect with hiring businesses
- A strong network of faith-based organizations that support reemployment efforts
- Collaborative services for claimant trainees and TAA-eligible customers

- Collaboration with HomeSafe Georgia for citizens needing mortgage assistance
- Job clubs sponsored by GDOL, faith-based organizations, and others
- Older worker workshop (SCSEP)
- Veteran work study program sponsored by the Veterans Administration that allows veterans in training to work part-time in career centers

The reemployment of UI claimants, lowering of UI claim duration and reduction of erroneous UI payments continue to be a high priority for Georgia and the U. S. Department of Labor and Employment and Training Administration. Georgia's RESEA program addresses all of these priorities.

Georgia has thousands of customers in high populous areas of the State in need of intensive reemployment services. Many of these customers are UI claimants identified as most likely to exhaust their benefits and are living in areas of the State where there are military bases, resulting in a high number of Unemployment Compensation for Ex-service members (UCX) claimants possessing barriers to employment. There are currently nine One-Stop career centers delivering RESEA services across the state.

Georgia's RESEA program provides intensive services to other large populations of UI claimants with self-identified barriers to employment such as, low education levels, language barriers, limited skill sets, homeless veterans, justice-involved individuals, and seniors. These groups typically experience multiple layoffs and move laterally from one low-paying job to another, never developing the skills or solid work history needed to advance to a more stable position in the workforce.

The RESEA program provides intensive services to assist these individuals in finding new jobs as quickly as possible, resulting in shorter UI claim duration, increased trust fund solvency and lower unemployment. To facilitate this goal, RESEA program services begin with an orientation to services followed by a one-on-one review of an individual's needs and facilitation of an aptitude assessment, discussion of the assessment results and development of a reemployment plan. Staff provide referrals to in-house workshops (e.g., résumé development, job search, and financial management), training, and other community workforce and supportive services as needed. Customers receive relevant labor market information and learn about helpful web sites which could enrich their job searching efforts. An evaluation of their work history is conducted and potential job matches are identified. RESEA sessions conclude with the staff providing their direct contact information to the participant, so they have an ongoing network of support in their job search efforts.

Georgia's robust and intensive approaches to facilitating the reemployment of UI recipients through the RESEA program has directly contributed to the lowest average of UI duration nationally over the past 6 years, and has decreased erroneous UI payments while increasing employment rates.

Georgia plans to continue the RESEA program to facilitate meeting the needs of these individuals and expanding the program to other areas of the state, as funding allows.

(d) State's Use of W-P Funds and Communication between W-P and UI

(1) Coordination and Provision of Labor Exchange Services

Georgia's UI and WP labor exchange systems are each administered by GDOL, and UI staff has access to all ES job referral, case management, employment, and other information as needed. Staffing is funded in accordance with Federal circulars to the allowable benefiting fund source.

Aside from a limited number of exempt UI recipients, all receive reemployment services, as they are required to register with the State ES. Approximately 60% of ES registered customers are UI claimants.

Each GDOL career center has a resource area where customers can access for their employment needs. Some of the resources available to all customers include: the Job Information System which includes jobs in Georgia, throughout the Southeast, and across the nation; labor market information, including GLME, O*Net tools and others; over 40 TapDance Live! self-directed career exploration and assessment tools; instructional software for typing and résumé development; automated job referral options; training and education resources; financial aid information; online filing of initial UI claims; telephones, fax machines and copiers.

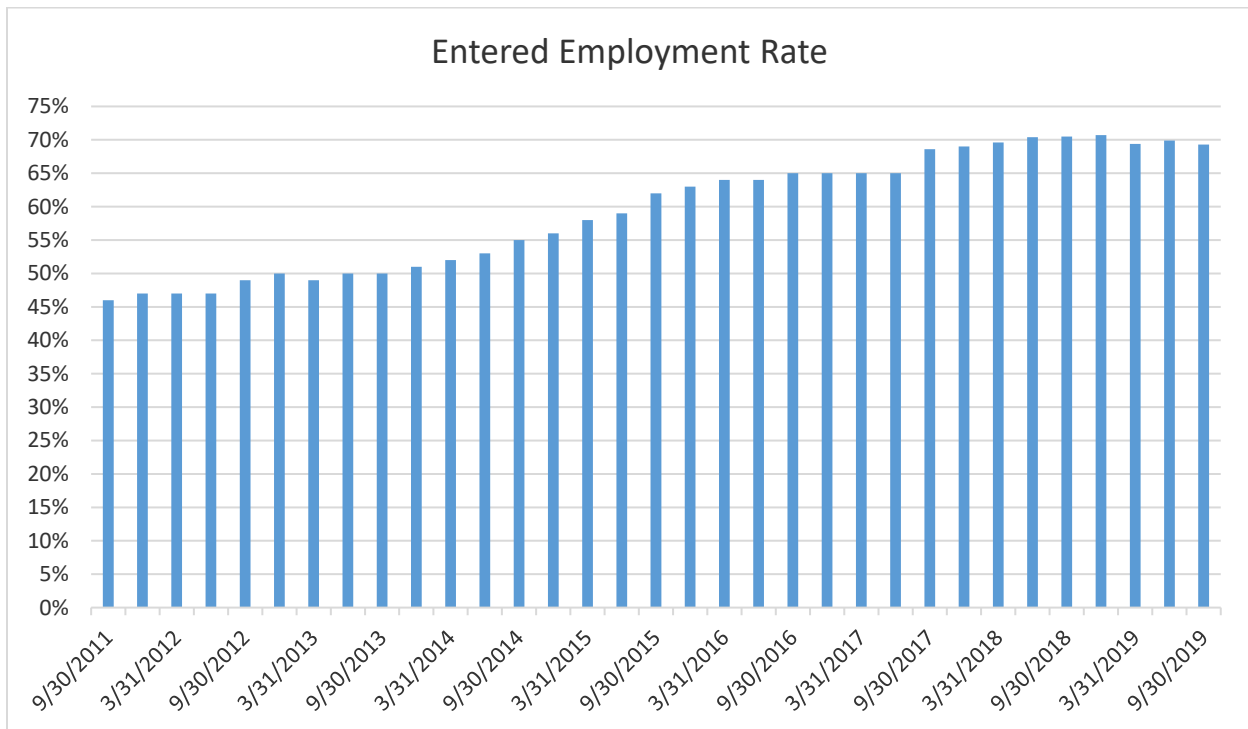
Services routinely provided to ES job seeker customers (including UI claimants) throughout the State include:

Self-service resources such as EG labor exchange services, unemployment claims application, books, videos, and pamphlets;

- Access to computers and job search software
- Résumé development and typing tutorials
- Job openings in Georgia, the Southeast, and across the nation
- Labor market information for career exploration, fields in demand, average salaries, etc.
- Training and education resources, financial aid options
- Vocational assessment
- Automated referral assistance
- Workshops on a variety of employment-related topics (e.g., effective job search, interviewing, résumé development, coping with job loss, financial management)
- Career expos
- Job search assistance and job referral
- Job development
- Job clubs
- Individualized assistance for customers with unique needs

- Specialized assistance for veterans, other eligible individuals and migrant and seasonal farm workers
- Assistance for ex-offenders
- Assistance with federal bonding; and
- Referral to partner and community provider services
- Over 383,000 job seekers received employment related services from in 2018, at GDOL career centers and via its upgraded online systems. Of these in 2018, GDOL staff provided workforce services to over 19,000 Georgia veterans resulting in a JVSG Employment Rate of 59.4%, and referred over 9,840 UI claimants to the RESEA program resulting in a completion rate of 88.7%
- To meet the employment needs of these job seekers, Georgia businesses listed approximately 100,000 available jobs on a daily basis through GDOL's Employ Georgia system. These posted job openings are a result of the continued growth in the local economy and the strengthening of employer relationships with the workforce system. As a result of the focused reemployment strategies of connecting job seekers to meaningful job opportunities, Georgia's Entered Employment Rate has shown steady recovery and surpassed pre-recession rates. The chart below shows a continuous increase in the number of job seekers who entered employment each program year.

Georgia's 'Employment Services' Employment Rate (Through 9/30/19)



(2) Registration of UI Claimants

Georgia law requires that UI claimants register with the State’s ES. This process is fully integrated into the claims application process. Claimants are given up to 10 days after the issuance of their first benefit payment to complete the ES registration process. A letter is mailed to the claimant and a payment stop is placed on the claim if the claimant fails to register by the deadline. The claimant is then given 7 additional days to register before being disqualified for benefits.

Once Georgia UI claimants are approved for their first UI payment, they are required to create an account and at least one searchable résumé in the EG system described previously. WP and UI staff, in addition to the job seeker, are able to manage and track job match alerts and job search activities.

Georgia maintains an active ERP through which UI customers are evaluated, typically at the 5th, 9th, and 14th weeks of their claim. At each of these dates, they receive additional guidance and resources for effective reemployment. Centers also offer workshops during these visits, on topics including interviewing techniques, networking, and dressing for success. These strategies contribute to the State’s nation leading low average duration of UI claims noted above.

(3) Administration of the Work Test for the State UI System

Individuals receiving unemployment benefits in Georgia must be able to work, available for work, and actively seeking full-time work. Individuals who earned the majority of wages in the base period used to establish the claim doing part-time work are allowed

to restrict their work search to part-time work. The only exceptions to the work search requirements are:

- Individuals with a job attachment. This includes individuals for whom their employer filed a “partial” unemployment claim or individuals with a definite recall to work within six (6) weeks of their last day worked
- Union members in good standing
- Individuals who are approved and enrolled in a Commissioner-approved training program.

In Georgia’s automated workforce system, customers enter work search information weekly. Staff have access to that information 24/7 and can contact a customer should questions arise or concerns be raised. In addition, EG captures a customer’s résumé, job referrals and information regarding a customer’s response to an employer’s request. Should an employer contact GDOL that a job candidate did not respond to a request for an interview, that claimant can be contacted to determine if compliance with the required work test occurred. To ensure accessibility to the automated system, staff are always on hand to assist claimants with the use of the labor market exchange. In addition, if the customer does not have a résumé, EG will build one for them. All claimants are subject to a work search audit and can be called into the office should questions arise.

During the initial claims filing application, individuals are asked questions regarding their availability. Negative responses require adjudication of the potential availability issue by GDOL claims examiners or services specialists.

Individuals referred to the UI RESEA program must report to their initial RESEA appointment, and must participate in all subsequent in-person and telephone appointments. During the in-person appointments, UI ERPs are performed, and staff question the individual about availability for work and any barriers to work they may be facing during all contacts. During all eligibility reviews (i.e., UI, RESEA, and REU) staff review the individual’s work search, discuss the individual’s availability, and any barriers to work.

Weekly UI benefit certification includes a question about whether the individual is able, available, and actively seeking employment. A negative response places an issue on the certification which cannot be removed until a statement is obtained regarding availability. If an issue is determined, a benefits eligibility review is performed by the GDOL services specialist or claims examiner and a determination released, if in order.

Employers and anonymous individuals can report suspected UI fraud on the GDOL web site. This can include employers reporting individuals who do not report for interviews, individuals who are incarcerated, or are otherwise not able, available, and/or actively seeking work.

ES staff have contact with employers and receive notice when individuals fail to report to an interview or refuse work – resulting in an issue on the individual’s claim. In the event a potential issue is discovered from any source, a BER is scheduled with a claims examiner or GDOL services specialist. If the individual is not able, available, and actively seeking work (and is not exempted from work search), an appropriate determination regarding UI benefits is released.

(4) Provision of Referrals and Application Assistance

The coordination of service delivery is a primary principle of WIOA, which brings together the core programs of Federal investment in skill development.

GDOL embraces WIOA’s primary goal of service delivery integration to provide a seamless experience for participants in federal skills development and employment services programs, by providing:

- information to GDOL customers on community resources, labor market information, GED, occupational training, OJT, and support services that make training possible to enhance an individual’s ability to return to work
- a “front door” to the workforce system with staff from career centers throughout the state who identify customers’ needs and assist them with UI, employment and reemployment assistance, trade services, automated resources, workshops and referrals to more intensive services such as training, available through WIOA LWDBs, and other partners.

(e) Agricultural Outreach Plan (AOP)

The Agricultural Outreach Plan (APO), as administered by The Georgia Department of Labor (Ga DOL), details the activities planned for providing services and outreach to both domestic Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW), H2-A MSFW’s and agricultural businesses for PY 2020. The AOP is prepared in accordance with the Workforce Innovations Opportunity Act (WIOA) planning guidance and is a four year plan.

Agriculture is a driving force for local economies across Georgia and has long shaped the state’s history. The 2019 Agriculture Snapshot brief on Georgia’s agricultural economy is based on the 2017 Georgia Farm Gate Value Report, an annual, county-level economic valuation for all food and fiber production in the state. Together, these commodities directly represent a value of over \$13.75 billion to the Georgia economy.

The Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development via the 2017 US Census of Agriculture data, reports that Georgia has 42,439 farms totaling 9,953,730 acres. The average size of a farm in Georgia is 235 acres. The total harvested cropland in Georgia is 3,628,707 acres. Through the activities of Ga DOL career centers, Telamon Corporation, local workforce partners and education agencies, the workforce system has made every effort to meet growers’ and workers’ increasing needs.

An area of agricultural activity which continues to blossom is Agritourism. This unique experience combines traditional agriculture with tourism, and includes visits to working

farms, orchards, ranches, wineries and other agricultural operations. This “win-win” model supports and sustains Georgia’s farmlands, while providing tourists with educational and relaxing outdoor adventures. Shopping and dining experiences are also often part of agritourism opportunities and operators are continuously updating their operations to incorporate new activities and events.

(1) Assessment of Need

(A) Assessment of Agricultural Activity

The following crops produced in Georgia involve a significant number of migrant and seasonal workers: beans, blueberries, cabbage, cantaloupe, cucumbers, eggplant, greens, nurseries, Vidalia onions, peaches, pecans, peppers, strawberries, squash, sweet corn, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, and watermelon. However, major crop activity for cotton and peanuts, as well as wheat, field corn and pecans, is mechanized and requires minimal workers for production. Table 1 provides the top five major crops and peak seasons for which labor is typically needed:

Table 1
Significant Levels of Agricultural Activity Requiring Seasonal Labor
Top 5 Georgia Crops

Crop	Months of Peak Labor Needs
1. Sweet Corn	June-July, October-November
2. Vidalia Onions (Harvest)	April-July
3. Blueberries (Harvest & Pack)	April-August
4. Watermelons (Harvest)	June-July
5. Peppers (Plant/Harvest)	March-November

Table 2 identifies other significant levels of agricultural activity requiring seasonal labor, and the peak seasons for which labor is typically needed:

Table 2
Other Significant Levels of Agricultural Activity Requiring Seasonal Labor
Georgia Crops

Crop	Months of Peak Labor Needs
Beans & Peas (Plant/Harvest)	Mar-Oct
Blackberry (Harvest & Pack)	May-Jul
Blueberry (Harvest & Pack)	Apr-Jun
Broccoli (Harvest & Pack)	Jan-Mar, Jun-Dec
Cabbage (Plant/Harvest)	Year Round
Cantaloupe (Plant/Harvest)	Feb-Apr, May-Aug
Carrots	Dec-May
Cotton (Ginning)	Aug-Feb
Cucumbers (Harvest)	April-Nov
Eggplant (Plant/Harvest)	Mar-Nov
Greens (Plant/Harvest)	Jan-Jun, Aug-Dec

Muscadines (Harvest)	Jul-Nov
Okra (Plant/Harvest)	Mar-Dec
Peaches (Prune/Thin/Harvest)	Jan-Aug
Peanuts (Ginning)	Sep-Dec
Pecans	Aug-Dec
Squash (Plant/Harvest)	Mar-Nov
Strawberries (Plant/Harvest)	Oct-Feb, Mar-Jun
Sweet Potatoes(Plant/Harvest)	Apr-Sep
Tobacco (Plant/Harvest)	Mar-Sep
Tomatoes (Plant/Harvest)	Mar-Dec
Vidalia Onions (Plant)	Nov-Dec

Below is a review of the current PY 2019 agricultural activity and the estimated (estimate of need) migrant and seasonal farmworker activity:

Counties	Crop(s)	Estimated H2A MSFW's
Bainbridge Career Center: Decatur, Early, Miller, Seminole	Cotton	100
	Sweet Corn	445
	Tomatoes	340
	Squash/ Organic Vegetables	45
Americus Career Center: Marion, Schley, Sumter, Taylor, Webster, Crisp, Dooly, Macon	Cucumbers	50
	Cotton	70
	Green Beans	70
	Peaches	190
	Strawberries	40
	Watermelons	620
	Squash	50
Douglas Career Center: Appling, Atkinson, Bacon, Coffee		
	Blueberries	4,317
	Pine Straw	120
	Cotton	119
	Peanuts	204
	Tobacco	142
	Tomatoes	50
	Squash	50
	Cucumbers	50
Peppers	50	
Dublin Career Center:	Watermelons	1,436

Emanuel, Johnson, Laurens, Treutlen, Wheeler Dodge, Bleckley, Telfair, Wilcox	Blueberries	205
	Vidalia Onion	1,148
	Strawberries	347
	Tobacco	124
	Greens	189
	Peas & Beans	422
	Cucumbers	65
	Cantaloupe	80
	Tomatoes	300
	Sweet Potato / Potato	496
	Squash	215
	Cabbage	170
	Corn (Sweet)	470
	Broccoli	270
Pecans	235	
Moultrie Career Center: Baker, Colquitt, Mitchell	Eggplant	331
	Okra	220
	Peppers	388
	Cabbage	634
	Greens	208
	Cantaloupes	136
	Cotton	185
	Cucumbers	388
	Peanuts	115
	Pecans	25
	Squash	596
	Sweet Corn	114
Tifton Career Center: Ben Hill, Berrien, Irwin, Tift, Turner	Watermelon	2,815
	Cucumber	1,542
	Squash	1,297
	Peppers	1,227
	Blueberry	495
	Cotton	140
	Muscadines	470
	Greens	897
	Beans	285
	Cabbage	992
	Cantaloupe	630
	Peas	285
	Peanut	135
	Eggplant	312
Tobacco	170	

	Blackberry	700
	Strawberry	40
	Perennial Grasses	380
	Broccoli	312
	Cauliflower	380
	Pine Trees Seedlings	380
Valdosta Career Center:	Peppers	430
Lowndes, Lanier, Echols, Cook, Brooks	Cucumbers	550
	Squash	760
	Eggplant	240
	Beans	600
	Cabbage	575
	Greens	325
	Sweet Potato	850
	Peaches	75
	Watermelon	145
	Blueberries	850
	Blackberries	850
	Carrots	850
	Onions	850
	Tomatoes	80
	Pecans	40
	Tobacco	190
	Cotton	50
	Vidalia Onions	5,849
	Vidalia Onions	5,699
	Sweet Corn	670
	Greens	645
	Carrots	510
Vidalia Career Center:	Cabbage	620
Candler, Evans, Jeff Davis, Montgomery, Tattnall, Toombs	Pecans	120
	Broccoli	850
	Cucumbers	560
	Squash	1,130
	Peppers	740
	Sweet Potato	1,545
	Tobacco	140
	Blueberries	70
	Watermelons	2,915
	Tomatoes	370

Waycross Career Center: Brantley, Charlton, Clinch, Pierce, Ware	Blueberries	2,240
	Watermelon	95
	Peppers	179
	Squash	303
	Eggplants	55
	Cucumbers	124
	Tomatoes	179
	Cabbage	124
	Onions	95
	Cotton	68
	Peanuts	68
	Tobacco	183

(B) Assessment of Unique Needs of Farmworkers

Georgia has ranked as one of the leading states in providing employment services to migrant and seasonal farmworkers (MSFWs), according to the United States Department of Labor. Due to the lack of MSFW’s migrating into the state and increased business demands, Georgia growers have had to put into practice new strategies to include automation where possible. Some of the contributing factors include:

- substantial increases in the number of H-2A orders
- MSFW migration pattern changes creating worker surplus/shortage in some areas
- increase in the number of farms and acreage
- expansion of crops into new areas and new methods of harvesting

During PY 2018, Georgia received 1,234 Agricultural applications (a 19% increase from PY 2017) for 77,089 workers (a 2% increase from PY 2017). PY 2019 projections show an anticipated increase in the GDOL Agricultural program with @ 1,500 applications and almost 92,000 workers as employers’ requests continue to expand.

Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker (MSFW) characteristics:

- Predominantly Spanish, Haitian Creole speaking and/or English language learners (ELL)
- Countries of origin include Mexico, Guatemala, Haiti, El Salvador
- U.S. born domestic workers include workers from Texas, Florida, Georgia and Puerto Rico
- Approximately 77,000 seasonal farm workers are predominantly H-2A visa foreign guest workers including a small percentage of Domestic MSFWs.
- Farmworkers, MSFWs and year-round workers have similar needs including:

- Assistance with transportation, language barriers and finding work
- Accessible services, especially when considering agricultural worker workday hours do not always coincide with typical business hours of available services
- H2A Farmworkers are seasonal workers that are authorized to work at specific farms seasonally
- In the off season, domestic workers may find other temporary jobs or wait to be called back by their previous agricultural employer.

(2) Outreach Activities

(A) Strategies for Contacting Farmworkers Not Reached by Normal Activities

Education, community food banks, Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and entities that provide Adult Literacy, ESL and GED® services to MSFWs. Ga DOL career centers collaborate with LWDBs to ensure MSFWs have training opportunities for jobs in demand in the area.

Outreach staff participate in local clinics and fairs targeted to MSFWs and their families and, where possible, assists local health departments to educate migrant workers on health issues. Staff partner with other one-stop centers/career centers in their area to provide services at the locations most convenient for the migrant worker, regardless of the counties each office typically serves.

Staff conducting outreach refer MSFWs to both seasonal agricultural employment and nonagricultural employment. This provides additional career opportunities and lengthens the period of employment for MSFW workers. With the diverse range of crops grown in Georgia, MSFWs have the opportunity for agricultural employment for nine to ten months of the year.

(B) Strategies for Providing Technical Assistance to Outreach Workers

Career Center Managers, with support from Agricultural Services, ensure agricultural staff are trained to perform their job duties. Training may include GDOL courses as well as training from industry organizations and other public agencies. Technical Advisories are shared with all Ga DOL staff as appropriate. Ga DOL is working on further developing its internal protocols and providing technical training as needed, and also request training on employment services as needed for outreach staff.

At minimum, Ga DOL trains staff annually on all program areas to include (but not limited to):

- Refresher training on the Agriculture/Outreach Program
- Complaint processing, filing & referral process
- Identifying and logging apparent violations while conducting outreach/farm visits
- Identifying opportunities for farm and food processing work

- Identifying opportunities to transition to other industries
- Informing farm workers about their rights protected (housing, work conditions, etc.);
- Identifying and providing links to support services (health, education, etc.)
- Providing services in the language workers understand, as with all customers
- H-2A updates on housing inspections (H-2A housing inspectors)

GDOL continues to provide Agricultural/Outreach worker training and awareness across core programs including:

- Unemployment Insurance (UI) program
- Identification of UI eligibility issue(s)

GDOL’s professional development activities include planning and coordinating services for workers and agricultural employers at the local level. This ensures that each community provides the unique services needed by local customers, and elevates the awareness of MSFW issues among local partners as they serve customers.

(C) Strategies for Increasing Outreach Worker Training and Awareness

Georgia Department of Labor provides outreach workers training and information to increase awareness. Individual training is provided to each outreach staff, along with ongoing technical assistance throughout the program year. Outreach staff also attend related conferences and meetings to increase their awareness of agricultural related activities across the state. Outreach staff are housed in One Stop/Career Centers together with WP/ES, UI, Trade, VET, and other workforce staff who they work collaboratively with to ensure all needs of the customer are addressed.

(D) Strategies for Providing Professional Development Activities to Outreach Workers

GDOL has a strong dual commitment to serve growers and workers in the agricultural community. The employment-related needs of Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs) are an important focus in Career Centers across the state, with an enhanced focus in the following nine agriculturally-significant Ga DOL career centers:

GDOL Career Center	Counties Served
Americus	Marion, Schley, Sumter, Taylor, Webster, Crisp, Dooly, Macon
Bainbridge	Decatur, Early, Miller, Seminole
Douglas	Appling, Atkinson, Coffee, Bacon
Dublin	Emanuel, Johnson, Laurens, Treutlen, Wheeler, Dodge, Bleckley, Telfair, Wilcox
Moultrie	Baker, Colquitt, Mitchell
Tifton	Ben Hill, Berrien, Irwin, Tift, Turner

Valdosta	Lowndes, Cook, Lanier, Echols, Brooks
Vidalia	Candler, Evans, Jeff Davis, Tattnell, Toombs, Montgomery, Long
Waycross	Brantley, Charlton, Clinch, Pierce, Ware, Wayne

Wagner-Peyser funded positions for MSFW outreach and agricultural specialists are located in the offices mentioned above, serving both MSFWs and Agriculture Businesses/Employers. Each of these offices has knowledgeable full-time designated staff to assist growers and MSFWs to supplement normal in-take activities conducted by the Georgia Department of Labor employment service offices and staff. It is the responsibility of the MSFW Outreach and Agricultural Specialist to conduct vigorous outreach in the areas where MSFWs are located and provide services.

(E) Strategies for Coordinating Outreach Efforts

Telamon, the NFJP grantee for the State of Georgia, provides core, intensive and training services and related assistance for MSFWs. The cooperative agreement between Ga DOL and Telamon was developed to coordinate and enhance service delivery to MSFWs. This partnership provides for the sharing of labor market information, training, supportive services and job-related resources available to MSFWs, Ga DOL and Telamon share reports on the staff hours spent performing MSFW outreach activity. In several parts of the state, Telamon staff is co-located in the area's comprehensive One-Stop Center. Telamon staff are located in the areas near our local career centers. Service locations:

- Douglas
- Moultrie
- Vidalia/Lyons
- Tifton
- Valdosta
- Waycross

Agricultural staff contacts growers prior to planting and harvesting seasons to plan for upcoming labor needs. Staff coordinates with the growers and with other career center staff to match the labor needs of the employers with qualified workers to fill these jobs. In line with Ga DOL's renewed focus on services to business, state staff provides outreach staff with comprehensive listings of area growers to aid in scheduling visits throughout the agricultural community.

The Department of Labor is also collaborating with Telamon Corporation and the Georgia Department of Agriculture to ensure that all resources for growers and agricultural workers are coordinated in a seamless fashion. Ga DOL works with the University of Georgia County Extension Service/Department of Agriculture field staff to collaborate and improve services to Ag employers and MSFW's.

Outreach contacts with MSFWs are made primarily during peak agricultural activity periods, which vary for different crops. Using available resources, contacts are made at locations where MSFWs live and congregate. Written and oral presentations are provided in the language(s) readily understood by workers. The typical menu of services includes the following:

- Referral to agricultural, H-2A orders and non-agricultural employment
- Referral to training
- Referral to supportive services
- Career counseling
- Job development
- Information on the Ga DOL complaint system
- Summaries of farm worker rights (terms and conditions of employment)

Staff obtain permission from the grower prior to entering the property to conduct outreach, and obtains permission from the workers prior to entering their living areas. After describing services, outreach staff encourages MSFWs to visit the nearest DOL Career Center for the full range of workforce services. However, in the event MSFWs cannot or do not wish to visit a career center, outreach staff help the customers complete an application for Employment Services, provide referrals to employment opportunities for which the individuals are qualified, assist them in preparing complaints, or make appointments for needed services. As appropriate, outreach staff carries out follow-up contacts with MSFW customers.

The State Monitor Advocate also performs a variety of advocacy activities, including but not limited to: overseeing the operation and performance of the MSFW complaint system; contributing to the state Agricultural Outreach Plan and reviewing the daily reports of outreach workers; participating in public meetings throughout the state; and meeting with farm worker groups and employers to promote the use of Ga DOL services. In addition to these activities, the State Monitor Advocate conducts field visits to the working and living areas of MSFWs to offer and verify job services. He also meets and works with other workforce agencies to coordinate services to MSFWs.

The State Monitor Advocate raises issues, as appropriate, to ensure that the development of new systems and strategies for service delivery will address the needs of MSFW customers. The State Monitor Advocate conducts onsite reviews at local career centers, ensuring local workforce systems are in compliance with the designated equity indicators and minimum service levels for MSFWs. The State Monitor Advocate also provides training and technical assistance, as needed, to staff of partner agencies regarding outreach and services to MSFWs and the Employment Service complaint system.

(3) Services Provided through the One-Stop Delivery System

(A) Strategies for Providing Full Range of Employment and Training Service

The Department of Labor's website contains a broad array of employment resources for job seekers and businesses, as well as information about other community resources, providing the full range of employment and training services to the agricultural community. Job search for employment opportunities in Georgia can be performed electronically through Georgia's labor exchange system, located at: www.employgeorgia.com.

Ga DOL has trained staff providing career and training services required under WIOA Title I to MSFWs through outreach and local career centers. Outreach contacts with MSFWs are made year-round and especially during peak agricultural activity periods, which vary for different crops. Contacts are made at locations where MSFWs live and congregate. Written and oral presentations are provided in the language(s) readily understood by the workers. The typical menu of services includes the following:

- Referrals to agricultural, H-2A orders and non-agricultural employment
- Referrals to training
- Referrals to supportive services
- Career counseling
- Job development
- Information on the GDOL complaint system
- Summaries of farm worker rights (terms and conditions of employment)

The department is always looking for new ways to improve services to agricultural employers and MSFWs. Each outreach staff person establishes a list of available community resources and develops partnerships with other organizations serving agricultural employers and MSFWs. Resources include, but are not limited to, local farm worker health programs, Telamon Corporation, Georgia Migrant Education, community food banks, the Salvation Army, and religious organizations that provide assistance to migrant populations. Georgia's technical colleges and regional educational organizations provide Adult Literacy, English as a Second Language and GED services to MSFWs. Career centers collaborate with local Workforce Development Areas to ensure that MSFWs have training opportunities for jobs in demand in the area. Ga DOL continues collaborative efforts to assist MSFWs to access needed resources.

Outreach staff participate in local clinics and job fairs targeted to MSFWs and their families and, where possible, assist local health departments to educate migrant workers on health issues. Staff partner with other career centers in their area to provide services at the locations most convenient for the migrant workers. For example, the Dublin and Vidalia career centers work together to serve both growers and MSFWs that live closer to one another's office, regardless of the counties each office typically serve.

Staff conduct outreach and refer MSFW's to both seasonal agricultural employment and non-agricultural employment. This provides additional career opportunities and lengthens the period of employment for MSFW workers. With the diverse range of crops grown in Georgia, MSFW's have the opportunity for agricultural employment for most of the year.

(B) Strategies for Marketing Employment Service Complaint System

ES Complaint system training is provided to all Career Center and partner staff on a continuous basis as needed. Ag Outreach staff participate and attend partner agency meetings, to educate and train on the ES Complaint system, as well as providing partner agencies GDOL-3501 complaint poster.

The ES Complaint system is discussed with workers when they reach out to Ga DOL staff to discuss possible violations of labor law. Workers seeking to file formal complaints are assisted with completing the complaint form and the staff forward the form to the appropriate enforcement office. Where workers do not want to file formal complaints, the Ga DOL staff work with businesses to discuss potential violations and resolve them with business cooperation.

(C) Strategies for Marketing Agricultural Recruitment System

Staff discuss the Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS) as a possible way to obtain the necessary labor for their business. These employers are informed that they can list interstate clearance orders with the Ga DOL to obtain domestic referrals. This effort expands job opportunities to workers in other states. States with large farm worker populations are contacted and assistance is provided in identifying available workers of these opportunities.

Agricultural employers are welcome to use local career centers/One-Stops for business service needs (e.g., Internet, copy and fax machines, etc.) and to interview job applicants. Worker recruitment, provision of forms for farm labor contractor registration, and assistance with the H-2A temporary agricultural program are other resources available to agricultural employers.

GDOL previously released findings of comprehensive Prevailing Practice for Farm Workers and Laborers Survey. The survey included responses of 226 farm operations employing more than 10,000 seasonal workers and was conducted in partnership with the Georgia Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association, the Georgia Farm Bureau, Georgia Agribusiness Council and other agricultural partners. The survey highlighted the emergence of stronger food safety practices across the industry and reinforced the prevailing practice of paying workers on a weekly basis. As a result of the positive feedback from the grower community, additional states have expressed interest in replicating the comprehensive survey approach with the involvement of a broad array of agricultural partners. The department plans to continue partnering with organizations who engage in similar comprehensive surveys in the future, to further expand involvement on improving services to the agribusiness community.

(4) Other Requirements

(A) Collaboration

The Georgia DOL has established a Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) with Telamon Corporation to better deliver services to MSFWs. This ensures MSFWs have meaningful access to services in a way that meets their unique needs as well as access to career pathways, job training, and other supportive services offered through the workforce development system to improve their livelihoods. This MOU is in effect from February 13, 2019 through June 30, 2022.

GDOL has a strong partnership with Telamon Corporation, which operates the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) in Georgia. This program is funded under Title 1 of the Workforce Investment Act to provide core, intensive and training services and related assistance for MSFWs. The cooperative agreement between Ga DOL and Telamon was developed to coordinate and enhance service delivery to MSFWs. In addition to sharing labor market information, training, supportive services and job-related resources available to MSFWs, Ga DOL and Telamon share reports on the staff hours spent performing MSFW outreach activity.

Telamon staff are located in the areas near our local career centers. Service locations:

- Douglas
- Moultrie
- Vidalia/Lyons
- Tifton
- Valdosta
- Waycross

(B) Review and Public Comment

The draft of this AOP has been made available to the groups listed below and they will be given a 30-day window to provide feedback and comments. The following groups and organizations were invited directly to share their input and comments:

- Consul General de México
- Consulate, El Salvador
- Consulate, Guatemala
- Consulate, Honduras
- East Georgia Health Care Center
- Farmworker Health Project
- GALEO (Georgia Association of Latino Elected Officials)
- Georgia Agribusiness Council
- Georgia Department of Agriculture
- Georgia Department of Education, Migrant Education Agency
- Georgia Farm Bureau
- Georgia Farmworker Health Program
- Georgia Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association

- Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Georgia Legal Services, Farmworker Division
- Latin American Association
- League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC #950)
- Mexican American Chamber of Commerce
- South Central Primary Care Centers (SCPCC)
- Telamon Corporation
- University of Georgia, Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development (CAED)
- University of Georgia, Extension County Operations
- USDOL, Wage and Hour (Savannah office)

(C) Data Assessment

In reviewing the previous four years of Wagner-Peyser reports on performance, Georgia has met its goals to provide MSFWs quantitatively proportionate services as compared to non-MSFWs. The most recent data below reflects services provided to MSFWs for the first quarter of PY2019:

**Service Provided Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers
Equity Ratio Indicators**

Individuals	MSFWs		Non - MSFWs		Equity	
	#	%	#	%	Yes	No
A. Total Applications	412		50,524			
1. Referred to Jobs	337	81.8%	24,024	47.5%	X	
2. Received Staff Assisted Services	352	85.4%	42,036	83.2%	X	
3. Referred to Support Service	347	84.2%	888	1.8%	X	
4. Career Guidance	360	87.4%	17,645	34.9%	X	
5. Job Development Contact	368	89.3%	30,078	59.5%	X	

Total equity indicators meeting: 5 out of 5

**Services Provided Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers
Minimum Service Level Indicators**

Data Items	Compliance Level					
	Compliance Level	Actual Level	Actual Den.	Actual Num.	Yes	No
1a. Placed in a job	42.5%	68.4%	38	16	X	
1b. Entered Employment						
2. Placed \$.50 above federal minimum wage	14%	\$121,541	N/A	N/A	X	

3a. Placed in long term non-ag job	3%	55.6%	45	25	X	
3b. Employment Retention						
4. Reviews of significant offices	100%	100%			X	
5. Field checks conducted	25%				X	
6. Outreach contacts per staff day worked	5	23			X	
7. Timely process of ES complaints	90%	100%			X	

Total number of minimum service level indicators meeting: 7 out of 7.

(D) Assessment of Progress

DOL agricultural staff meet quarterly with partner organizations like Telamon Corp, Georgia Department of Education, Georgia Migrant Health Programs, Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College and Georgia Department of Agriculture in delivery of services to MSFWs across the state through onsite, in office and collaborative events. Ongoing interaction with these respective agencies is maintained to ensure communication of upcoming events and activities is coordinated, as well as to look at ways to integrate services where possible.

GDOL Outreach/Agricultural and Complaint Specialists across the state are readily available to assist MSFWs with issues when they arise. When possible, a team of staff are sent, one to meet with the employers/FLCs and the other to meet with workers onsite to assist in resolution of issues. Often, by facilitating communication between parties, quick resolution is reached and both parties can focus on returning to agricultural activities. The State Monitor Advocate (SMA) offers one on one compliance/technical assistance training to staff as needed throughout the year. In addition to the SMA, Ga DOL has a full-time Complaint Coordinator to provide on-going and immediate technical assistance to specialists in the field. When and if needed, a formal complaint is signed and submitted and the appropriate oversight agency notified. Apparent Violations (informal complaints) signed off by staff and filed at the career center where issue was resolved.

Agricultural staff contact growers prior to planting and harvesting seasons to plan for upcoming labor needs. Staff coordinates with the growers and with other career center staff to match the labor needs of the employers with qualified workers to fill these jobs. In line with the Georgia Department of Labor's renewed focus on services to business, state staff provide outreach staff with comprehensive listings of area growers to aid in scheduling visits throughout the agricultural community. Ga DOL is also reaching out in collaboration with the Georgia Department of Agriculture to ensure all resources for growers and agricultural workers are coordinated in a seamless fashion. The department has a works with the University of Georgia County Extension Service/Department of Agriculture field staff to collaborate and improve services to

agricultural employers and MSFW's to ensure compliance with state and federal rules and regulations pertaining to agricultural farming.

Agriculture/Outreach staff have been provided with laptops in order to provide MSFWs with on-site registration/enrollment into Georgia's Workforce System.

Laptops are effectively used to assist agricultural employers and have streamlined housing inspections, prevailing wage/practice surveying activities, provision of required posters/paperwork and the ability to sign required documents in the field.

The monthly report of Services to Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers is compiled for quarterly reporting on the ETA-5148 report. All prescribed policies and procedures regarding documentation and reporting as outlined by US Department of Labor are followed.

(E) State Monitor Advocate

The State Monitor Advocate, State agricultural staff, and agricultural outreach staff work together to provide feedback needed in the development of the State Ag Plan. This ensures the team has the opportunity to discuss any service delivery strategy changes needed for the upcoming planning year. The State Monitor Advocate, is directly involved in the development of the plan and has approved the drafted plan as required by USDOL and said federal requirements.

WAGNER-PEYSER ASSURANCES

The State of Georgia hereby certifies the following:

Common Assurances:

1. The Wagner-Peyser Employment Service is co-located with one-stop centers or a plan and timeline has been developed to comply with this requirement within a reasonable amount of time. (sec 121(e)(3));

Yes

2. If the state has significant MSFW one-stop centers, the state agency is complying with the requirements under 20 CFR 653.111, State Workforce Agency staffing requirements;

Yes

3. If a State Workforce Development Board, department, or agency administers State laws for vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, that board, department, or agency cooperates with the agency that administers Wagner-Peyser services, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs and Youth Programs under Title I; and

Yes

4. If a state chooses to provide certain ES activities without merit staff, it remains incumbent upon SWA officials to carry out the following activities if they arise:

- 1) Initiate the discontinuation of services;
- 2) Make the determination that services need to be discontinued;
- 3) Make the determination to reinstate services after the services have been discontinued;
- 4) Approve corrective action plans;
- 5) Approve the removal of an employer's clearance orders from interstate or intrastate clearance if the employer was granted conditional access to ARS and did not come into compliance within 5 calendar days;
- 6) Enter into agreements with state and Federal enforcement agencies for enforcement-agency staff to conduct field checks on the SWAs' behalf (if the SWA so chooses); and
- 7) Decide whether to consent to the withdrawal of complaints if a party who requested a hearing wishes to withdraw its request for hearing in writing before the hearing.

Yes

III. ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY PROGRAM

(a) Aligning of Content Standards

The Office of Adult Education (OAE) requires that all Adult Education programs use curriculum, classroom materials and assessments that are aligned to the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) and English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS), which are aligned with K-12 standards. To support this effort, OAE rolled out a three-year implementation plan beginning in 2017-2018 that consists of professional development workshops, webinars, and technical assistance. To ensure ongoing compliance and consistency of standards integration, OAE will continue to provide professional development, classroom observations, coaching, and technical assistance to adult education providers and instructors across Georgia.

(b) Local Activities

Previous Grant Competition

OAE provides AEFLA grant funds to local providers through a competitive application process. In May 2017, OAE awarded grants to 31 providers throughout Georgia. Of these 31 providers, 27 offered adult basic education and secondary education, 25 offered English language acquisition programs, and 10 offered Integrated English Language and Civics education. 30 providers offered workplace preparation activities, as well as integrated education and training (one program was terminated in December 2019 for noncompliance). In addition, all providers offered at least two activities concurrently.

Current Grant Competition

Application Process, Structure & Allowable Activities

In late January/early February 2020, OAE opened its new competitive Request for Applications (RFA) and plans to award grants to providers in May 2020. Under this RFA, applicants can apply for a General Adult Education Grant and/or an Integrated English Language & Civics Education (IELCE) Grant. Grant recipients will receive funding for a four-year period, from July 2020 to June 2024, contingent upon an annual renewal process.

In accordance with WIOA 231(c), OAE will ensure all eligible providers have equitable access to apply and compete for adult education funding by announcing the grant opportunities in the legal organ of each Georgia county as well as by using the same application and review process for all general adult education applicants and IELCE applicants, respectively.

OAE has structured its application process to ensure the local providers it funds establish and operate programs that provide the adult education and literacy activities identified in WIOA Section 203. The chart below details each grant opportunity, including its funding stream(s) and the activities it will fund.

Grant Opportunity	Funding Source(s)	Allowable Activities
General Adult Education Grant	WIOA Sections 231 and 225 State Matching Funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Basic & Secondary Education • Corrections Education • English Language Acquisition Activities • Family Literacy • Integrated Education & Training • Workplace Preparation Activities
Integrated English Language & Civics Education (IELCE) Grant	WIOA Section 243	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated English Language & Civics Education in combination with Integrated Education & Training

The application also contains questions targeted at ensuring each applicant explains which activities they will offer, how they will implement those activities, and how they know those activities will meet their students' and region's needs.

Alignment to the 13 Considerations

Both the General Adult Education Grant and the IELCE Grant applications are structured to gather information related to the 13 considerations as specified in WIOA section 231(e), as well as to ensure that applicants only use AEFLA grant funds to serve eligible individuals as specified in WIOA section 203(4). The below chart details the application structure, including which sections align with which considerations.

Application Structure	
Section	WIOA Consideration(s)
Program Overview	1, 4, 13
Staffing	9
The Student Experience	11
Instructional Plan	5, 6, 7, 8, 10
Partnerships	4, 10, 11
Past Effectiveness	2, 3
Data, Outcomes & Continuous Improvement	Required information per Section 232(4)
Budget	Required information per section 232(1)
Family Literacy Supplement	
Corrections Supplement	

Reviewers will evaluate and score each application using a rubric that aligns with the 13 considerations listed in WIOA Section 231(e). OAE will use these scores, along with the feedback it receives from the local workforce development board (LWDB) review as required by 107(d)(11)(B), to make its final funding decisions.

(c) **Corrections Education and other Education of Institutionalized Individuals**

In May 2017, OAE awarded grants to 23 adult education providers to establish and operate programs under Section 225 of WIOA for corrections education and the education of other institutionalized individuals. Under the current grant competition, launched in late January/early February 2020, applicants can again apply for funding, provided under WIOA Section 225, to establish and operate programs for corrections education and the education of other institutionalized individuals. Programs will receive funding for a four-year period, from July 2020 to June 2024, contingent upon an annual renewal process.

In accordance with WIOA 231(c), OAE will ensure all eligible providers have equitable access to apply and compete for corrections funding by announcing the grant opportunity in the legal organ of each Georgia county as well as by using the same application and review process for all corrections applicants.

In their application, all corrections applicants must discuss:

- The correctional and institutional facilities in which they plan to serve students,
- The programs they will offer students including: (a) adult education and literacy activities; (b) special education; (c) secondary school credit; (d) integrated education and training; (e) career pathways; (f) concurrent enrollment; (g) peer tutoring; and (h) transition to re-entry initiatives and other post release services with the goal of reducing recidivism, and
- The applicant's plans to prioritize serving individuals who are scheduled to be released within five years.

Reviewers will review and score each supplement using the General Adult Education Rubric along with the Corrections Supplement Rubric. The rubric takes into account the 13 considerations as specified in WIOA section 231(e), as well as the extent to which the applicant: (a) will offer activities that meet the unique needs of students in correctional facilities, and (b) has a logical process to prioritize serving students who will leave the correctional facility within five years. OAE will use these scores to make its final funding decisions.

(d) Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Program

In May 2017, OAE awarded grants to ten providers – including four community or faith-based organizations and six technical colleges – to establish and operate Integrated English Language & Civics (IELCE) education programs. Under its current grant competition, launched in late January/early February 2020, OAE will again provide an opportunity for eligible providers to apply for and receive funds to establish and operate IELCE programs by submitting an IELCE Grant Application.

In accordance with WIOA Section 231(c), OAE will ensure all eligible providers have equitable access to apply and compete for an IELCE grant by announcing the grant opportunity in the legal organ of each Georgia county as well as by using the same application and review process for all IELCE applicants.

In their application, all IELCE applicants must specifically address how their program will strategically integrate the following components:

- Instruction in literacy and English language acquisition, which includes the use of the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS);
- Instruction on the responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation; and
- Workforce preparation activities and integrated education and training (IET) which, together, will prepare English language learners for, and place them in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency.

In addition, all IELCE applicants must describe how they will partner with the workforce development system – both by having a presence in and partnering with their respective

one-stop and by partnering with local business and industry to implement IET activities for students.

Reviewers will review and score each supplement using the IELCE Rubric. The rubric takes into account the 13 considerations as well as the extent to which the applicant will strategically integrate English language instruction, instruction on citizenship and civic participation, and workforce preparation activities, including IET. OAE will use these scores, along with the feedback it receives from the LWDB review as required by 107(d)(11)(B), to make its final funding decisions.

(e) State Leadership

OAE utilizes its state leadership funding to fund staff that carry out the state leadership activities identified in Section 223 of WIOA. These staff are responsible for the below activities:

WIOA Section 223(A) The alignment of adult education and literacy activities with other core programs and one-stop partners, including eligible providers, including the development of career pathways to provide access to employment and training services for individuals in adult education and literacy activities.

Alignment with one-stop partners and core programs

Per 121(b), OAE's adult education providers enter into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the one-stop centers in the local workforce development area(s) (LWDA) where they serve students. In addition to fulfilling the terms outlined in each specific MOU, representatives from local adult education providers regularly attend LWDB meetings and establish strategic partnerships with LWDBs and other core WIOA partners to support adult education students. One-stop providers refer individuals in need of adult education services to the adult education provider. While the nature of each partnership varies by region, some examples of how LWDBs, one-stops, and adult education providers collaborate are listed below.

- LWDBs provide funding, through individual training accounts and other means, for adult education students, specifically students participating in IET.
- Adult education providers offer classes at their local one-stop.
- Adult education providers develop their IET to prepare students for in-demand occupations as identified by their LWDB.

OAE staff leverages state leadership funds to support its local programs in navigating the MOU process as well as continually strengthening their partnerships with their LWDBs and one-stops. Specifically, since OAE and Worksource Georgia are both housed within the Technical College System of Georgia, the two departments are able to collaborate to strengthen systems – such as aligning intake procedures and strategically utilizing funding – that enable adult education programs, LWDBs and one-stops to successfully partner.

Development of Career Pathways

To ensure Georgia's adult education students have clear and direct paths to employment in an in-demand industry, OAE requires all its providers to offer at least one integrated education and training (IET) opportunity for its students. As part of the Fiscal Year 2021 grant competition, all applicants are required to discuss their plans to offer IET, including which training providers they will partner with and how they know their IET will prepare students for a regionally in-demand occupation as identified by their respective LWDB.

Once awarded, OAE's Instructional Services Team will continue to support IET implementation by offering training and technical assistance – including the webinar series, IET Phone Home, and ongoing assistance from OAE's Instructional Services and Professional Development & Transition Resources teams – to its providers. In addition, as part of the annual renewal process, providers will be required to reflect on the success and challenges of their IET, as well as the extent to which their IET placed students in regionally in-demand careers, and to discuss plans to continually improve their IET offerings.

WIOA Section 223(B) The establishment and operation of high quality professional development programs to improve the instruction provided pursuant to required local activities, including instruction incorporating the essential components of reading instruction as such components relate to adults, instruction related to the specific needs of adult learners, instruction provided by volunteers or by personnel, and dissemination of information about models and promising practices related to such programs.

OAE's Professional Development & Transition Resources (PDTR) team provides targeted professional development to local providers based upon an annual statewide needs assessment, research-based best practices, and federal recommendations. Professional development activities include an annual statewide conference where OAE can disseminate promising practices, quarterly operations meetings for program administrators, regional institutes to address the needs of local providers, online courses, and webinars. While the specific professional development offerings vary annually based on the needs assessment, local providers always have access to training on standards-based (CCRS and ELPS) instruction, instructional best practices, IET, and integrating technology into the classroom. OAE also offers professional development on reading instruction through the Student Achievement in Reading (STAR) program. The PDTR team also supports each provider's Career Services Specialist with ongoing professional development on wraparound services, one-stop engagement, and transition to postsecondary education and employment.

WIOA Section 223(C) The provision of technical assistance to eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities receiving funds under this title

OAE delivers technical assistance to eligible providers to enhance program effectiveness, increase the ability of providers to meet established performance standards, and fulfill one-stop partner obligations. OAE's Instructional Services team provides technical assistance through on-site visits, teleconference, webinars, and regional trainings. Each

program has an assigned Grant Program Support Coordinator (GPSC) who provides ongoing technical assistance related to program performance, grant compliance, instructional quality, student assessment, data collection, reporting, one-stop engagement, transition to postsecondary education and employment, and student recruitment/retention.

The Instructional Services team also provides targeted technical assistance through different webinar series, including IET Phone Home and Technically Speaking. The IET Phone Home webinar series focuses on supporting local providers in developing a single set of learning objectives (SSLOs) for IETs and implementing high quality IET programs. The Technically Speaking webinar series provides needs-based technical assistance for local providers on topics such as data management best practices, the use of technology in instruction and program monitoring, best practices to support English language learners, and more.

WIOA Section 223 (D) The monitoring and evaluation of the quality of, and the improvement in, adult education and literacy activities and the dissemination of information about models and proven or promising practices within the State.

OAE utilizes several methods to assess the quality of its providers and to provide technical assistance and support to improve the quality of its local programs. A team of Grant Program Support Coordinators (GPSCs) provide technical assistance and support to local programs. GPSCs regularly monitor and analyze program data to assess each program's progress toward meeting established performance benchmarks. GPSCs then provide tailored support, technical assistance, and training to programs to ensure continuous program improvement.

OAE also conducts an annual risk assessment on its providers. This risk assessment evaluates each provider's risk of noncompliance with both fiscal and programmatic federal and state statutes, regulations, and the grant award terms and conditions. OAE uses the risk assessment results to determine which programs to monitor as well as the type of monitoring visit the program will receive. Programs can receive a virtual or in-person monitoring visit in following areas: (a) fiscal, (b) instruction, programming & performance, and (c) data, assessment and intake. If needed, OAE will place the program on a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) to address areas of noncompliance or a Program Improvement Plan (PIP) to address areas for programmatic improvement. The program then receives support from OAE's staff, including but not limited to the Director of Accountability, the Director of Instructional Services, and the program's respective GPSC, in addressing the findings and areas for improvement as well as meeting the requirements of the CAP or PIP.

Programs that do not meet their performance target in the prior year are also placed on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) at the beginning of each state fiscal year. The PIP requires programs to:

- Reflect on areas where they may be experiencing challenges, such as retention, teacher accountability, training and professional development, and data analysis;
- Identify, using data, key issues and their root causes;
- Develop a plan and timeframe to address those key issues;
- Establish a program improvement team that includes the program administrator, the data manager, the lead instructor, the program's GPSC, as well as any additional members; and
- Schedule monthly PIP meetings with the program improvement team to review data, discuss instructional strategies, and assess the ongoing outcomes of those strategies.
- OAE will disseminate information about models and proven or promising practices within the State through regional technical assistance seminars, webinar series, professional development trainings, the teacher-of-the-year competition, and the annual statewide conference for adult education providers.

OAE also utilizes state leadership funds to carry out the following permissible activities identified in WIOA Section 223.

WIOA Section 223 (D) The support of state or regional networks of literacy resource centers.

Georgia's Certified Literate Community Program (CLCP) is a network of county-based nonprofit organizations with the mission of combatting low literacy levels in their respective counties. CLCPs support adult education programs and their students by providing funding for supportive services such as childcare and transportation. OAE provides support to CLCPs in improving the quality of support they provide to adult education providers and ensuring that all areas of the state have active and engaged CLCPs.

(f) Assessing Quality

OAE utilizes several methods to assess and improve the quality of its local programs. The specific methods are detailed below.

- **Grant Program Support Coordinators:** OAE has a team of four Grant Program Support Coordinators (GPSC) that provide technical assistance and support to local programs. Specifically, GPSCs regularly monitor and analyze program data to assess each program's progress toward meeting established performance benchmarks. GPSCs then provide tailored support, technical assistance, and training to programs to ensure continuous program improvement.
- **Risk Assessment & Monitoring:** Per 2 CFR § 200.331, OAE conducts an annual risk assessment on each of its providers. This risk assessment evaluates each provider's risk of noncompliance with fiscal and programmatic federal and state statutes and regulations as well as the grant award terms and conditions. OAE uses the risk assessment results to determine which programs to monitor as well as the type of monitoring visit the program will receive. Programs can receive a virtual or in-person

monitoring visit in following areas: (a) fiscal, (b) instruction, programming and performance, and (c) data, assessment and intake.

- OAE then uses a comprehensive monitoring process during which OAE staff review and analyze program performance data, review documents, conduct pre-monitoring surveys, interview staff, students, and partner organizations, and observe classes and other activities. After the monitoring visit, OAE staff synthesize the data they collected during the visit and provide the program with a Program Summary Review Form that outlines findings, areas for improvement, and commendations. If needed, OAE will place the program on a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) to address areas of noncompliance or a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) to address areas for programmatic improvement. OAE staff then support the program in addressing the findings and/or areas for improvement and, if applicable, fulfilling the terms of the CAP or PIP.
- **Annual Performance Improvement Plans:** At the beginning of each state fiscal year, OAE places programs that did not meet performance targets in the prior year on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). The PIP requires programs to:
 - Establish a program improvement team that includes, at a minimum the program administrator, the data manager, the lead instructor, the program’s GPSC, as well as any additional members; and
 - Schedule monthly PIP meetings with the program improvement team to review data, discuss instructional strategies, and assess the ongoing outcomes of those strategies.

In addition, the program improvement team must:

- Reflect on areas where they may be experiencing challenges, such as retention, teacher accountability, training and professional development, or data analysis;
- Identify, using data, the key issues that have led to low performance and their root causes;
- Develop a plan and timeframe to address those key issues;

Throughout the process, OAE staff provide tailored and ongoing professional development, coaching, and feedback focused on areas such as data, assessment, and instructional design.

- **Mid-Year and End-of-Year Program Snapshots:** OAE uses data and reports generated by the Georgia Adult Learners Information System (GALIS) to produce mid-year and end-of-year program snapshots to assess program performance on a variety of metrics, including WIOA performance accountability measures and statewide performance benchmarks. OAE shares the mid-year and end-of-year program snapshots with local providers. OAE staff, including the GPSCs, work with local providers to interpret program snapshots and use the data to inform program improvement.

- **Professional Development:** As required by WIOA Section 233(a)(1)(B), OAE provides regular professional development, focused on improving instruction, to its programs. At the conclusion of each professional development event, OAE solicits qualitative feedback from participants through surveys. OAE analyzes and uses the survey feedback to inform follow-up support to participants and improve the quality of future professional development events. OAE also conducts an annual professional development needs assessment with all adult education staff in the state to evaluate the effectiveness of professional development each year and inform future professional development offerings.

OAE's Instructional Services team also audits and observes local professional development trainings offered by local providers to their staff. OAE requires local providers to enter all professional development activities and attendance into the GALIS system, as well as administer evaluation forms after each training. OAE reviews the evaluation forms for local professional development events to monitor the quality and consistency of professional development throughout the state.

ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT PROGRAM CERTIFICATIONS AND ASSURANCES

Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)

At a state level, OAE provides resources, technical assistance, and professional development to adult education program leaders, instructors, and other program staff. OAE utilizes a variety of strategies to ensure all participants, including those with special needs and those located in geographically diverse areas, have equitable access to participate in OAE's programming. Some examples of these strategies include, but are not limited to:

- OAE delivers training and professional development using a variety of modalities to support the various needs of program participants. For example, OAE regularly delivers training that include both audio and visual components.
- As a large state, Georgia has significant geographic diversity. To ensure both rural and metro adult education providers have equitable access to training, technical assistance, and professional development, OAE holds its in-person professional development sessions at rotating locations throughout Georgia as well as virtual professional development sessions which participants can access from any location.
- OAE utilizes its website to post technical assistance documents and resources for its local programs. OAE, housed under the Technical College System of Georgia, makes every effort to ensure that its website and published documents meet accessibility standards. TCSG adopts and implements the guidelines established by the World Wide Web Consortium for digital accessibility.

In addition, OAE will ensure that all its local providers comply with GEPA and ensure their participants have equitable access to participate in adult education programming.

Specifically, in alignment with GEPA Section 427, as part of the application process both adult education and Integrated English Language & Civics (IELCE) applicants must describe potential barriers individuals will face in accessing the program and the steps they will take to address those barriers. In addition, during its monitoring process, OAE assesses whether its local programs are taking steps to ensure all participants have equitable access to the program.

The State of Georgia hereby certifies the following:

Common Assurances:

1. The plan is submitted by the State agency that is eligible to submit the plan; Yes
2. The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program; Yes
3. The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan; Yes
4. All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law; Yes
5. A State officer, specified by title in the certification, has authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the plan; Yes
6. The State officer who is submitting the plan, specified by the title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan; Yes
7. The agency that is submitting the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan; and Yes
8. The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program; Yes
9. The eligible agency will expend funds appropriated to carry out title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) only in a manner consistent with fiscal requirements under section 241(a) of WIOA (regarding the supplement-not-supplant requirement); Yes
10. The eligible agency will ensure that there is at least one eligible provider serving each local area, as defined in section 3(32) of WIOA; Yes
11. The eligible agency will not use any funds made available under title II of WIOA for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not “eligible individuals” within the meaning of section 203(4) of WIOA, unless it is providing programs, services or activities related to family literacy activities, as defined in section 203(9) of WIOA; Yes
12. Using funds made available under title II of WIOA to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution, the eligible agency will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program. Yes

13. The eligible agency agrees that in expending funds made available under Title II of WIOA, the eligible agency will comply with sections 8301 through 8303 of the Buy American Act (41 U.S.C. 8301-8303). Yes

IX. VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

(a) Input of State Rehabilitation Council

(1) Input Provided by State Rehabilitation Council

Since its inception in 2012, the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (GVRA) has worked to strengthen its collaborative relationship with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC). The two entities have implemented the following to ensure that the SRC's input is integrated into the ongoing work of GVRA: on-going technical support for the Council's meetings and membership development efforts; SRC presentations at Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Services (GVRS) Board meetings; agency and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) staff presentations at quarterly SRC meetings; and SRC and agency/VR collaboration to address opportunities for improvement of service delivery. GVRA provided funds to support the council in performing its mandated activities. This support included the funding of a comprehensive statewide needs assessment led by the SRC.

In addition, this plan reflects a time of significant transition for GVRA. The agency has new leadership and budgetary constraints. The Georgia SRC recognizes the challenges that come with the transition and limited resources. The council recognizes the importance of implementing effective changes that can create stability for the agency and the individuals with disabilities needing the agency's support. The SRC would like to highlight and comment on some of these changes:

- i. The Georgia SRC supports GVRA's goal of maximizing taxpayer value with conservative budgeting and leveraging technology to best utilize state resources. In order to support these efforts, the SRC has centralized its meeting locations and is expanding the use of technology during the meetings.
- ii. The Georgia SRC strongly supports GVRA's goal of improving organizational culture to result in staff retention and services to internal and external customers. This is a focal point for the SRC. One of the unintended effects of the agency's transition has been a high rate of staff turnover and vacancies. These vacancies have negatively affected GVRA's customer service to clients seeking and/or receiving services and community partners. The SRC recommends the implementation of order of selection to prioritized services for those individuals who have the most significant disabilities and barriers to employment. This will prioritize the demand for services, temporarily decreasing the demand for services. As a result, the order of selection will help the agency staff to promptly respond to those clients with the most significant disabilities.
- iii. The Georgia SRC strongly supports GVRA's goal of decreasing complaints and establishing positive relationships with the disability community. The agency's significant transition has inadvertently caused inconsistency in services. This inconsistency has effected the agency communication with the disability community including community partners. This is a significant trend found in the data collected thus far as part of the comprehensive statewide needs assessment. The SRC recommends the implementation of ongoing town hall meetings while the agency is at this stage of transition to keep the disability community informed. Through these meetings, the agency will have a mechanism to gather information on the impact that the agency's transition and changes are having on the disability

community and stakeholders. In addition, these meetings will provide the perfect platform for GVRA leadership to explain to the community in a consistent and direct manner the agency transition process and to explain its action plan to address current and future needs. The SRC can collaborate in coordination of these meetings.

(2) Designated State Response to Council

The Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (GVRA) and its Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program appreciates the support it receives from the Georgia State Rehabilitation Council (SRC). A new Executive Director and new Vocational Services Director arrived in January/February 2019 and quickly recognized numerous barriers in the provision of quality rehabilitation services. Since then, they have implemented multiple strategies to correct these issues and ensure effective service for Georgians with disabilities.

New leadership strongly believes in maximizing funding to ensure fiscal accountability and the responsible use of resources. Therefore, GVRA encouraged the SRC to centralize its meeting locations and to expand its use of technology.

At this time, GVRA and VR leadership are reviewing organizational structure as well as processes and procedures, with the goal of improved services and increased staff retention. This ongoing review, implemented under current leadership, will identify opportunities and solutions that lead to a more client-focused future. Once the assessment is complete, leadership will determine the most appropriate course of action and execute a plan.

One of the critical initial efforts will be the implementation of professional development to ensure VR professionals have the knowledge, skills and abilities to perform their jobs. At this time, closing of priority categories is not under active consideration, but if additional factors present, the current decision may change.

GVRA and VR eagerly await the results of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA). A consultant was selected in early spring 2019 with the results/report due in early 2020. Once VR receives and reviews results, findings will be incorporated as appropriate into the VR strategic plan. VR intends to hold public hearings and/or town hall meetings to ensure the public is kept apprised of the many initiatives currently in development. VR will ensure these meetings/hearings are held throughout the state in accessible locations and welcomes the SRC's collaboration in the planning process.

(3) Designated State Explanations for Rejection of any Council Input

GVRA/VR does not reject SRC input regarding the VR section of the State Unified Plan. GVRA/VR acknowledges the long-standing service delivery issues the SRC has identified. However, the organization views these issues as the catalyst for aggressive problem solving efforts through systemic evaluation and strategic planning, rather than a result of the ongoing transition.

(b) Request for Waiver of Statewideness

Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency offers programs on a statewide basis.

(c) Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities under the Statewide Workforce Development System

(1) Federal, State, and Local Agencies and Programs

GVRA/VR collaborates with other agencies and programs in an effort to maximize resources and to expand employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. These partnerships increase opportunities for our mutual participants and lead to coordinated, non-redundant services. Examples of agencies and programs VR works with include the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD), the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) and the Local Education Agencies (LEA).

(2) State Programs under Section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998

GVRA/VR currently has no cooperative agreements with State programs carried out under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998. However, VR does work closely with Tools for Life, which is the Georgia Assistive Technology Act Program. Currently, Tools for Life loans equipment to clients for demonstrative purposes. GVRA/VR is also one of the pilot sites for Tools for Life and the State ADA office to test equipment that is under consideration for state purchase. Tools for Life also provides training to GVRA/VR professionals, including the Assistive Work Technology team.

(3) Programs by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the Department of Agriculture

GVRA/VR partners with the University of Georgia AgrAbility project, Farm Again. The project assists agricultural workers with disabilities or chronic health conditions that impact their ability to work by addressing barriers with solutions that allow them to maintain their farm businesses. The VR program provides time-limited services such as assistive technology, work site modifications and accommodations, self-employment start-up costs, guidance and counseling and home modifications. AgrAbility and VR services continue to collaborate in developing joint training courses that will improve services for mutual clients. This informal partnership has existed for almost ten years; new leadership at GVRA/VR will launch efforts to develop a more formalized agreement.

(4) Non-Educational Agencies Serving Out-of-School Youth

Currently, GVRA/VR does not have cooperative agreements with non-educational agencies serving out-of-school youth. The agency is committed to improving service delivery to out-of-school youth with disabilities. VR will evaluate the potential impact of non-educational agencies that serve out-of-school youth to strengthen GVRA transition service delivery.

(5) State Use Contracting Programs

The Georgia State Use Council and the Department of Administrative Services (DOAS) administer the State Use law through GVRA's Georgia Industries for the Blind, a program established under the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Act to create employment opportunities for people who are blind in a manufacturing and service setting, and through the non-profit Georgia Enterprises Product and Services (GEPS), the purpose of which is to promote the utilization of businesses owned and operated by people with disabilities.

(d) Coordination with Education Officials

GVRA/VR has cultivated and formalized relationships with the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) and the Local Education Agencies (LEA). GVRA has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the

GaDOE outlining the collaboration between the agencies, including the planning, coordination and provision of transition services and pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS). At the LEA level, VR supervisors attend monthly regional Georgia Learning Resource System (GLRS) meetings with Special Education Directors to ensure seamless services to students with disabilities.

(1) Designated State Plans, Policies, and Procedures

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) defined specific services that state vocational rehabilitation agencies must provide to potentially eligible students with disabilities as part of their transition from high school to post-secondary education and/or employment. Pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) are designed to give students opportunities through early career exploration and occupational exposure so they can make informed decisions that will maximize their potential to enter competitive integrated employment. WIOA is well aligned with Employment First initiatives, as well as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), both of which reinforce the importance of work experience for students with disabilities as part of transition planning.

GVRA/VR has a long history of collaboration with the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE)/State Education Agency (SEA) and Local Education Agencies (LEAs) across the state in the provision of transition services for students and youth with disabilities. Since the inception of WIOA, GVRA/VR has been committed to following the expectations of WIOA and the development of Pre-ETS that support student success after high school. GVRA/VR is also committed to quality Pre-ETS that support those potentially VR eligible students' exposure to employment options should they decide to become clients.

Planning for Pre-ETS occurs between local VR leadership and LEA leadership. The planning also includes annual needs assessments to determine Pre-ETS at the individual and group services delivery level. Pre-ETS are intended to provide an early start in job exploration and should enrich, not delay, the transition planning process or the application to VR and the continuum of services.

Pre-ETS may be provided by VR professionals (in-house delivery of services), in collaboration with education professionals within LEAs, or by a provider who has a current provider agreement with GVRA. Pre-ETS may be delivered to students with disabilities who are considered potentially eligible for VR services and also to those students who are VR eligible.

GVRA/VR provides the five (5) required Pre-ETS, which includes:

1. Job Exploration Counseling
2. Work Based Learning
3. Counseling on Post-Secondary Opportunities
4. Workplace Readiness Training
5. Instruction in Self-Advocacy

GVRA/VR developed policy and procedures for VR professionals that define WIOA Pre-ETS requirements, ensure effective coordination of services with GaDOE and comply with expectations for documentation and reporting. Policy and procedures will be incorporated into staff training to ensure effectiveness and efficiencies of program operations. Staff training, from VR client facing professionals to the VR leadership level, will focus on the benefits of internal controls for accuracy in reporting as

well as improved program effectiveness and efficiency in operations. The core policies related to Pre-ETS include:

- A. GVRA/VR Program will provide the five (5) required Pre-ETS;
- B. GVRA/VR Program will work collaboratively with LEAs statewide to develop an annual plan for the provision of PreETS;
- C. GVRA/VR Program will maintain compliance with Pre-ETS reporting elements according to internal and Federal guidelines;
- D. GVRA/VR will follow procedures to accurately track Pre-ETS expenditures;
- E. GVRA/VR Program will establish and maintain effective internal controls related to Pre-ETS provision, coordination and documentation;
- F. GVRA/VR Program will maximize the case management system (AWARE) to evaluate VR Program outcomes in relation to Pre-ETS.

While Pre-ETS provide additional work exposure for students with disabilities, effective transition services must also support post-secondary success when identified student needs warrant a student's application for VR services. Transition services purchased by GVRA/VR may include, but are not limited to vocational assessments, vocational training, post-secondary education, job development and job placement services.

GVRA/VR staff will attend Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings as requested to assess needs and goals for transition. Pre-ETS will be provided in a logical and sequential manner to support student exposure to careers and over time, an increase in Career Pathways participation. GVRA/VR will require that students with disabilities determined VR eligible have an IPE in place while in high school to support successful transition planning. Without exception, all VR clients will exit high school with Individualized Plans for Employment (IPE) in place. Staff will develop IPEs as early as possible during the transition planning process. VR services will be provided to eligible clients in compliance with the *GVRA/VR Client Services Policy Manual*.

(2) Information on Formal Interagency Agreement with State Educational Agency

(A) Consultation and TA to Assist Educational Agencies

GVRA/VR and GaDOE will work together to ensure that consultation and technical assistance, which may include video conferences and conference calls, are available for LEA staff in planning for the transition of students with disabilities to post-school activities. This includes implementing a structure to ensure Pre-ETS and VR services are available statewide for those students with disabilities who need them.

GVRA/VR and GaDOE will collaborate and promote transition to adult services through participation in existing councils, committees and other workgroups within each respective agency.

GaDOE in consultation with GVRA/VR will develop training and communications tools for LEA staff regarding WIOA, to ensure there is understanding and compliance with the provision of Pre-ETS not supplanting the LEAs responsibilities under IDEA.

GVRA/VR and GaDOE will collaborate and promote staff training across both agencies to support effective transition planning for students with disabilities.

(B) Transition Planning for Individualized Education Programs

GVRA/VR and GaDOE staff will provide technical assistance and consultation regarding the following five (5) required Pre-ETS available to students with disabilities:

1. Job exploration counseling to assist students with disabilities in understanding their work related strengths, interests and potential possibilities;
2. Work-based learning experiences, which may include in-school or after school opportunities, or experiences outside the traditional school setting (including internships), that are provided in an integrated environment in the community;
3. Counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs at institutions of higher education;
4. Workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living; and
5. Instruction in self-advocacy (including instruction in person-centered planning), which may include peer mentoring (including peer mentoring from individuals with disabilities working in competitive integrated employment).

GVRA/VR and GaDOE agree to share responsibility for ensuring that LEA staff are knowledgeable about the tools available to support students with disabilities. These agencies also share responsibility to help LEAs inform students of supports available based on their strengths, interests and preferences in order to make informed choices regarding post high school opportunities and pathways to competitive integrated employment.

(C) Roles and Responsibilities of Each Agency

GVRA/VR will assist students with disabilities in making informed choices to prepare for, obtain, maintain, advance in or regain competitive integrated employment. Services include the provision of Pre-ETS for students who are eligible or potentially eligible for VR services. GVRA/VR also assesses an individual's vocational rehabilitation needs, develops and implements the Individualized Plan for Employment and assists with the achievement of employment goals for individuals who have applied for VR services, been found eligible and assigned to an open priority category.

GVRA/VR and GaDOE will coordinate to document the requirements set forth in WIOA and 34 C.F.R. § 397.1(b) (1) and (2) with regard to students and youth with disabilities seeking subminimum wage employment.

GVRA/VR and GaDOE are each financially responsible for the services they provide under their own laws and rules. No commitments reduce the obligation under IDEA of an LEA or any other agency mandated to provide or pay for any transition services that are also considered special education or special education-related services and that are necessary for ensuring a free appropriate public education.

GVRA/VR and GaDOE will use due diligence to provide support to local VR professionals and LEAs to prevent an inappropriate shift of burden for providing a service, for which it otherwise would be responsible, to the other entity. The LEAs and local VR staff members will decide which entity will be

responsible for providing transition services, Pre-ETS or vocational rehabilitation services that can be considered both a special education and a vocational rehabilitation service. In making these decisions, LEAs and local VR professionals will consider:

1. The purpose of the service: Is it related to outcomes for employment or education?
2. Which agency customarily provides the service?
3. Is the student eligible for transition services under the IDEA and/or pre-employment transition services or vocational rehabilitation services under the Rehabilitation Act?

(D) Procedures for Outreach and Student Identification

GVRA/VR and GaDOE will work together to develop outreach tools related to competitive integrated employment for students with disabilities, parents or representatives of students with disabilities, school personnel and other community agencies. Materials will include a description of the purpose of the VR program, application procedures, eligibility requirements, priority for services and scope of services that may be provided to eligible individuals. The method of dissemination of this information will be determined by the LEAs and local VR leadership.

GVRA/VR transition teams will work with LEAs statewide to ensure outreach and identification of students who could benefit from Pre-ETS. This analysis of need and agreed upon plan for service delivery will be led by local VR leadership and the LEA Special Education leadership in collaboration with GVRA/VR and SEA personnel.

GVRA/VR leadership will reach out within the first term of this agreement to LEA Special Education leadership to analyze needs and implementation of the agreed upon plan for service delivery. The parties agree to do a comprehensive needs assessment to evaluate and improve services.

Collaboration with education, disability, and advocacy groups, as well as community organizations, is essential to identifying students and out-of-school youth with disabilities in need of transition services. A transition team exists to ensure implementation of the WIOA transition regulations, manage the Career Pathways Demonstration grant and provide guidance and training to VR field staff. Three Career Pathways Specialists were hired and assigned to various regions of the state to support VR staff and transition partners and to attend and contribute to meetings with Special Education Directors and teachers. Below is a brief listing of collaborative partnerships.

Collaborative Partners	
Local	LEA, Workforce Investment Board, Family Connection, Local Interagency Planning Team, Community Services Board (Public Behavioral Health Authority), Local Interagency Transition Council, Project Search, Parent Mentor Groups, Support Employment Providers, two and four year Technical Colleges, Employer Committees

State	Georgia Workforce Development, Georgia Department of Education, Georgia State University, Parent to Parent of Georgia, Georgia Advocacy Office, Center for Disability in Leadership, Georgia Inclusive Post-Secondary Consortium, State Interagency Transition Councils, Georgia Department of Family and Children’s Services, Georgia Department of Community Health, Georgia Department of Education State Advisory Panel for Special Education, Atlanta Workforce Board’s Youth Council
National	Poses Family Foundation, WINTAC

VR counselors will participate in community resource fairs, attend parent/teacher functions and serve on councils to further promote the availability of services and supports to youth with disabilities who are in school or who need to be served in an integrated, community-based setting. VR team members share information on community resources, partner in the transition process and provide workshops on services and support opportunities for groups of students, families and school personnel.

(e) Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations

GVRA/VR has an established network of private non-profit providers that have a wide variety of employment and work preparation services available to VR clients. These services include but are not limited to: vocational evaluation, vocational training, work adjustment training, employment skills training, supported employment, job coaching, job development, job placement and specialized services. Cooperative agreements have been established with all entities from which services are purchased.

GVRA/VR is currently examining the agreement process to standardize and streamline the service agreement progression. GVRA/VR has traditionally utilized Cooperative Agreements with private non-profit organizations, especially with respect to the provision of services and supports to VR clients. As GVRA/VR improves service definitions, provider standards, and develops new and innovative services, a Provider Task Force that included private non-profit entities and VR professionals developed an improved Outsourcing Manual, which is nearing completion at the time of this report. This manual will be the new standard for all entities in their application to become and maintain approved provider status.

GVRA/VR is developing an annual assessment tool to evaluate the effectiveness of all services delivered. The assessment results will help determine whether GVRA/VR will continue using a provider to deliver services. Client needs throughout the state will be the primary focus for determining when new providers are needed, type of services needed and service area. VR is developing structured onboarding for new providers with input from the task force to ensure they are mentored and understand GVRA/VR operations and processes.

Additionally, GVRA/VR operates two state residential programs: Roosevelt Warm Springs and Cave Spring Center. The programs and services offered at RWS and CSC are designed and implemented to maximize the benefits of both campuses to assist those students referred by VR in reaching their independent living and employments goals.

The Roosevelt Warm Springs (RWS) program has been assisting individuals with disabilities prepare for employment for over 50 years. RWS is a comprehensive rehabilitation center comprised of a highly integrated set of programs and services that span twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Utilizing a multi-disciplinary model of service delivery and incorporating strength based assessment strategies, individualized vocational rehabilitation plans are developed to ensure that the unique strengths of students are built upon to maximize their vocational readiness and personal growth. Multi-disciplinary team members include Certified Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors, Employment Specialists, Daily Living Skills Instructors, Academic Teachers, Behavioral Specialists and Health Management staff. Additional team members may also include Vocational Assessment Specialists, Physical Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Recreation Therapists and other specialists. Medical, neuropsychological, psychological and psychiatric services are also available to students as part of comprehensive rehabilitation center services.

Programs and services for students are designed and implemented to promote independence, self-determination and employment skills. These services include, but are not limited to: vocational assessments, vocational evaluations, academic education and learning opportunities, work readiness training, vocational training, independent living skills, therapeutic recreation and specialty programs. During State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2019 students earned four hundred nineteen (419) certifications. As of April 2019, seventy-one percent (71%) of SFY 2016 successful completion discharges, fifty-four percent (54%) of SFY 2017 successful completion discharges, and forty-eight percent (48%) of SFY 2018 successful completion discharges were in employment or job ready status.

Cave Spring Center (CSC) became a satellite program of RWS in July 2014. CSC provides an integrated, multi-disciplinary rehabilitation program that operates twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Services include, but are not limited to: daily living skills, self-determination and interpersonal skills, work ethics, employability skills, academic education, health education and recreation and fitness. CSC provides an opportunity for students to develop work skills and gain independence as they prepare for competitive integrated employment.

As a part of RWS, programs and services at CSC will ultimately align with those offered at RWS while accounting for the unique abilities and learning needs of CSC's student population, including a significant number who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deaf/Blind. Some staff are specially trained and skilled in the use of American Sign Language (ASL), though the campus is equipped to address all types of disabilities. CSC's multi-disciplinary team members include Certified Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors, Employment Specialists, Daily Living Skills Instructors, Academic Teachers and Health Services staff. A consulting psychiatrist provides additional support to students on site.

- (f) Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services
GVRA/VR participates in interagency collaborations to expand services for persons with the most significant disabilities receiving Supported Employment (SE) services, including youth with the most significant disabilities. All SE services lead to competitive integrated employment with on-going supports for the employee as long as they are employed at that job. GVRA/VR does not support, contract for or provide subminimum wage Extended Employment services.

Formal Agreements are established with other state agencies. Additionally, GVRA/VR enters into agreements with providers for the provision of Supported Employment, Individual Placement Support (IPS) model of supported employment and Customized Employment (CSE) services. GVRA/VR currently has 216 cooperative agreements in place, with 133 agreements for traditional SE, 23 agreements for IPS (dually approved by DBHDD and GVRA), and 47 agreements for CSE.

GVRA/VR collaborates at the state level through various interagency committees and teams involved with supported employment. Through interagency collaboration, GVRA/VR developed two formal MOUs with DBHDD. One MOU is with DBHDD's behavioral health division and focuses on the Behavioral Health population utilizing the evidenced based IPS model of SE. A second MOU with DBHDD's developmental disabilities division focuses on individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities through the best practice of Customized Employment.

GVRA/VR also collaborates with GaDOE, the Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities (GCDD) and contracted SE providers to meet the employment needs of transitioning students with significant disabilities through the Project Search as well as the three models of SE.

(g) Coordination with Employers

The purpose of GVRA/VR is to connect *individuals with significant disabilities* to *real* jobs that fill a *real* need for employers in their communities. To fulfill this purpose, GVRA established positions dedicated solely to employment services and relationship-building, with the goal of connecting VR clients with businesses in the communities where they live. Employment services professionals focus on aligning the workforce with private and public sector career opportunities. Staff function as the centralized point of contact for all external employer engagements, and their primary function is to create a single focused approach and strategy to ensure individuals with significant disabilities are an integral part of the workforce. Employment services managers and consultants provide the following to help develop career opportunities for individuals with disabilities to achieve their competitive integrated employment goals:

- Interface with employers to identify specific workforce needs and provide the employers with qualified candidates to meet their needs;
- Interface with employers to provide education and training, such as hiring individuals with disabilities, job accommodations, disability awareness and federal contractor requirements to increase the employer's interest and willingness to hire individuals with disabilities;
- Provide education and training to VR field staff regarding the unique needs of partner employers in order to facilitate better matching of individuals with disabilities in jobs and careers; and
- Interface with employers who are federal contractors and/or federal subcontractors to identify their specific workforce needs and provide qualified candidates to meet their needs and fulfill their federal workforce compliance standards.

See (1) Coordination to Provide VR Services for additional information on GVRA employment

(1) Coordination to Provide VR services

WIOA places a greater emphasis on the state's workforce development system. Consequently, GVRA changed its organizational structure as it relates to employer engagement. The intent of this restructuring was to create a standardized approach for VR to engage employers, as well as to work with the VR program's provider network to create a unified approach to job development and job placement. VR provides the following to support individuals with disabilities in achieving their competitive integrated employment goals:

- Interface with employers to create employer-based training and education opportunities for individuals with disabilities, such as specific employer job education, apprenticeships, on-the-job training and internships (work adjustment training) to increase the qualifications of individuals with disabilities as potential job candidates for that employer.
- Provide consultation, technical assistance and support to employers on workplace accommodation and assistive technology.

GVRA/VR will examine the effectiveness of this strategy given the reduction in successful employment outcomes for VR clients since its implementation. Additionally, VR leadership is reviewing the employer module in the current client information system (AWARE) to improve its efficiency in tracking new and existing business opportunities. This integration and utilization will facilitate better record keeping of current and new relationships with businesses.

(2) Coordination to Provide Transition Services

GVRA/VR serves individuals of all ages and all disabilities. GVRA/VR recognizes the importance of early identification of youth and students with disabilities for improved post-secondary outcomes. Employment services staff interface with employers and identify their willingness to provide employer presentations, company tours and career exploration, work based learning opportunities, apprenticeships, internships and job training to transitioning students. Additionally, developing more mentorship opportunities that place students in contact with employers to facilitate earlier relationships with those who are willing to hire the students after graduation is a priority for future efforts. As GVRA/VR examines the effectiveness of employment services, it will pursue efforts to expand partnerships with WIOA programs to develop employer relationships, work based learning opportunities and work sites to facilitate better employer engagement.

(h) Interagency Cooperation

GVRA/VR has collaborative relationships with multiple State agencies in order to more efficiently and effectively assist individuals with disabilities in achieving competitive integrated employment. Several of these relationships have been formalized through Interagency Cooperative Agreements described earlier in Section (f) Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment. As GVRA/VR continues its analysis of effective practices, additional partnerships will emerge to support collaboration and seamless service delivery statewide.

(1) State Medicaid Plan under Title XIX of the Social Security Act

GVRA/VR does not currently have a formal agreement with DCH, the state agency responsible for administering Medicaid. However, GVRA/VR does collaborate with DCH through various state level

boards and committees and will work towards developing a mutually beneficial agreement. Additionally, GVRA/VR has two MOUs with the DBHDD, the state agency that administers services under the NOW/COMP Medicaid waiver program.

(2) *State Agency Providing Services for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities*

GVRA/VR executed a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) in 2015 (thereafter annually renewed), the State agency responsible for providing services to individuals with developmental disabilities. The current MOU expands the capacity of the VR program to serve those individuals who have the most significant disabilities in customized supported employment. A description of this partnership is in Section (f) Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment services.

(3) *State Agency Providing Mental Health Services*

GVRA executed a formal Memorandum of Understanding with DBHDD in 2015 (thereafter automatically renewed), the State agency responsible for providing services to individuals with a mental illness. The current MOU expands the capacity of the VR program to serve those individuals who have severe and persistent mental illness in supported employment, specifically utilizing exclusively the evidenced based practice of the Individual Placement and Support model of Supported Employment. A description of this partnership is in Section (f) Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment.

(i) *Comprehensive System of Personnel Development; Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development*

GVRA/VR has the primary responsibility for relationships with educational institutions and maintenance of the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD). The goals for CSPD are to:

- Maintain the established standard that all Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors are certified by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) or supervised by a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC).
- Monitor and provide support for our counseling series positions to comply with and transition into the CRC position, including preparation support for personnel who are taking the CRC exam and support to those who are engaging in continuing education to maintain the CRC.
- Actively utilize the counseling series to provide an avenue for development of staff members without the CRC credential the opportunity to move into CRC positions.
- Rebuild the VR training program to provide foundational courses for the direct service delivery positions to ensure qualified personnel provide services to people with significant disabilities.
- Continue to provide in-service training opportunities for all VR staff members to ensure that quality services are provided by qualified VR personnel and to link that training to staff members' competencies and business outcomes.

(1) Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development

(A) Qualified Personnel Needs

(i) Personnel Employed by State VR Agency in Relation to Individuals Served

GVRA collects personnel data regarding the number of positions and vacancies in each job category, the number of incumbents, years of service, credentials and certifications and education. In addition to this data, GVRA/VR collects data on staff developmental performance, career plans and goals. The tables included in the sections below further expound upon current personnel employed by GVRA.

(ii) Personnel Currently Needed by State VR Agency to Provide VR Services

The tables included in the sections below further expound upon current personnel employed by GVRA.

(iii) 5-Year Personnel Projections for State Agency to Provide VR Services

GVRA collects personnel data regarding the number of positions and vacancies in each job category, the number of incumbents, years of service, credentials and certifications and education. In addition to this data, GVRA/VR collects data on staff developmental performance, career plans and goals. Finally, information is kept on staff members' eligibility for retirement during the next five years.

The following table depicts the (i) the number of qualified personnel for the provision of VR services, organized by job title of client facing staff members; (ii) the number of current vacancies organized by job title of client facing staff members; and, (iii) the projections for the number of personnel that will be needed based on the numbers served, staff who are expected to retire or leave the field and other relevant factors.

	Job Title	(i) Current Positions	(ii) Current Vacancies	(iii) Projected Vacancies Over the Next 5yrs
1	Assistant Field Service Director	4	0	2
2	Service Area Manager	15	1	4
3	Certified Rehabilitation Counselor	83	117	100
4	Career Specialist	112	0	12
5	Employment Services Manager	6	2	3
6	Employment Services Consultant	20	14	12
7	Counselor Assistant	70	46	28
8	Team Lead	35	19	15
9	AWT Team Lead	4	0	1
10	AWT Engineer	3	1	1
11	AWT Occupational Therapist	4	3	1
12	AWT Technologist	12	10	5
13	AWT Technician	4	0	1

	Total	372	213	185
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Based on the feedback that GVRA/VR has received from individuals with disabilities, providers, internal rehabilitation professionals, the Client Assistance Program, the State Rehabilitation Council, other disability advocacy groups and performance data, leadership is well aware that GVRA/VR is not meeting the needs of the individuals who qualify for and are potentially eligible for VR services; therefore two studies were commissioned to identify barriers and possible solutions. The results from the two studies will be used to update needed staffing patterns and position allocation for the future.

(B) Personnel Development

(i) Institutions of Higher Education in State Preparing VR Professionals

GVRA/VR continues to maintain established relationships with institutions of higher education that can assist with meeting CSPD requirements. GVRA/VR currently collaborates with the following universities to provide graduate level rehabilitation counseling coursework that will assist counselors in meeting the CRCC Credential standard required of Georgia VR Counselors: Georgia State University, Thomas University, Auburn University, San Diego State University, University of North Texas, Troy University, Mercer University and Fort Valley State University. Since GVRA counselor qualifications are tied to the CRCC Certification, the Georgia VR program works with schools that have an accredited master’s program in Rehabilitation Counseling.

GVRA/VR continues to support staff development with the ultimate goal of a qualified and certified VR counselor. Staff members from all job classes continue to take advantage of their eligibility to be considered for the Master’s degree in Rehabilitation Counseling program offered by Georgia State University and Mercer University with their Long-Term Training Grant opportunities for support.

(ii) Students Enrolled at Each Institution

The following table (i) lists the institutions of higher education that are preparing VR professionals with a Master’s degree in Rehabilitation Counseling; (ii) number of students enrolled at each institution; and (iii) number of students who graduated. Please note that the table indicates the number of students who graduated and are eligible for certification or license. Currently, there is no process in place to follow up with the students to determine if they received certification or licensure post-graduation.

	(i) Institutions	(ii) Students Enrolled	Employees Sponsored by Agency and/or RSA	Graduates Sponsored by Agency and/or RSA	(iii) Graduates from the Previous Year
1	Fort Valley State University	93	None	3	11
2	Georgia State University	33	None	8	17
3	Thomas University	100	9	12	20
4	Mercer University	45	None	6	11

(iii) Prior Year Graduates from Each Institution

The table above includes this information.

(2) Plan for Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Qualified Personnel

Recruitment:

GVRA conducted a comprehensive examination of its effectiveness in human resources and the results of that study resulted in a complete rebuild of the department's structure. The new team is working with VR to establish effective and efficient recruitment plans.

Efforts to promote recruiting and hiring of individuals with disabilities and from culturally diverse backgrounds are part of the GVRA/VR personnel process. GVRA/VR uses online and print resources such as the National Rehabilitation Association website, Deaf Digest and Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA) publications to increase GVRA/VR's visibility for recruitment of persons with diverse backgrounds. The GVRA/VR maintains affiliations with disability organizations and advertises career opportunities in disability related publications. Active recruiting opportunities exist during conferences such as the Southeast National Rehabilitation Association and the Southeast Regional Institute on Deafness where Georgia participants are visible and active.

The VR Program continues to receive requests for paid as well as unpaid internships from new counseling graduates from institutions of higher education. During this last reporting period, Georgia VR supervised 42 interns from whom VR hopes to recruit new, CRC eligible graduates. Job announcements are posted continuously on various websites including the State of Georgia Job Site.

Retention:

GVRA/VR continues to be challenged with the high attrition rate of counselors. The counselor quality standard of the CRC sometimes leads to filling a position at the Career Specialist level when there are no CRC applicants. GVRA/VR will examine the counselor series to identify an improved hiring and retention strategy. Currently, many counselors are finding more lucrative positions elsewhere within school systems and federal employment sites.

The on-boarding developmental process for new staff members provide an historical, in-depth, position-specific orientation and training conducted primarily through local mentoring by subject matter experts and individual instruction. However, use of the system was discontinued under past leadership. GVRA/VR will be revamping the past program to meet current needs. Because of the extensive turn-over rate, local mentoring has been less than optimal and standardization harder to maintain. Based on changes in GVRA/VR leadership, a renewed commitment was affirmed to ensure all new staff members receive the most effective on-boarding experience possible.

Succession Planning:

Changes in management and administrative leaders have been a frequent occurrence over the past few years within the GVRA/VR. The agency anticipates additional retirements, and the need for succession planning is a forefront issue. As GVRA/VR completes its analysis of the organization, leaders will develop a succession plan that addresses changes, retirements and turnover.

(3) Personnel Standard

The GVRA/VR goal is to hire and retain staff with the competencies necessary to improve individual performance and agency outcomes. Georgia state law does not require certification nor licensure for rehabilitation professionals or paraprofessionals. Therefore, GVRA/VR established the CSPD standard for the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor position is the CRC credential awarded by the CRCC. The Certified Rehabilitation Counselor is the Georgia VR staff person with the authority to determine eligibility, determine priority category, develop IPEs including all amendments and all reviews, authorize funds, and close cases. One hundred percent (100%) of Georgia's CRCs meet the CSPD standard and are eligible to independently perform core functions. Current GVRA/VR leadership is committed to providing training to assist personnel, particularly VR counselors, to meet the highest requirements.

The VR Program continually recruits to fill CRC positions and uses the Career Specialist position when there are no CRC applicants. The minimum qualifications that VR uses to hire on the Career Specialist position are: Bachelor's Degree in Rehabilitation or a related field and two years of experience working with individuals with disabilities; this position is also used when a candidate has a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling, Counseling or Counseling related field (Counselor Education, School Counseling, Mental Health Counseling, Counseling Psychology, etc.) AND One (1) year of related experience OR Interns who are within 12 weeks of graduation from a regionally accredited Master's Rehabilitation Counseling Program. Note: Successful completion of an Internship will be deemed equivalent to one year of professional experience and it is the requirement of the person filling this position to obtain/maintain Certification from the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC).

VR leadership is comprised of two categories of management level positions: those located in the field who supervise direct service delivery staff organized by area and those centrally located in Atlanta with statewide responsibilities. VR leadership and external consultants are examining current organizational structure with recommendations for improvement to be available early 2020.

(4) Staff Development

GVRA/VR leadership's current priority is to develop a robust training program to provide opportunities for all VR professionals to enhance their skills for the provision of high quality services. This program will be designed to meet the personal and career development needs of VR personnel. The GVRA/VR comprehensive training program will include specific training on the rehabilitation process, effective utilization of AWARE, needs assessment, vocational counseling, job development, fiscal management and assistive technology.

New Employee Orientation: GVRA new employee orientation will provide foundational training that includes the following: (1) A robust history of the GVRA and its mandate for providing services that are best practices and meet performance outcomes set forth by GVRA/VR and funding entities; (2) A review of the vocational rehabilitation program and its core functions; (3) An introduction to how systems are integrated and how policies guide seamless delivery of services agency-wide; and (4) Steps to building effective relationships and having positive and normalized interactions with individuals with disabilities.

VR Counselor On-Boarding: VR Counselor On-Boarding will provide task-specific training through modules that connect course instruction with hands-on training in overall case management. Module topics include: Roles of the Counselor, the Rehabilitation Process, Needs Assessment, Service Delivery, Performance Indicators and Outcomes, Review of GVRA/VR Terminology and Case Studies, and Case Management System (AWARE).

Annual On-going Staff Development Training Sessions: GVRA/VR will develop and provide annual training opportunities for rehabilitation professionals in an effort to grow the team's knowledge base. The objective is to help these professionals provide services to individuals and to ensure that staff members are prepared when changes occur to policies and practice standards.

Leadership Development: GVRA/VR will develop a leadership program to educate, develop and empower current and future leaders of the agency. The program follows best practice in executing the training in:

- Communication Skills
- Conflict Resolution and Negotiation Skills
- Coaching and Mentoring Skills (including Positive Discipline and Open Coaching)
- Transitioning into a Management and Supervisory Role
- Situational Management
- Change Management and Problem Solving Decision Making Skills
- Team Building (including Achieving Buy-in and Building Morale)

GVRA/VR disseminates information gathered from current research and relevant trends to provide resources to staff through email, webinars and in-person trainings. As appropriate, materials are also permanently housed on various password-protected online platforms, including a shared drive and a learning management system.

(5) Personnel to Address Individual Communication Needs

GVRA/VR recognizes the need for counselors who are fluent in non-English languages when English is not the first language of the client. Although personnel do not represent all languages spoken by individuals served, GVRA/VR does have an internal directory of multi-lingual employees which includes speakers of more than a dozen languages. To meet the demands across the state, the agency has a statewide contract with a translation service that allows personnel to communicate with any potential client regardless of their proficiency in the English language. This contract also allows for translation of documents such as manuals, policies and procedures, where applicable.

GVRA/VR currently employs staff members who use sign language to best meet the needs of our clients who use sign language. GVRA/VR is currently recruiting staff ASL interpreters to ensure we can meet needs statewide for both clients and coworkers. VR is accessible to consumers who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing through the Georgia Relay 711 service, videophone direct communication and Video Relay Service. ASL and Braille versions of the GVRA/VR Client handbook are available. VR counselors and managers who provide services to Deaf clients have an Intermediate or higher proficiency level in American Sign Language (ASL) as demonstrated by the Sign Language Proficiency Interview (SLPI). VR

also holds vendors who provide direct communication with clients to the same standard. GVRA/VR contracts with agencies and private vendors to provide sign language interpreting and transliterating services for individuals who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deaf-Blind. GVRA/VR provides Braille, reader service, data in the preferred electronic media that is compatible with assistive technology such as JAWS, and large print text for individuals who have visual impairments.

(6) Coordination of Personnel Development Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

WIOA defines a student with a disability as an individual who is in a secondary, post-secondary or other recognized education program between the age of 14 and 22 years of age; and is eligible for and receiving special education under Part B of the IDEA; or is a student with a disability for the purposes of section 504.

A youth with a disability is defined in 34 C.F.R. § 361.5(c)(58) as an individual with a disability who is age 14 through 24. The distinction between a “student with a disability” and “youth with a disability” is critical in planning pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) activities and transition-related services. Pre-ETS are available only to students with disabilities. Transition services may be provided to both students and youth with disabilities. Youth with disabilities who are not students may receive transition related services that are identified in their Individual Plans for Employment (IPE), but they may not receive Pre-ETS as these services are limited to students with disabilities. Students with disabilities may receive Pre-ETS with or without an IPE and/or transition services under an IPE.

While the IDEA mandates that transition services be available to students as part of their Individualized Education Plans (IEP), GVRA/VR recognizes the crucial role VR shares with the GaDOE in developing effective and successful transition plans for Georgian students and youth with disabilities.

Individualized assessment of needs and targeted goal setting are necessary for students and youth with disabilities to transition effectively to post-secondary education, training and employment. Specific goal setting areas include training, education, employment skills and independent living skills.

In implementing WIOA and IDEA, the GVRA/VR and the Ga DOE will provide reciprocal best practices training for personnel serving youth and students with disabilities. Training activities include, but are not limited to:

- A statewide annual conference co-sponsored to provide personnel with information about the applicable laws;
- Co-created informational packets disseminated to personnel; and
- Local VR professionals participating in LEA meetings of Special Education Directors.

(j) Statewide Assessment

Former leadership made the decision several years ago to complete needs analysis internally. In 2019, the decision was made in collaboration with the SRC to contract with an external consultant for the first formal Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment since 2008. The results of that study will be available in March 2020. GVRA/VR also contracted with a private consultant firm in fall 2019 to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the organizational structure, its processes and procedures and to examine the staffing patterns required to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities. Those

findings will be available in March 2020. Based on the findings of both examinations, GVRA/VR anticipates significant process change leading to improvement.

(1) Needs of Individuals with Disabilities in State

(A) Needs of Those with the Most Significant Disabilities

Based on feedback from individuals with disabilities, providers, internal rehabilitation professionals, the Client Assistance Program, the State Rehabilitation Council, other disability advocacy groups and the performance data, leadership is well aware that GVRA/VR is not meeting the needs of the individuals who qualify for or are potentially eligible for VR services; therefore two studies were commissioned to identify barriers and possible solutions. The results from the two studies will be used to update the strategic plan that addresses the needs.

(B) Needs of Minorities

Based on the feedback that GVRA/VR has received from individuals with disabilities, providers, internal rehabilitation professionals, the Client Assistance Program, the State Rehabilitation Council, other disability advocacy groups and the performance data, leadership is well aware that GVRA/VR is not meeting the needs of the individuals who qualify for or are potentially eligible for VR services; therefore two studies were commissioned to examine the situation and to identify barriers and possible solutions. The results from the two studies will be used to update the strategic plan that addresses the needs.

(C) Needs of Those Unserved or Underserved by the VR Program

Based on the feedback that GVRA/VR has received from individuals with disabilities, providers, internal rehabilitation professionals, the Client Assistance Program, the State Rehabilitation Council, other disability advocacy groups and the data available within GVRA/VR, leadership is well aware that GVRA/VR is not meeting the needs of the individuals who qualify for or are potentially eligible for VR services; therefore two studies were commissioned to identify barriers and possible solutions. The results from the two studies will be used to update the strategic plan that addresses the needs.

(D) Needs of Those Served Through Other Components of the State Workforce System

Based on the feedback that GVRA/VR has received from individuals with disabilities, providers, internal rehabilitation professionals, the Client Assistance Program, the State Rehabilitation Council, other disability advocacy groups and the performance, leadership is well aware that GVRA/VR is not meeting the needs of the individuals who qualify for or are potentially eligible for VR services; therefore two studies were commissioned to examine the situation and to identify barriers and possible solutions. The results from the two studies will be used to update the strategic plan that addresses the needs.

(E) Needs of Youth and Students with Disabilities

Based on the feedback that GVRA/VR has received from individuals with disabilities, providers, internal rehabilitation professionals, the Client Assistance Program, the State Rehabilitation Council, other disability advocacy groups and the performance data, leadership is well aware that GVRA/VR is not meeting the needs of the individuals who qualify for or are potentially eligible for VR services; therefore two studies were commissioned to examine the situation and to identify barriers and possible solutions. The results from the two studies will be used to update the strategic plan that addresses the needs.

Prior to the completion of the above Assessment, GVRA/VR implemented a system to complete an annual analysis of Pre-ETS needs. This analysis, completed by VR and LEA leadership at the district level, addresses specific high school plans for the upcoming school year. Needs assessment also identifies individual and group needs. GVRA/VR works with the local LEAs to ensure that transition services and Pre-ETS do not supplant the LEAs responsibilities under IDEA. While the IDEA mandates that transition services be available to students as part of their Individualized Education Plan (IEP), GVRA/VR recognizes the crucial role VR shares with the GaDOE in developing effective and successful transition plans. Individualized assessment of needs and targeted goal setting are necessary for students and youth with disabilities to transition effectively to post-secondary education, training and employment. Specific goal setting areas acknowledged by GVRA/VR as important for students to achieve success include training, education, employment skills and independent living skills.

(2) Need to Establish, Develop, or Improve Community Rehabilitation Programs

Based on the feedback that GVRA/VR has received from individuals with disabilities, providers, internal rehabilitation professionals, the Client Assistance Program, the State Rehabilitation Council, other disability advocacy groups and the performance data, leadership is well aware that GVRA/VR is not meeting the needs of the individuals who qualify for or are potentially eligible for VR services; therefore two studies were commissioned to identify barriers and possible solutions. The results from the two studies will be used to update the strategic plan that addresses the needs.

Prior to the completion of the above assessment, GVRA/VR established a Provider Management Taskforce to improve relationships with the Community Resource Providers (CRPs) and other rehabilitation providers and to work more effectively together in order to better serve Georgians with disabilities. The focus of these discussions has been to move towards shared performance outcomes and serving individuals together. Based on these discussions and other input received, the following have been identified as areas for needed improvement: (1) develop more community-based, integrated training opportunities; (2) develop more services in rural areas of Georgia; (3) improve communication with all parties through joint meetings with clients, VR counselors and provider staff members (include discussion on clients' progress and plan for achieving successful outcomes); (4) revisit the fee structure for providers; (5) the need to standardize metrics to enhance provider performance; (6) streamline fiscal operations such as invoicing and payments to decrease processing time; (7) review authorization process to enhance efficiency, and (8) update and modernize the specific skills and/or customized training programs to be more aligned with employer demand in the local communities.

GVRA/VR also operates two state residential programs: Roosevelt Warm Springs and Cave Spring Center. The programs and services offered at RWS and CSC are designed and implemented to maximize the benefits of both campuses to assist those students referred by VR in reaching their independent living and employments goals.

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Cave Spring Center (CSC) became a satellite program of RWS in July 2014. CSC provides an integrated, multi-disciplinary rehabilitation program that operates twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Services include, but are not limited to: daily living skills, self-determination and interpersonal skills, work ethics, employability skills, academic education, health education and recreation and fitness. CSC provides an opportunity for students to develop work skills and gain independence as they prepare for competitive integrated employment.

As a part of RWS, programs and services at CSC will ultimately align with those offered at RWS while accounting for the unique abilities and learning needs of CSC's student population, including a significant number who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing and DeafBlind. Some staff are specially trained and skilled in the use of American Sign Language (ASL), though the campus is equipped to address all types of disabilities. CSC's multi-disciplinary team members include Certified Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors, Employment Specialists, Daily Living Skills Instructors, Academic Teachers and Health Services staff. A consulting psychiatrist provides additional support to students on site.

The state operated residential programs, RWS and CSC, have capital infrastructure deficiencies and expansion opportunities which are assessed annually through GVRA/VR's capital bond planning process. Each facility has distinctive needs in order to continue providing unique services to Georgians with disabilities. At RWS, it is forecasted that capital planning and projects over the next three years will continue to focus on repairing and renovating critical infrastructure deficiencies to keep the campus operating safely and to improve efficiency. Recently completed projects have included fire alarm sprinkler upgrades, roofing upgrades, electrical upgrades, and a sewer renovation. Although there are additional repairs and upgrades necessary in each of these areas, the HVAC systems are currently well past their useful lives and a focal point for upcoming capital projects. Additional areas of improvement include: roof structures, water proofing and other building envelope renovations, additional electrical and fire sprinkler upgrades, roadway assessment and upgrades. Future program

growth and expansion is currently forecasted for a dedicated Autism Spectrum Disorder program and to expand vocational assessment services. These program and service expansion areas may change as the needs of the GVRA/VR program evolve. GVRA/VR is in the process of evaluating identified infrastructure deficiencies at CSC with the assistance of a contract engineering firm. Based on the recommendations of the engineering firm, GVRA/VR will need to address the identified deficiencies using the capital planning process. Programmatic space at CSC is limited and, therefore, program and service growth opportunities requiring additional space will be evaluated in consideration with other identified capital needs during the annual capital planning process.

(3) Needs of Individuals with Disabilities for Career and Pre-Employment Transition Services

Based on the feedback that GVRA/VR has received from individuals with disabilities, providers, internal rehabilitation professionals, the Client Assistance Program, the State Rehabilitation Council, other disability advocacy groups and the performance data, leadership is well aware that GVRA/VR is not meeting the needs of the individuals who qualify for and are potentially eligible for VR services; therefore two studies were commissioned to examine the situation and to identify barriers and possible solutions. The results from the two studies will be used to update the strategic plan that addresses the needs.

Prior to the completion of the above assessment, GVRA/VR implemented a system to complete an annual analysis of pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) needs at the district level to address specific high school plans for the upcoming school year. These needs assessments identify individual and group needs of the students, which allow for quality planning with LEAs and CRPs for an appropriate service strategy. Services provided by GVRA/VR cannot supplant the LEAs responsibilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); therefore, GVRA/VR works with the LEAs to ensure that transition services and Pre-ETS do not supplant the LEAs' responsibilities under IDEA. VR provided services may add to existing services, but they do not take place of those services already provided by LEAs. This expectation is included in the MOU between GVRA and the GaDOE.

A GVRA/VR transition team provides technical assistance to VR professionals and local VR leadership to support statewide accountability for outreach to statewide LEAs, for providing and coordinating effective transition and Pre-ETS activities, and for timely processing of referrals for VR eligibility and IPE development. The transition team also leads transition initiatives within GVRA/VR and LEAs to maximize the impact of Pre-ETS for students with disabilities and best practice approaches to transition services.

(k) Annual Estimates

(1) Number of Individuals in State Eligible for Services

The Census data collected from the years 2013-2017, indicated the overall percentage (prevalence rate) of individuals with a disability in the State of Georgia was 12.4%, meaning that 1,237,621 of the 10,012,994 citizens reported having one or more disabilities. Furthermore, the State has an overall percentage (prevalence rate) of people with a disability, ages 18 to 34, of 6%. In other words, 138,565 of the 2,321,558 individuals, ages 18 to 34, in Georgia reported having one or more disabilities. According to the 2013-2017 ACS, the estimate for Georgia's population, ages 18 to 64, is 6,246,295. Of those who are 18 to 64, 10.7% or 669,968 have a disability. Although there are 669,968 individuals in

Georgia who report having a disability, GVRA/VR will not make an eligibility determination on this entire population. GVRA/VR will only make an eligibility determination on those who apply for services.

(2) Number of Eligible Individuals who will Receive Services

(A) Individuals in VR Program

Based on the feedback that GVRA/VR has received from individuals with disabilities, providers, internal rehabilitation professionals, the Client Assistance Program, the State Rehabilitation Council, other disability advocacy groups and the performance data, leadership is aware that GVRA/VR is not meeting the needs of the individuals who qualify for VR services; therefore, two studies were commissioned to identify barriers and possible solutions. The results from the two studies will be used to update needed staffing patterns and position allocation for the future. The following table provides a historical look at those served over the past three fiscal years as well as the projected numbers through FY2020.

VR Services						
SFY	Total Served	Potentially Eligible Students	Applications	Plans	Successful Closures	Closed Without Employment Outcome
2017	33,863	10	5,440	3,858	4,430	8,722
2018	33,750	2,317	11,516	6,657	1,987	7,166
2019	39,441	7,836	9,375	7,495	2,008	11,240
2020	39,800	9,000	9,600	4,267	2,250	10,000

Note: The projections for 2020 did not increase due to vacancy rate.

(B) Individuals in Supported Employment Program

GVRA/VR, through its MOU with the Georgia DBHDD, will accept new referrals of between 800 -1000 individuals with serious and persistent mental illness (SPMI) and provide IPS services to assist those individuals reach their competitive integrated employment goals and to accept new referrals at a maximum of 300 individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities and provide customized employment services to assist those individuals reach their competitive integrated employment goals. This is in addition to already being committed to provide SE services to all individuals who qualify for VR services and need Supported Employment services to reach their competitive integrated employment goals.

(C) Individuals in Priority Categories

GVRA/VR is under an open order of selection and has 3 priority categories. The table below shows the number of individuals assigned to each category over the past 3 years along with a projection for 2020.

Clients Served and Projected to be Served Under OOS

SFY	(1) (permanent) Individual with a Most Significant Disability	(2) (permanent) Individual with a Significant Disability or recipient of SSI/ SSDI	(3) (permanent) Individual with a Disability
2017	18,981	7,950	4,416
2018	15,836	9,253	3,944
2019	15,781	11,195	2,621
2020	15,870	11,755	2,673

(3) Number of Individuals Eligible for VR Services, but not Receiving due to an Order of Selection

Currently, all categories are open. If categories close during this period of the State Plan, GVRA/VR will submit an update.

(4) Cost of Services for Individuals Estimated to be Eligible for Services

The following table captures the number of individuals served and the cost of services in FFY 2017, 2018, and 2019.

FFY	Number of Individuals Served	Cost of Services
2017	33,863	\$36,294,068
2018	33,750	\$38,634,508
2019	39,441	\$40,316,950

(l) State Goals and Priorities

Based on the feedback that GVRA/VR has received from individuals with disabilities, providers, internal rehabilitation professionals, the Client Assistance Program, the State Rehabilitation Council, other disability advocacy groups and the performance data, leadership is well aware that GVRA/VR is not meeting the needs of the individuals who qualify for and are potential eligible for VR services; therefore two studies were commissioned to examine the situation and to identify barriers and possible solutions. The results from the two studies will be used to update the goals and priorities.

GVRA/VR and the SRC have a collaborative relationship which has allowed for productive discussions and planning between the two entities. The following are mutual goals, which both entities will review and update after the two assessments are completed.

1. The Georgia SRC supports GVRA's goal of maximizing taxpayer value with conservative budgeting and leveraging technology to best utilize state resources.
2. The Georgia SRC strongly supports GVRA's goal of improving organizational culture to result in staff retention and services to internal and external customers.

3. The Georgia SRC strongly supports GVRA's goal of decreasing complaints and establishing positive relationships with the disability community.

Prior to the completion of the above noted Analysis, VR leadership developed its preliminary Goals and Priorities.

Goal #1 - Stability - Improve performance and morale

Objective #1 – Implement an organizational structure that supports staff and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) performance

- A. Establish clear positions with detailed job descriptions and worker functions
- B. Research technological options for on-line applications and electronic signatures for Individualized Plans for Employment (IPEs)

Objective #2 – Improve employee morale

- A. Establish a staff training program
 1. Evaluate and prioritize training needs
 2. Develop a training plan
 - i. Evaluate potential career ladders based on performance
 - ii. Create an On-Boarding training program
 3. Implement the training plan
 4. Deliver the training statewide
- B. Establish an employee recognition and morale program
 1. Organize a committee of field staff to design a local and state-wide employee recognition and morale program
 2. Implement the recognition and morale program
 - i. Establish statewide criteria for individual and office performance recognition
 - ii. Implement locally and statewide based on criteria
 - iii. Develop processes and platforms to recognize individual and office performance and achievements

Objective #3 – Improve performance in reaching RSA indicators

- A. Communicate standard operating procedures and processes to field staff that support optimal performance
 1. Incorporate the established standards into the new training program
 2. Utilize the quality assurance tools of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Operation Performance Improvement (OPI) to evaluate, document and manage performance

Objective #4 – Improve fiscal responsibility and accountability (internal controls)

- A. Implement strategies for IPE development that support responsible, financial stewardship and successful client outcomes

1. Utilize information obtained from the OPI process to develop effective fiscal planning
 2. Manage case service budgets locally with weekly tracking and reporting
 3. Explore utilization of Amazon for client purchases
- B. Utilize data and collaborate with provider network to establish service delivery parameters (including fee structure, provider qualifications, etc.) as well as service evaluation criteria and expectations
 - C. Create and establish a provider evaluation system to ensure quality of service provision, qualifications of providers (all employees), performance outcomes and update the provider list accordingly
 - D. Establish a fiscal officer position dedicated to VR
 - E. Develop a VR fiscal plan for 2020 and beyond

Goal #2 – Return prestige to Georgia VR as a recognized national leader

Objective #1 – Reduce VR Attrition

- A. Access and analyze data of clients leaving VR without an employment outcome
- B. Establish goals and identify strategies for reduction
- C. Develop and implement a plan
- D. Evaluate every 6 months

Objective #2 – Improve the quality and quantity of competitive integrated employment (CIE) outcomes

- A. Train staff to conduct comprehensive needs assessments
- B. Train staff on effective IPE planning and development
- C. Ensure sufficient amount of qualified staff
- D. Ensure sufficient amount of qualified providers for quality services
- E. Evaluate current services and identify best practices
- F. Develop and implement a plan to increase and improve CIE outcomes, which includes supported employment

Objective #3 – Improve Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) processes and delivery options

- A. Analyze patterns and trends of services provided and associated outcomes
- B. Identify and utilize career pathways and work-based learning opportunities
- C. Recognize and provide quality education and training programs that lead to recognized credentials, advanced post-secondary degrees, and career advancement
- D. Analyze services (provided by GVRA/VR and providers) to ensure all meet the nature and scope of Pre-ETS
- E. Establish standards for Pre-ETS delivery, such as reviewing the use of assessments, to ensure compliance

Objective #4 – Ensure timely progression through the rehabilitation process

- A. Provide staff training on Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) performance indicators and RSA Monitoring Report with corrective action measures
- B. Determine eligibility within 60 days for 90% of VR applicants
- C. Develop IPE within 90 days of eligibility for 90% of VR clients
- D. Establish a system to document CIE outcomes

Objective #5 – Ensure client information system captures accurate client data and supports effective business processes

- A. Evaluate utilization of AWARE case management system
- B. Review case service data prior to RSA submissions for accuracy
- C. Establish case management standards
- D. Provide staff training and communicate performance expectations
- E. Sustain workgroup (VR and Business Applications leadership) meetings to review data implications and address functionality concerns from the field
- F. Participate in sponsored training and discussions with case management system vendor Alliance

Objective #6 – Continue to integrate the programs and services provided by the State operated residential programs, Roosevelt Warm Springs and Cave Spring Center, to increase utilization and maximize the return on investment of these programs.

- A. Expand access to Vocational Assessment services provided by Roosevelt Warm Springs and Cave Spring Center
- B. Reduce the time from referral to admission through coordination of information through GVRA/VR's case management system
- C. Review vocational training programs based on labor market trends, GVRA VR training needs, and partnership training needs
- D. Maintain an average growth rate of thirty percent (30%) through June 30, 2020 in order to increase the number of clients served to nine hundred fifty two (952)
- E. Maintain a transportation plan to support serving up to sixty five (65) day students
- F. Develop and foster partnerships with local high schools to:
 - a. Provide pre-employment transition services to eligible and potentially eligible students
 - b. Provide VR training services for VR clients still in high school
 - c. Encourage a coordinated transition into the residential programs for eligible clients to minimize the time between high school graduation and vocational training

In collaboration with the SRC, GVRA/VR contracted in 2019 for the completion of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment. The results of that study will be available in March 2020. GVRA/VR also contracted with a private consulting firm in fall 2019 to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the organizational structure, its processes and procedures and to examine the staffing patterns required to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities. Those findings will be available in March 2020. Based on the findings of both examinations, GVRA/VR will update goals and priorities accordingly.

Based on the feedback that GVRA/VR has received from individuals with disabilities, providers, internal rehabilitation professionals, the Client Assistance Program, the State Rehabilitation Council, other disability advocacy groups and the performance data, leadership is well aware that GVRA/VR is not meeting the needs of the individuals who qualify for or are potentially eligible for VR services; therefore two studies were commissioned to examine the situation and to identify barriers and possible solutions. The results from the two studies will be used to develop a performance plan to address the accountability measures.

RSA monitoring conducted under section 107 occurred in Georgia in 2017 and placed the agency under corrective action. RSA's five findings include:

FINDING 1: As demonstrated by performance data, GVRA did not make eligibility determinations within the required 60-day period for those individuals whose service records were closed in FFY 2016. As a result of the analysis, RSA determined that the agency did not satisfy the eligibility determination requirements in 34 CFR §361.41(b)(1).

FINDING 2: As the FFY 2016 performance data demonstrates, GVRA did not develop IPEs for each eligible individual whose service record was closed within 90 days following the date of eligibility determination pursuant to 34 CFR §361.45(a)(1) and within the required 90-day period pursuant to 34 CFR §361.45(e).

FINDING 3: As a result of the analysis and lack of supporting documentation, RSA determined that GVRA did not satisfy the service record closure requirements in 34 CFR §361.56.

FINDING 4: Based on the analysis, RSA has determined that GVRA is not in compliance with the prior approval requirements pursuant to the Uniform Guidance (2 CFR §200.407).

FINDING 5: GVRA does not maintain effective internal controls over the Federal award that provide reasonable assurances that the non-Federal entity is managing the Federal award in compliance with Federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the award, as required by 34 CFR §361.12 and 2 CFR §200.303. Specific internal control areas of deficiency include unreasonable and disproportionate One-Stop rental costs, missing and invalid vendor agreements, insufficient collaborative agreement development and oversight, improper allocation of non-grant supported activities, reasonableness of staffing costs, and overall accountability with regard to Inclusive Post-Secondary Education (IPSE) collaborative agreements. Collectively, these material deficiencies suggest generalized, systemic deficiencies within the agency's control environment.

RSA plans to return in 2020 based on current performance. GVRA/VR submits a quarterly report of progress.

(m) Order of Selection

When applying the Order of Selection (OOS) and assigning the individual to a priority category, the VR counselor must determine the individual eligible for VR services. GVRA/VR utilizes the following OOS: Priority Category Description

Priority Category 1 (Individual with a Most Significant Disability): An eligible client shall be classified in this category if he/she has been determined by VR to be an individual who has:

- limitations in 3 or more functional capacities in terms of a competitive integrated employment outcome; and
- requires multiple VR services over an extended period of time (3 months or more)

Priority Category 2 (Individual with a Significant Disability): An eligible client shall be classified in this category if he/she has been determined by VR to be an individual who has/is:

- limitations in 1 or more functional capacities in terms of a competitive integrated employment outcome; and
- requires multiple VR services over an extended period of time; or
- a recipient of Social Security Disability (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits

Priority Category 3 (Individual with a Disability): An eligible client shall be classified in this category if he/she has been determined by VR to be an individual who has:

- limitations in 1 or more functional capacities in terms of a competitive integrated employment outcome; and
- requires 1 or more VR services NOT over an extended period of time

The following table captures the capacities, number of services and extended periods of time for VR’s Order of Selection.

Order of Selection			
Priority Category	# Capacities	# Services	Extended Period of Time= Three (3) Months or more
(1) Individual with a Most Significant Disability (<i>permanent</i>)	3 or more	Multiple	Over an Extended Period of Time
(2) Individual with a Significant Disability or recipient of SSI/SSDI (<i>permanent</i>)	1 or more	Multiple	Over an Extended Period of Time
(3) Individual with a Disability (<i>permanent</i>)	1 or more	1 or more	Not Over an Extended Period of Time

It is the intent of GVRA/VR to serve any and all persons in the state who are eligible for services. However, in the event vocational rehabilitation services cannot be provided to all eligible individuals who apply, VR has chosen to establish an OOS to protect service delivery for those with the most significant disabilities. When an individual is determined eligible for VR services and assigned to a closed priority category, that individual shall be placed on a wait list to be served in the chronological order in which they were determined eligible. Students who are receiving Pre-ETS prior to applying for and being determined eligible for VR services shall continue to receive those services while categories remain closed. Individuals who are currently receiving services on an active Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), prior to the closing of the priority category for which they are assigned, shall continue to receive services. As closed priority categories are re-opened, individuals will be moved off

the wait list in a chronological order with those with the most significant disability (Priority Category 1) being served first. Information and referral services shall be provided to applicants, potential applicants and eligible clients who do not qualify for VR services due to the program's OOS and to clients who have been determined ineligible for VR services due to low likelihood they will benefit from services in terms of an employment outcome. Referral to other programs, including other statewide workforce investment system programs, shall be provided in order to best meet the individual's needs.

Currently, all categories are open. If categories close during this period of the State Plan, an update will be submitted.

In order to ensure individuals with the most significant disabilities are served first, these individuals are defined as those who have limitations in three or more functional capacities and who require multiple VR services over an extended period of time and are placed in priority category one. Currently, all categories are open. If categories close during this period of the State Plan, an update will be submitted.

The WIOA regulations allow eligible individuals to be served in order to maintain employment regardless of OOS. In the event of reduced funding, GVRA/VR has chosen to establish an OOS to protect service delivery for those with the most significant disabilities.

(n) Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI Funds

(1) Goals and Priorities Supported Employment Services

GVRA/VR will utilize reserved funds (based on section 603) for individuals who are youth with the most significant disabilities and additional 110 funds to focus on continued expansion of SE services associated with previously described collaborations in section (h). GVRA/VR will continue to collaborate with DBHDD around the existing SE work with individuals with SPMI and individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities.

To increase the successful outcomes of this effort, GVRA/VR will work to increase overall SE capacity including provider capacity and efficacy through planned training in evidence/research based supported employment models. In addition GVRA/VR will continue to emphasize individual employment placement in competitive integrated settings and identifying and facilitating natural supports.

(2) Activities to be Conducted for Youth with Most Significant Disabilities

As part of the existing supported employment initiatives, these services available to youth with the most significant disabilities. GVRA/VR also participates in 25 Project Search sites across the state. GVRA/VR collaborates with GaDOE, Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities, and contracted SE providers to meet the employment needs of transitioning students with significant disabilities through the Project Search model. This model assists students in preparing for, engaging in, and maintaining competitive integrated employment and connects youth with SE services including extended services. GVRA/VR will continue to expand and refine Project Search partnerships to maximize funds and increase access to services.

Under WIOA, funds received under Title VI must be used for the provision of SE services, including extended services for youth with the most significant disabilities for up to four years. Currently,

GVRA/VR utilizes collaborative agreements with providers to deliver SE services which include the plan for extended services. Dual providers associated with the collaboration with DBHDD, described in section (f), receive ongoing support funding through DBHDD after exiting from VR Services. Individuals, including youth with the most significant disabilities served by non-dual providers, continue to receive extended services for the life of the job pursuant to the terms of the collaboration agreement with each provider.

GVRA/VR has developed the following strategies to leverage other public and private funds to increase the resources for extended services and expanded SE opportunities for youth with the most significant disabilities:

- Continue to expand the current braided funding relationship with DBHDD to increase SE service delivery to transitioning youth with intellectual/developmental disabilities or behavioral health diagnoses.
- Continue collaboration around Project Search and other programs increasing access for youth with the most significant disabilities to SE.
- Explore funding options for extended supports through the Ticket to Work Program.
- Continue to expand and facilitate the SE provider network's use of natural supports.
- Increase the use of Social Security reimbursements for additional program expenditures.
- Explore opportunities for collaboration with DBHDD's Division of Children, Youth, & Families around services for Supported Education & SE for youth with severe & persistent mental illness
- Assess GVRA's current network of providers rendering services for youth with significant disabilities

(o) State's Strategies

Based on the feedback that GVRA/VR has received from individuals with disabilities, providers, internal rehabilitation professionals, the Client Assistance Program, the State Rehabilitation Council, other disability advocacy groups and the performance data, leadership is aware that GVRA/VR is not meeting the needs of the individuals who qualify for and are potential eligible for VR services; therefore two studies were commissioned to identify barriers and possible solutions. The results from the two studies will be used to update these strategies.

(1) Methods to Expand and Improve Services

At this time, GVRA/VR leadership is examining their organizational structure, processes and procedures in order to improve and expand services to individuals with significant disabilities. Strategies will be formulated at the completion of the analysis. Prior to the completion of these assessment, a few preliminary strategies are in place:

- Provide staff training and communicate performance expectations
- Establish case management standards
- Analyze patterns and trends of services provided and associated outcomes

- Increase the number of qualified providers to ensure appropriate and evidence-based services are available that lead to documented skill gains, credentials, and competitive integrated employment outcomes
- Partner with existing mental health and developmental disability providers to assist them in transforming traditional services to become better at competitive employment.

(2) How Assistive Technologies will be Provided

GVRA/VR has Assistive Work Technology (AWT) teams consisting of occupational therapists, rehabilitation engineers, technicians and technologists. These staff provide skilled services including evaluation, rehabilitation engineering, job modification/accommodation, technical assessment, technology acquisition and technology training. GVRA/VR also partners with Tools for Life (Georgia Assistive Technology Act Program) that loans equipment to individuals with disabilities for exploratory usage before purchase.

(3) Outreach Procedures

GVRA/VR has counselors assigned to all counties in Georgia and to designated referral sites (including other state agencies) in order to ensure all individuals with disabilities are aware of vocational rehabilitation services.

It should be noted that traditional marketing activities GVRA/VR historically employed to promote VR services are strategically suspended as identified service delivery problems are actively and aggressively addressed. In past years, agency strategic communications plans have included traditional print, broadcast and digital advertising and targeted social media campaigns; however, marketing staff have currently redirected efforts to internal and external communications and provision of basic informational resources for use in local VR offices. As GVRA/VR leadership implement process improvements leading to better service delivery, marketing staff will collaboratively evaluate appropriate activities to support program and client needs.

(4) Methods to Expand and Improve Services to Students

GVRA/VR has developed numerous methods to ensure transition services are provided for students with disabilities.

- GVRA/VR and the LEA will develop outreach tools for awareness and identification of students with disabilities
- GVRA/VR will provide all five required pre-employment transition services
- GVRA/VR and the LEAs will assess pre-employment transition services yearly in order to improve these services and address specific needs
- GVRA/VR staff will attend all IEP meetings to assess transition needs and goals when invited
- GVRA/VR staff will ensure an application, eligibility determination and IPE development is completed as soon as the need is apparent in order to facilitate a smooth transition

(5) Plans for Community Rehabilitation Programs within the State

GVRA/VR continues to collaborate with CRPs statewide in order to work more effectively together and better serve Georgians with disabilities. This dialogue hopes to ensure appropriate and evidence-based services are available and that those services lead to documented skill gains, credentials and competitive integrated employment outcomes.

(6) Strategies to Improve Performance with Section 116 Accountability Measures

GVRA/VR will work with all core partners to develop and monitor performance indicators. Internally, GVRA/VR will communicate standard operating procedures and processes to staff to encourage optimal performance and incorporate the measurements into staff training.

(7) Strategies for Assisting Statewide Workforce System

GVRA/VR will work with all core partners to improve collaboration, program development and implementation, and to expand innovative VR Services to individuals with disabilities throughout the statewide workforce development system.

(8) How Strategies will be Utilized

(A) How Strategies will Achieve Goals and Priorities for State

GVRA/VR awaits information from its ongoing assessments. Once that information is received, current strategies will be updated based on the findings.

(B) How Strategies will Support Innovation and Expansion Activities

GVRA/VR eagerly awaits information from its ongoing assessments. Once that information is received, current strategies may be changed, added, or deleted based on the needs identified. GVRA/VR will continue with support for the State Independent Living Centers (SILC) as program evaluation occurs.

(C) How Strategies will Overcome Identified Equitable Access Barriers

GVRA/VR eagerly awaits information from its ongoing assessments. Once that information is received, current strategies will be updated.

(p) Evaluation and Reports of Progress

Based on the feedback that GVRA/VR has received from individuals with disabilities, providers, internal rehabilitation professionals, the Client Assistance Program, the State Rehabilitation Council, other disability advocacy groups and the performance data, leadership is well aware that GVRA/VR is not meeting the needs of the individuals who qualify for and are potentially eligible for VR services; therefore two studies were commissioned to examine the situation and to identify barriers and possible solutions. The results from the two studies will be used to update these strategies.

(1) Strategies for VR Program Goals

In the previous approved State Plan, GVRA/VR set the following goals:

1. Goal I – Maximize available federal funds to assist more individuals with disabilities achieve their employment goals.
2. Goal II – Expand transition services to assist more students with disabilities to go from high school to work or post-secondary education/training.

3. Goal III – Enhance services to unserved and underserved populations to increase their employment outcomes.
4. Goal IV – Help employers meet their human resources needs through hiring qualified individuals with disabilities.

Although GVRA/VR met some of the above goals, it has become apparent from performance data as well as information received from individuals with disabilities, providers, internal rehabilitation professionals, the Client Assistance Program, and the State Rehabilitation Council that GVRA/VR is not meeting the needs of individuals with disabilities. Therefore, GVRA/VR leadership commissioned two studies to examine GVRA/VR and identify barriers and solutions. Although VR has developed preliminary goals, the results of these studies will be used to update current goals and strategies.

Based on the feedback that GVRA/VR has received from numerous sources and performance data, leadership is well aware that GVRA/VR is not achieving its goals and priorities. Therefore two studies were commissioned to examine the situation and to identify barriers and possible solutions. The two studies will yield insights into the factors impeding goals and priorities.

(2) Success of Supported Employment Program Goals

In reference to goal III listed above, SE outcomes have increased due to the following strategies:

- Training specialty staff in the unique needs and strengths for those who require SE services
- Expanding the partnership with DBHDD to provide evidenced based SE services for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness and individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities
- Technical Assistance Team who provides field level support

Collaboration among agencies and braiding funding presents many challenges. Coordination of multiple services across multiple organizations and funding sources continues to be an issue for agency staff, provider staff and individuals receiving services. It has been observed that service delivery success and outcomes increase when participants (agency staff, provider staff and/or the individual receiving services) have knowledge about the service delivery methodologies of all involved programs.

Turnover continues to be an issue that broadly impacts most areas of service delivery as it robs not only labor force but also the aforementioned knowledge needed for efficient navigation of multiple systems. Turnover is an issue that impacts the agency as well as providers.

There also are not enough qualified SE providers across the state that possess the knowledge, skills and abilities to deliver quality SE services. Delivering quality services that adhere to the fidelity of the model is an ongoing challenge. GVRA/VR will be delivering training to potential providers in the area of Customized Employment (CE) to increase access and improve service delivery.

(3) VR Program's Performance on Section 116 Performance Accountability Indicators

GVRA/VR's performance baselines have yet to be determined as we work to better understand the changes and design the system to meet the accountability expectations.

(4) How Funds Reserved for Innovation and Expansion Activities were Utilized

In FFY2020, GVRA/VR expended \$267,000 for SILC operations and activities.

(q) Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services

GVRA/VR utilizes SE services statewide to assist those with the most significant disabilities in obtaining and maintaining competitive integrated employment. Three models of supported employment are utilized, including 1) Traditional Supported Employment 2) Individual Placement and Support (IPS) and 3) Customized Employment. Additionally, Project Search partnerships increase access for students and youth to supported employment services. These various approaches allow us to meet the continuum of needs for individuals with the most significant disabilities, including youth with the most significant disabilities. GVRA/VR recognizes the need to increase not only the capacity but also the quality of SE services.

IPS providers are dually approved by DBHDD/BH and GVRA/VR and are trained to deliver IPS with fidelity to the model. As such, annual Fidelity Reviews are completed and must be at good fidelity to continue to be approved to deliver IPS. Training is provided ongoing statewide.

Providers delivering Customized Employment services are required through their collaborative agreements to utilize employment specialists that have been trained through an ACRE accredited program in Customized Employment. CE providers are working towards dual approval by GVRA/VR and DBHDD/DD. As part of continuing efforts to improve capacity and the quality of this service, as indicated in section (h) Interagency Cooperation, GVRA/VR, will contract to deliver ACRE accredited Customized Employment training for dual SE providers' frontline staff in 2020. Ongoing technical assistance will be available as well as creating the monitoring tools for the delivery of customized employment services.

Transition to extended services begins once the individual achieves success with competitive integrated employment and has entered stabilization (and been in this phase at least 30 days). While receiving extended services, the SE provider is responsible for ensuring the provision of long-term supports on and off the work site. Extended services may include such things as natural supports, transportation support from the community, or direct support from the supported employment provider. Following exit from GVRA/VR services, in accordance with the collaborative agreement, extended services are provided by the provider for the life of the job.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION CERTIFICATIONS AND ASSURANCES CERTIFICATIONS

The State of Georgia hereby Certifies the following:

1. The Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency ("GVRA") is authorized to submit the Vocational Rehabilitation ("VR") services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan under title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Rehabilitation Act), as amended by WIOA¹¹, and its supplement under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act¹²;
2. As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of VR services, GVRA¹³ agrees to operate and administer the State VR Services Program in accordance

¹¹ Public Law 113-128.

¹² Unless otherwise stated, "Rehabilitation Act" means the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA, signed into law on July 22, 2014.

¹³ All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

with the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan¹⁴, the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations¹⁵, policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under section 111 of the Rehabilitation Act are used solely for the provision of VR services and the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan;

3. As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act for supported employment services, the designated State agency agrees to operate and administer the State Supported Employment Services Program in accordance with the supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan¹⁶, the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations, policies, and procedures established by the Secretary of Education. Funds made available under title VI are used solely for the provision of supported employment services and the administration of the supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan;
4. The designated State agency and/or the designated State unit has the authority under State law to perform the functions of the State regarding the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement;
5. The State legally may carry out each provision of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement.
6. All provisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement are consistent with State law.
7. The GVRA Executive Director has the authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement;
8. The GVRA Executive Director has the authority to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and the supplement for Supported Employment services;
9. The agency that submits the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan and its supplement.

And the State of Georgia hereby certifies the following Common Assurances:

The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate and identified in the State certifications included with this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, through signature of the authorized individual, assures the Commissioner of the

¹⁴ No funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

¹⁵ Applicable regulations, in part, include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR parts 76, 77, 79, 81, and 82; 2 CFR part 200 as adopted by 2 CFR part 3474; and the State VR Services program regulations.

¹⁶ No funds under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supported employment supplement to the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan in accordance with section 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act. ²⁰Applicable regulations, in part, include the citations in footnote 6.

Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), that it will comply with all of the requirements of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement, as set forth in sections 101(a) and 606 of the Rehabilitation Act. The individual authorized to submit the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement makes the following assurances:

- 1. Public Comment on Policies and Procedures:** The designated State agency assures it will comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements for public participation in the VR Services Portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, as required by section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act.
- 2. Submission of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and Its Supplement:** The designated State unit assures it will comply with all requirements pertaining to the submission and revisions of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan and its supplement for the State Supported Employment Services program, as required by sections 101(a)(1), (22), (23), and 606(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; section 102 of WIOA in the case of the submission of a unified plan; section 103 of WIOA in the case of a submission of a Combined State Plan; 34 CFR 76.140.
- 3. Administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan:** The designated State agency or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures it will comply with the requirements related to:
 - (a) the establishment of the designated State agency and designated State unit, as required by section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act.
 - (b) the establishment of either a State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council, as required by section 101(a)(21) of the Rehabilitation Act. The designated State agency or designated State unit, as applicable (Option A or B must be selected):
 - (A) is an independent State commission.
 - (B) has established a State Rehabilitation Council.
 - (c) consultations regarding the administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(16)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act.
 - (d) the financial participation by the State, or if the State so elects, by the State and local agencies, to provide the amount of the non-Federal share of the cost of carrying out the VR program in accordance with section 101(a)(3).
 - (e) the local administration of the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act. Select yes or no, as appropriate, to identify if the designated State agency allows for the local administration of VR funds, (Yes/No)
 - (f) the shared funding and administration of joint programs, in accordance with section 101(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act. Select yes or no, as appropriate, to identify if the designated State agency allows for the shared funding and administration of joint programs, (Yes/No)
 - (g) statewideness and waivers of statewideness requirements, as set forth in section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act. Is the designated State agency requesting or maintaining a waiver of statewideness for one or more services provided under the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan? (Yes/No) See Section 2 of this VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan.

- (h) the descriptions for cooperation, collaboration, and coordination, as required by sections 101(a)(11) and (24)(B); and 606(b) of the Rehabilitation Act.
- (i) all required methods of administration, as required by section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act.
- (j) the requirements for the comprehensive system of personnel development, as 38 OMB Control Number 1205-0522 38 set forth in section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act.
- (k) the compilation and submission to the Commissioner of statewide assessments, estimates, State goals and priorities, strategies, and progress reports, as appropriate, and as required by sections 101(a)(15), 105(c)(2), and 606(b)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act.
- (l) the reservation and use of a portion of the funds allotted to the State under section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of VR services to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities.
- (m) the submission of reports as required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act.

4. Administration of the Provision of VR Services: The designated State agency, or designated State unit, as appropriate, assures that it will:

- (a) comply with all requirements regarding information and referral services in accordance with sections 101(a)(5)(D) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act.
- (b) impose no duration of residence requirement as part of determining an individual's eligibility for VR services or that excludes from services under the plan any individual who is present in the State in accordance with section 101(a)(12) of the Rehabilitation Act.
- (c) provide the full range of services listed in section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act as appropriate, to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the State who apply for services in accordance with section 101(a)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act? (Yes/No)
- (d) determine whether comparable services and benefits are available to the individual in accordance with section 101(a)(8) of the Rehabilitation Act.
- (e) comply with the requirements for the development of an individualized plan for employment in accordance with section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act .
- (f) comply with requirements regarding the provisions of informed choice for all applicants and eligible individuals in accordance with section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act.
- (g) provide vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing in the State, in accordance with section 101(a)(13) of the Rehabilitation Act.
- (h) comply with the requirements for the conduct of semiannual or annual reviews, as appropriate, for individuals employed either in an extended employment setting in a community rehabilitation program or any other employment under section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, as required by section 101(a)(14) of the Rehabilitation Act.
- (i) meet the requirements in sections 101(a)(17) and 103(b)(2) of the 1. Rehabilitation Act if the State elects to construct, under special 2. circumstances, facilities for community rehabilitation programs
- (j) with respect to students with disabilities, the State,
- (i) has developed and will implement, (A) strategies to address the needs identified in the assessments; and (B) strategies to achieve the goals and priorities identified by the State, to improve and expand vocational rehabilitation services for students with disabilities on a statewide basis; and

- (ii) has developed and will implement strategies to provide pre-employment transition services (sections 101(a)(15) and 101(a)(25)).

5. Program Administration for the Supported Employment Title VI Supplement:

- (a) The designated State unit assures that it will include in the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan all information required by section 606 of the Rehabilitation Act.
- (b) The designated State agency assures that it will submit reports in such form and in accordance with such procedures as the Commissioner may require and collects the information required by section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act separately for individuals receiving supported employment services under title I and individuals receiving supported employment services under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act.
- (c) The designated state unit will coordinate activities with any other State agency that is functioning as an employment network under the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency program under Section 1148 of the Social Security Act.

6. (a) Financial Administration of the Supported Employment Program:

The designated State agency assures that it will expend no more than 2.5 percent of the State's allotment under title VI for administrative costs of carrying out this program; and, the designated State agency or agencies will provide, directly or indirectly through public or private entities, non-Federal contributions in an amount that is not less than 10 percent of the costs of carrying out supported employment services provided to youth with the most significant disabilities with the funds reserved for such purpose under section 603(d) of the Rehabilitation Act, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(G) and (H) of the Rehabilitation Act.

- (b) The designated State agency assures that it will use funds made available under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act only to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities, who are eligible to receive such services; and, that such funds are used only to supplement and not supplant the funds provided under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act, when providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment, in accordance with section 606(b)(7)(A) and (D), of the Rehabilitation Act.

- 7. (a) Provision of Supported Employment Services:** The designated State agency assures that it will provide supported employment services as defined in section 7(39) of the Rehabilitation Act.

(b) The designated State agency assures that:

- i. the comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under section 102(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and funded under title I of the Rehabilitation Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome, in accordance with the requirements of section 606(b)(7)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act
- ii. an individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act, which is developed and updated with title I funds, in accordance with sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 606(b)(6)(C) and (E) of the Rehabilitation Act.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Georgia Department of Labor's Business Services Unit

The Business Services Unit (BSU) of the Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL) reflects a new direction and emphasis on employer-driven service delivery, and access to a market driven staff dedicated to fulfilling the needs of Georgia employers. The realignment of vision and purpose has positioned GDOL to refocus its commitment to the business community and provide a venue for a more proactive and employer friendly partnership. The BSU provides the following services:

Regional Coordinator Program

- Partners with economic developers, locally, regionally and statewide by executing prompt turn around data and customized solutions to workforce issues.
- Regional Coordinators help economic developers identify data critical for the successful location and expansion of industry.

Business Services Recruiters

- Develop and maintain relationships with employers - identifying talent pools for target industries; identifying employer talent requirements and matching the talent with the hiring needs.

Special Workforce Assistance Team (SWAT)

- Works closely with Chambers of Commerce, Industrial Authorities and economic developers to fill the gaps and barriers to employment many job seekers face.
- SWAT – Job Readiness events feature workshops on a plethora of topics such as improving interviewing skills, networking skills, and using social media in job search.
- The team encompasses expert staff prepared to assist job seekers with résumé assistance and the marketing tools necessary to impress hiring managers.

Career Expos

- BSU manages Regional Career Expos that can be tailored to targeted industries, job seekers, and skill requirements, as well as general and community events.
- Business and job seekers from all industries are able to attend and encounter the opportunity of a potential job match between employer and jobseeker.

Georgia Department of Labor's Customized Recruitment (CR)

- This is a specialized resource offered to eligible businesses (new to Georgia) aimed towards the streamlining of the company's candidate search and recruitment process by utilizing a team of highly successful GDOL recruiters, working on behalf of the employer.
- The CR team partners with economic developers, and project managers to ease the recruitment piece by alleviating direct applicant contact to the employer and providing screening assistance.
- Candidates go through multiple steps of established CR checks and balances, ensuring their

qualifications, applications or résumés are then referred to the employer for established next steps.

Georgia Department of Labor's Customized Recruitment X (CRX)

- This is a specialized resource that was created in response to the needs of existing Georgia companies who are experiencing growth.
- Modeling the highly successful Customized Recruitment program, CRX provides the same expert level of services to Georgia's existing valued businesses who will be expanding.
- Candidates go through the same process established with CR to ensure their qualifications, applications or résumés are then referred to the employer for established next steps.

Employer Committee

- Employer Committees are groups of local business representatives who establish and maintain a working relationship between the employer community and the GDOL.
- The committees provide input and guidance in the development of policy and legislation by the Department of Labor as it impacts Georgia employers and employees.

Regional Summits

- Regional Summits are designed to help business owners, hiring professionals, and others better understand and conquer compliance challenges in the workplace.
- "Employers In the Know" attendees meet and hear from Commissioner of Labor, Mark Butler, as he shares valuable information on current GDOL initiatives and programs. Get information from a Labor Law expert about federal policies and legislation that will help ensure businesses are compliant and profitable in the upcoming years.

Appendix B: Performance Goals for the Core Programs

	Title I- Adult Program			
	Program Year 2020		Program Year 2021	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	77.5%		78.0%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	71.0%		71.3	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	\$4800		\$4900	
Credential Attainment Rate	60.5%		61.0%	
Measurable Skills Gains	5.0%		7.5%	

	Title I- Dislocated Worker Program			
	Program Year 2020		Program Year 2021	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	79.0%		80.0%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	77.0%		78.0%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	\$5500		\$5600	
Credential Attainment Rate	65.0%		66.0%	
Measurable Skills Gains	2.0%		5.0%	

	Title I- Youth Program			
	Program Year 2020		Program Year 2021	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	63.0%		63.5%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	63.0%		63.5%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	\$2500		\$2600	
Credential Attainment Rate	60.0%		62.0%	
Measurable Skills Gains	5.0%		7.5%	

	Title II- Adult Education Program			
	Program Year 2020		Program Year 2021	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	42.0%		43.0%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	41.0%		42.0%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	\$3830		\$3900	
Credential Attainment Rate	43.0%		44.0%	
Measurable Skills Gains	54.0%		55.0%	

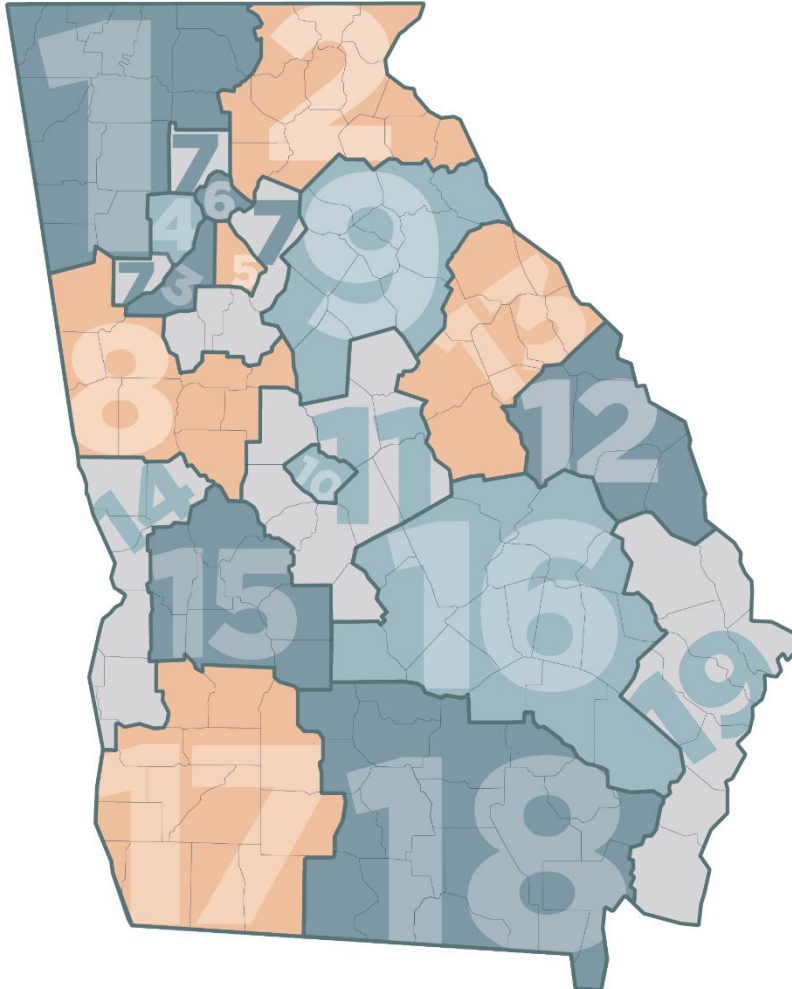
	Title III- Wagner-Peyser Program			
	Program Year 2020		Program Year 2021	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	71.1%		71.2%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	72.0%		72.1%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	\$4909		\$4959	

	Vocational Rehabilitation Program ¹⁷			
	Program Year 2020		Program Year 2021	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Credential Attainment Rate	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline	Baseline
Measurable Skills Gains	20%		20%	

¹⁷ For the VR program, all indicators except for Measurable Skills Gains are Not Applicable for PY 2020 and PY 2021; however, they will be applicable for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

	Effectiveness in Serving Employers			
	Program Year 2020		Program Year 2021	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Retention with Same Employer in the 2 nd and 4 th Quarter After Exit	70.2%		70.3%	
Repeat Business Customer Rate	44.1%		44.2%	

Workforce Development Area Map



1 Northwest Georgia	2 Georgia Mountains	3 City of Atlanta	4 Cobb	5 DeKalb	6 Fulton County	7 Atlanta Regional
8 Three Rivers	9 Northeast Georgia	10 Macon-Bibb	11 Middle Georgia	12 Central Savannah River Area	13 East Central Georgia	14 Lower Chattahoochee
	15 Middle Flint	16 Heart of Georgia	17 Southwest Georgia	18 Southern Georgia	19 Coastal	

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Workforce Development Region Map

