



State of Georgia Four Year WIOA Unified State Plan



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02.2022



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UNIFIED STATE PLAN: REQUIRED PARTNERS SIGNATURE PAGE



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ACRONYM GUIDE

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

FY Fiscal Year

GaDOE Georgia Department of Education

GALIS Georgia Adult Learners Information System

GA-PRI Georgia Prisoner Reentry Initiative

GCDD Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities

GDEcD Georgia Department of Economic Development

GDOL Georgia Department of Labor

GED® General Educational Development test¹

GEPS Georgia Enterprises for Products & Services

GLME Georgia Labor Market Explorer

GLRS Georgia Learning Resource System

GOTSR Governor's Office of Transition, Support & Reentry

GPSC Grant Program Support Coordinator

GSE Georgia Standards of Excellence

GVRA Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency

GVRs Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Services

GWROPP Georgia Work Ready Online Participant Portal

GWS Georgia Workforce System

HDCI High Demand Career Initiative

HSE High School Equivalency

IATSE International Association of Theatrical & Screen Employees

IAWP International Association of Workforce Professionals

ICR Information Collection Request

IDEA Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

IELCE Integrated English Literacy & Civics Education

IEP Individualized Education Plan

IET Integrated Education and Training

IPE Individualized Plan for Employment

IPS Individualized Placement & Support

ISY In-School Youth

ITA Individual Training Account

ITP Individualized Transition Plan

IWT Incumbent Worker Training

ITW Internet Tax and Wage

JFF Jobs for the Future

LEA Local Education Agency

LEOs Local Elected Officials

LVERs Local Veteran Employment Representatives

LWDA Local Workforce Development Area

LWDB Local Workforce Development Board

LWIA Local Workforce Investment Area

MHS Migrant Head Start

MIS Management Information System

MOA Methods of Administration

MOU Memorandum of Understanding

MSFW Migrant & Seasonal Farmworkers

NAICS North American Industry Classification System

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

NRS National Reporting System

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

VR Vocational Rehabilitation
WARN Worker Adjustment & Retraining
Notification
WEx Work Experience
WIA Workforce Investment Act
WIG Workforce Implementation Guidance
Letter

WIOA Workforce Innovation & Opportunity
Act
WOTC Work Opportunity Tax Credit
WP Wagner-Peyser Act/programs
WSP TANF Work Support Program
YDC Youth Detention Center

I. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

(a) Unified or Combined State Plan

In 2020, the State of Georgia submitted a Unified State Plan. In late 2021, the core partners began reviewing and updating the plan, and the version that follows includes the required two-year modification for Program Years 2022 and 2023. Although Georgia has chosen a Unified State Plan, partnerships with non-core partners are included in the State's four-year strategy and continue to be a priority for the workforce system. 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, TANF, and SNAP have continued discussions regarding integration of services and strategies to help Georgians across the state. OWD is also currently partnering with GaDOE on evaluating and improving the credentials of value in their CTAE programs; and the office plans to pursue additional opportunities to partner with Perkins in the coming years. However, the State chose not to submit a Combined Plan including these partners 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.

Approval & Submission Process for 2020 Plan

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, GVRA, as well as the State Workforce Development Board. Additionally, the group sought feedback from the state's local workforce development areas and business representatives. 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 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.

Approval & Submission Process for 2022 Modification

For the required two-year modification, the same working group convened in October 2021 to begin discussing necessary edits to the plan ahead of the March 2022 deadline. All edits were incorporated into the plan and presented to the SWDB Executive Committee on January 5, 2022, and the plan was approved for posting to allow for public comment. Throughout the public comment period, comments will be addressed by the appropriate partner and any additional edits incorporated into the plan. At the conclusion of the public comment period, the plan will be taken down and presented, along with a summary of comments received, to the SWDB for final approval on February 17, 2022.

After final SWDB approval of the plan, the working group responsible for compiling the State Plan will meet regularly to evaluate the goals, strategies, and partnerships throughout 2022 and 2023. These meetings began after submission of the 2020 plan and have been fruitful, especially in addressing the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, as the group was able to discuss their challenges and successes over the past two years. Though the workforce system has been challenged by the pandemic, emphasizing the shared goals of partners and ensuring open communication has been key to Georgia's success.

II. STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

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

(1) Economic and Workforce Analysis

Since Georgia's first reported case of COVID-19 in early 2020, the state's economy has not only proven resilient but also grown by drawing from its strengths that include a diverse mix of established industries, favorable business climate, and strong workforce development system and training partners.

That is not to say the pandemic has not had historic impacts on Georgia's economy and workforce. Georgia's November 2021 record number of job openings and historic low labor force participation and unemployment rates accentuate the need for the state's workforce development system. Georgia's Office of Workforce Development and the 19 LWDA's can help resolve the state's current worker shortages by re-engaging, training, and providing needed support services to the State's strategic populations who are struggling within or who have dropped out of the labor force. (Those 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).

Highlights from this analysis of the state's economy and workforce include the following findings:

- Nearly all indicators point to Health Care and Transportation & Warehousing continuing to be industries of high priority for in-demand occupation training. From net new jobs, to job postings to estimated annual openings, these industries will need to continue to be a focus of Georgia's workforce development programs.
- The state's largest recent new job announcements, which may have an impact on the LWDAs' work, include 7,500 jobs by electric adventure vehicle manufacturer Rivian in Northeast Georgia; 1,200 jobs by medical device manufacturer Surgical Operations in the Atlanta Region; and 856 jobs by firearms company Remington to include manufacturing, R&D and HQ operations in West Central Georgia.
- Georgia's participating workforce has rapidly lost older workers with experience in the increasingly hard-to-fill "middle skills" jobs. The population age 65 and older is becoming an increasingly large proportion of the working age population as all other age 15 and over cohorts shrink. Further, it was the age 55 and over labor force participation rate that dropped from November 2019 to November 2021 at a far greater rate than all other age cohorts did.
- Both the state's unemployment rate (2.8% for November 2021) and labor force participation rate (61.5%) are at near-unprecedented low levels suggesting an employers' challenge and workforce development professionals' opportunity to re-engage with support services and training those not participating or otherwise out-of-work within the state's target populations.
- With a pandemic-motivated change in consumer buying habits and comfort levels with telehealth, telework and similar practices, jobs in IT-related fields will likely increase in prominence as lower-skill, customer-service-oriented, in-person jobs may decline. And with Software Developers already Georgia's third most common job posting of the past 12 months, the state anticipates technology-related jobs increasing in prominence among Georgia's most in-demand occupations.

(A) Economic Analysis

Economic development site selection trade publications *Area Development and Site Selection* ranked Georgia as the best state in the nation in which to do business for eight consecutive years.² Through limited regulation and taxation, low cost of living, a strong workforce, and high quality of life, Georgia has sustained a strong business climate that consistently brings new job opportunities to Georgia's workforce through new and existing businesses' investments in the state.

Despite the economic effects of COVID-19, job creation by new and expanding companies in Georgia has not slowed down. Since January 2020, the State of Georgia, through the Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD), has worked with around 665 companies who combined have plans to invest over \$23.8 billion and create an estimated 68,900 jobs throughout the state. And that success

² Area Development ranked Georgia No. 1 for business each year from 2014 to 2021. Site Selection consecutively ranked Georgia No. 1 from 2013 to 2020.

is anticipated to only build on itself. For example, on December 16, 2021, Governor Kemp announced the single-largest development project in state history; Rivian Inc. will invest \$5 billion in a carbon-conscious campus in Social Circle, Georgia (LWDA 9) for its electric adventure vehicles. The manufacturing facility will create an estimated 7,500 jobs. But Georgia's economy has always benefited from never relying on one industry. The state's "renaissance man" economic strengths were illustrated by announcements in November 2021. Within just one week, GDEcD announced more than \$477 million in project investments across five regions of the state. Together, these projects will create more than 1,120 jobs across a diverse array of industries.

- ✓ Three Rivers: Remington Firearms, Troup County
- ✓ Central Savannah River Area (CSRA): Aurubis, Richmond County
- ✓ Coastal Georgia: Celadon Development Corporation, Chatham County
- ✓ Southwest Georgia: American Peanut Growers Group, Seminole County
- ✓ Metro Atlanta: Ringover, Fulton County

In the coming years, the State's economic development strategy will continue to be a shared focus on recruiting new investments and jobs that leverage and build upon Georgia's high-demand industries, as well as new opportunities such as the electric vehicle battery and assembly supply chain.

(i) Existing Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations

Georgia continues to experience strong economic conditions, with sustained success and expansion across a range of industries anticipated in the coming years. As depicted in Figure 1 below based on five-year job growth, the top in-demand industry sectors in Georgia's economy are Health Care & Social Assistance, Construction, and Transportation & Warehousing.

Figure 1. Growth Industries
Based on Net Job Growth, 2015 to 2020

NAICS	Description	2015 - 2020 Net New Jobs	2015 - 2020 % Job Growth	12-Month # of Job Postings
62	Health Care & Social Assistance	38,989	8.7%	246,080
23	Construction	35,376	21.4%	20,288
48	Transportation & Warehousing	34,512	19.6%	86,012
55	Management of Companies & Enterprises	22,294	34.0%	1,879
54	Professional, Scientific, & Tech Services	22,200	8.6%	90,031
56	Administrative & Support & Waste Management & Remediation Services	12,114	3.9%	54,036
52	Finance & Insurance	10,556	6.5%	86,598
31	Manufacturing	7,522	2.0%	90,781
53	Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	6,882	11.0%	27,764
61	Educational Services	6,244	9.2%	39,988
92	Government	5,902	0.9%	33,070
51	Information	2,533	2.4%	43,709
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	419	0.4%	22,966
21	Mining, Quarrying, & Oil & Gas Extraction	386	8.0%	2,275
	Total, All Industries	156,128	3.8%	1,452,360

Sources: EMSI 2021Q4 data set; BGLI 11/1/2020 to 10/31/2021

Health Care

Twelve-month job postings as included in Figure 1 above illustrate that Health Care jobs dominate on-line advertised job opportunities in the state. Additional industries with strong demand for applications include Manufacturing; Professional, Scientific and Tech Services; Finance and Insurance; and

Transportation and Warehousing. All of these align with established economic strengths in Georgia with anticipated continued growth.

Nationwide, Health Care will continue to be a strong growth area; growth projections for Georgia strongly outpace the nation (for 2015 to 2025, 38.1% growth estimate for Georgia vs 28.0% for U.S.).³ The bulk of the job growth is within physicians' offices, followed by home health services, services for the elderly and persons with disabilities, and assisted living facilities for the elderly. The latter three accentuate the particular need for nurses (LPs and RNs), certified nursing assistants and other direct caregiving service occupations.

This growth has and will continue to place a strain on the existing Health Care workforce, and exacerbates the need for more workers in Georgia's Health Care industries. These talent-related issues are even more severe in the rural parts of the state as compared to the urban, with the counties with the longest median posting duration for physician office jobs currently led by rural areas of the East Central Georgia, CSRA, Heart of Georgia, Middle Flint and Southern LWDAs.⁴

Professional, Scientific and Technical Services

Job growth in the varied services classified within the NAICS 54 Professional, Scientific and Technical Services sector was led by the sub-sectors of Computer Systems Design and Related Services; Management, Scientific and Technical Consulting Services; and Legal Services. While Georgia job growth in these fields is typically dominated by growth in the Metro Atlanta commercial centers, the state's top counties for job creation within Computers Systems Design included Houston County (Middle Georgia) and Augusta-Richmond County (CSRA); for Consulting Services included Columbus-Muscogee County (Lower Chattahoochee); and for Legal Services included Chatham County (Coastal Georgia). Outside the Atlanta Region, when these three sub-sectors are combined, the most net new job creation occurred in Middle Georgia, Northeast Georgia and Coastal Georgia, further illustrating these sectors' relevance throughout the state.

Transportation and Warehousing

Georgia's longstanding role as a center of logistics for the Southeast continues as the state's most net new job growth is anticipated in General Warehousing and Storage, Couriers and Express Delivery Services, and General Local Freight Trucking. While these opportunities will always be reliable around the state's transportation hubs – the ports of Savannah and Brunswick and Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport – the inland ports in Northwest, Mountain and Southwest Georgia represent opportunities for those LWDAs. Northeast Georgia is also an established and growing distribution center for the state, and net job growth is also strong in areas of the Lower Chattahoochee (Troup County), Southern (Lowndes County) and Macon-Bibb LWDAs.

Manufacturing

Manufacturing job growth in Troup County is largely driven by its strong automotive sector anchored by Kia Georgia. Other areas of the state with recent strong manufacturing growth include the Atlanta Regional (predominately the counties of Cherokee, Fayette and Gwinnet), Georgia Mountains and CSRA LWDAs.

³ Source: EMSI 2021Q4 data set.

⁴ Source: EMSI 2021Q4 data set.

Sectors of Manufacturing where Georgia has had the strongest recent growth are the production of food and beverages, motor vehicle parts, manufactured homes, aircraft parts, and tires. Projected job growth aligns with these same sectors, although Georgia's recent successes locating large job creators manufacturing newer products like batteries for electric vehicles and solar panels may result in changes in current projections. This is particularly true for the Northeast part of the state benefiting from suppliers and other business activity following the large investment by SK Innovation, and the recent Rivian announcement. And, for Middle Flint Georgia, the recently announced solar panel manufacturing facility.

Once Rivian nears completion of its announced construction project and starts hiring for an anticipated 7,500 jobs, Northeast Georgia will likely outpace the Three Rivers area for automotive manufacturing job growth during the new facility's ramp up hiring process. And the automotive assembly and related job opportunities for the workforce could become a focus of not only the Northeast Georgia LWDA which serves the Social Circle area, but also the LWDA's for eastern Atlanta Regional, eastern Three Rivers and northern Middle Georgia region because they are in proximity to the announced Social Circle location.⁵

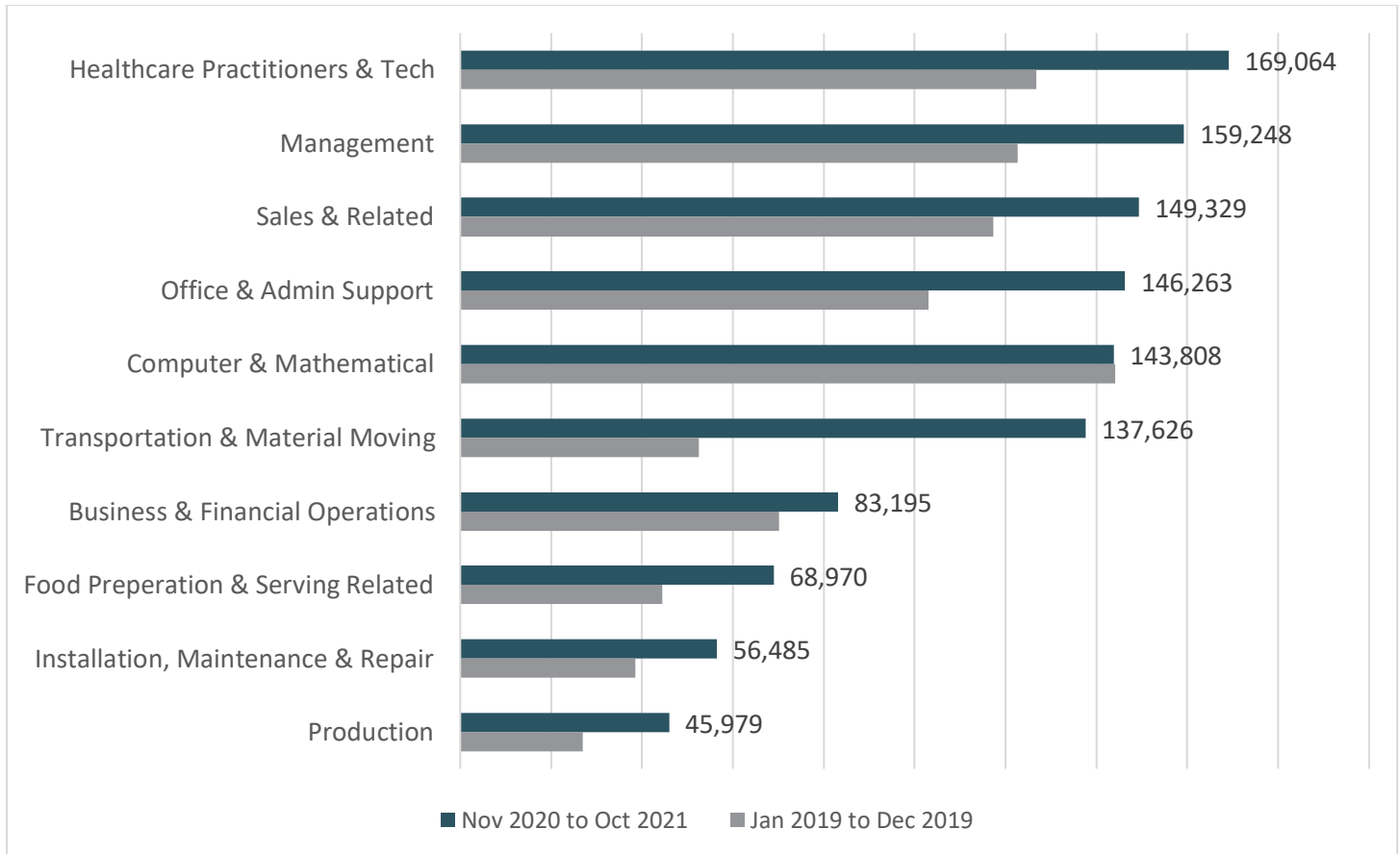
⁵ For examples: Rivian's selected site in Northeast Georgia's Social Circle is just 21 miles from Conyers in Atlanta Regionals' Rockdale County; 32 miles from Jackson in Three Rivers' Butts County; 34 miles from Eatonton in Middle Georgia's Putnam County; and 35 miles from Lawrenceville in Atlanta Regional's Gwinnett County.

Additional Industries

Industries that have recently declined in jobs – most prominently Retail Trade, Accommodation and Food Services, and Entertainment and Recreation – are not included in the above Figure 1 due to their decline. While the decline corresponds with the COVID-19 pandemic which hit these industries particularly hard, these are also industries that typically offer below standard living wages.

Figure 2. Leading Job Posting by Occupational Families

Based on 1,414,334 job postings from November 2020 to October 2021
vs 1,024,167 postings from January 2019 to December 2019



Source: BGLI 11/1/2020 to 10/31/2021

The move of the Computer & Mathematical occupation family from the lead to fifth place is the biggest change in the ordering of occupational families by job postings data presented in the 2020 annual plan vs the most recent data presented in the above Figure 2. Reasonable speculation is the job postings in health care, management, sales and office support are from hiring occurring during the “great reshuffle” and other COVID-19 pandemic impacts to on-line job posting dynamics over the past 12 months. Versus occupations like software developers, computer systems engineers/architects and computer user support specialists that likely had little to no disruption from the pandemic due to the ease with which these types of jobs can transition to telework.

Consistent with industry growth patterns, the most job postings from the past 12 months were for registered nurses; the next highest were heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers, software developers, sales representatives for wholesalers and manufacturers, retail salespersons and customer service representatives. These and other leading occupations by family are in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3. Leading Job Posting by Occupation

Based on occupations with 5,000 or more postings from November 2020 to October 2021, or the occupation within the family with the most when the largest is less than 5,000.

Family	Occupation	Job Postings
Health Care Practitioners & Tech	Total for Health Care Practitioners & Tech	169,064
	Registered Nurses (RN)	62,636
	Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN)	12,173
	Critical Care Nurses	9,496
	“All Other” Health Technicians	5,227
	Medical Records & Health Info Tech	5,189
	Speech-Language Pathologists (SLP)	5,158
Management	Total for Management	159,248
	“All Other” Managers	29,180
	Food Service Managers	16,276
	Medical & Health Services Managers	16,113
	General & Operations Managers	15,524
	Marketing Managers	13,316
	Sales Managers	13,137
	Financial Managers, Branch or Dept.	7,034
	Construction Managers	5,300
Sales & Related	Total for Sales & Related	149,329
	Sales Representatives for Wholesalers & Manufacturers	38,483
	Retail Salespersons	38,090
	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	26,258
	Insurance Sales Agents	9,276
	Cashiers	7,816
	Real Estate Sales Agents	6,530
Office & Admin Support	Total for Office & Admin Support	146,263
	Customer Service Representatives	34,377
	Secretaries & Admin Assistants	12,523
	Stock Clerks in Stockrooms, Warehouses or Storage yards	9,084

Family	Occupation	Job Postings
	Bookkeeping, Accounting & Auditing Clerks	8,169
	First-Line Supervisors of Office & Admin Support Workers	8,167
	Medical Secretaries	7,476
	Hotel, Motel & Resort Desk Clerks	6,445
	Stock Clerks on Sales Floor	6,086
	General Office Clerks	5,559
Computer & Mathematical	Total for Computer & Mathematical	143,808
	Software Developers	44,687
	Computer Systems Engineers/Architects	10,584
	Computer User Support Specialists	9,922
	Info Tech Project Managers	9,487
	Computer Systems Analysts	9,318
	Web Developers	7,047
	Info Security Analysts	6,782
	Business Intelligence Analysts	6,744
	Database Administrators	5,687
Transportation & Material Moving	Total for Transportation & Material Moving	137,626
	Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	62,654
	Hand Laborers & Freight, Stock & Material Movers	33,669
	Driver/Sales Workers	10,577
	Industrial Truck & Tractor Operators	7,676
	Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	6,531
Business & Financial Operations	Total for Business & Financial Operations	83,195
	HR Specialists	12,980
	Management Analysts	11,814
	Accountants	8,690
	Market Research Analysts & Marketing Specialists	7,146
	Financial Analysts	5,208
Food Prep & Serving Related	Total for Food Preparation & Serving Related	68,970
	Combined Food Prep & Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	18,465
	Waiters & Waitresses	10,503
	First-Line Supervisors of Food Prep & Serving Workers	9,394
	Restaurant Cooks	8,609
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	Total for Installation, Maintenance & Repair	55,485
	General Maintenance & Repair Workers	17,447

Family	Occupation	Job Postings
	Automotive Specialty Technicians	9,784
	First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers & Repairers	5,444
Production	Total for Production	45,979
	"All Other" Production Workers	11,539
Health Care Support	Total for Health Care Support	34,914
	Nursing Assistants	12,177
	Medical Assistants	7,327
Architecture & Engineering	Total for Architecture & Engineering	31,497
	Industrial Engineering Technicians	4,647
Building & Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	Total for Building & Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	31,291
	Janitors & Cleaners	11,993
	Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners	9,551
Education, Training & Library	Total for Education, Training & Library	30,233
	Preschool Teachers (except Special Education)	7,621
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports & Media	Total for Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports & Media	28,758
	Merchandise Displayers & Window Trimmers	9,871
Personal Care & Service	Total for Personal Care & Service	25,250
	Personal Care Aides	6,932
Construction & Extraction	Total for Construction & Extraction	19,398
	Construction Laborers	4,695
Protective Service	Total for Protective Service	18,016
	Security Guards	9,963
Community & Social Service	Total for Community & Social Service	14,715
	Educational, Guidance, School & Vocational Counselors	2,554
Life, Physical & Social Science	Total for Life, Physical & Social Science	9,853
	Quality Control Analysts	1,865
Legal	Total for Legal	7,867

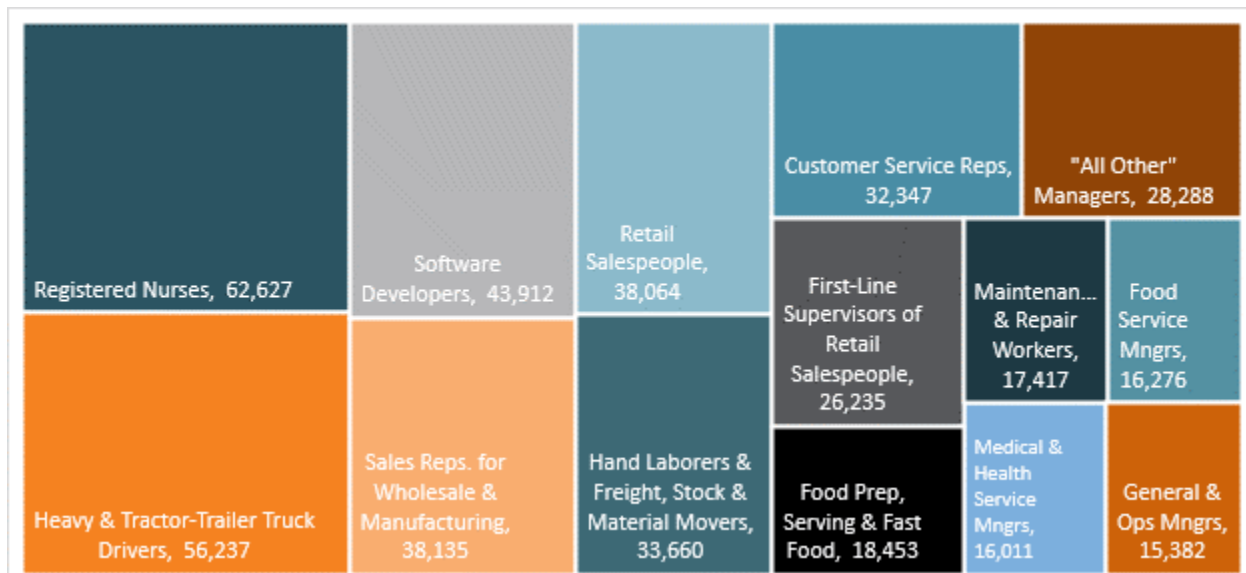
Family	Occupation	Job Postings
	Lawyers	4,247
Farming, Fishing & Forestry	Total for Farming, Fishing & Forestry	2,062
	Crop Farmworkers & Laborers	664
Military Specific	Total for Military Specific	513
Total Postings, All Occupations		1,414,334

Source: BGLI 11/1/2020 to 10/31/2021

The dominance of retail, logistics and restaurant-related occupations in top statewide job postings for the past 12-months reflect the re-hiring that is occurring after the spring 2020 shutdowns that dramatically affected these industries and changes to consumer buying patterns. The large number of postings for registered nurses and software developers demonstrates, quite simply, that some things may never change for 21st century U.S. hiring patterns.

Figure 4. Top Occupations by Job Postings

Based on occupations with 15,000 or more postings from November 2020 to October 2021



Source: BGLI 11/1/2020 to 10/31/2021

Regional Job Patterns

The following paragraphs address each of Georgia's workforce regions in turn to offer a regional perspective on the state's occupation trends.⁶ Please note that this regional analysis is based only on the state perspective drawn from its available data sources. A more detailed and accurate depiction of local/regional industry demands are in the respective local and regional plans. The incompleteness of employment and demand data within some sectors can lead to challenges when painting a statewide picture. However, OWD will work with all local areas to depict accurately current trends and needs for the completion of local planning.

Region 1 – WorkSource Northwest Georgia (LWDA 1): Region 1 had the most net new jobs from 2016 to 2021 in the following sectors: Health Care & Social Assistance (3,764), Administrative & Support and Waste Management & Remediation Services (1,925), and Transportation & Warehousing (1,306). Organizing jobs by more specific sector classifications, Supermarkets & Other Grocery Stores (1,152), General Medical & Surgical Hospitals (1,147), and General Warehousing & Storage (1,080) have created the most net new jobs.

Leading on-line job postings of the past 12 months include heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers (4,245), registered nurses (4,079), retail salespeople (1,975), customer service representatives (1,435) and first-line supervisors of retail sales workers (1,400). Employers making most use of on-line job postings include flooring manufacturers Mohawk Industries, Shaw Industries, and health care providers Hospital Corporation of America,⁷ Wellstar Health System and Adventhealth. Additional large employers include manufacturers Engineered Floors, Roper Corporation, and Toyo Tire; health care providers Floyd Health Care Management, Hamilton Medical Center, and Redmond Regional Medical Center; and Walmart.

Region's Largest New Jobs Announcements July 1, 2020 through December 17, 2021: *Note the occupations listed are not from the employers making the announcement; they represent examples based on estimates of the most prevalent occupations within the industry.*⁸

- ✓ 210 jobs by United Surface Solutions' floor covering manufacturing facility: textile winding, twisting, and drawing out machine setters, operators and tenders; sewing machine operators; and textile knitting and waving machine setters, operators and tenders.
- ✓ 200 jobs by GEDIA's stamped metal products manufacturing facility: miscellaneous assemblers & fabricators; welders, cutters, solders and brazers; and cutting, punching, and press machine setters, operators and tenders, for metals and plastics.
- ✓ 150 jobs by CJ Logistics operations: cargo and freight agents; hand laborers and freight, stock and material movers; and sales representatives.

Region 2 – WorkSource Georgia Mountains (LWDA 2): Region 2 had the most significant net new job growth in Health Care & Social Assistance (3,926), Construction (1,677) and Retail Trade (1,599).

⁶ All leading new job creation by industry data in the regional overviews are based on the 2016 to 2021 period as published in the EMSI Q42021 data set release. All job posting data is as published by Burning Glass' Labor Insights for the November 2020 to October 2021 period. The job announcement information is from the Georgia Dept. of Economic Development, and large employer lists are from the 2021 Georgia Dept. of Labor Local Area Profiles.

⁷ According to its website, Health Care Corporation of America has almost 200 locations in Georgia; their location types include surgery centers, freestanding ERs, urgent care centers, diagnostic and imaging centers, walk-in clinics and physician clinics.

⁸ Sources: Announcements from Georgia Dept. of Economic Development project locations, including both existing and new facilities in the state. Occupations from EMSI 2021Q4 data set industry overviews.

Leading regional job growth at a more specific industry level were Employment Services, who often provide contract workers to distribution centers and manufacturers (1,559); Data, Processing, Hosting & Related Services (1,279); and Offices of Physicians (1,225).

In the region, the most online job postings have been for registered nurses (3,161), heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers (2,153) retail salespersons (2,078), hand laborers and freight, stock and material movers (1,971) and first-line supervisors of retail sales workers (1,353). Employers Amazon, Northeast Georgia Medical Center, Allied Universal, Wayne Farms and Northside Hospital posted the most job openings. Additional large employers in the region include manufacturers Fiedale Farms, Kubota Manufacturing of America, Pilgrim's Pride; retailer and distributors Ingles Markets, Publix Super Company, The Kroger Company and Walmart; and the University of North Georgia.

Region's Largest New Jobs Announcements July 1, 2020 through December 17, 2021: *Note the occupations listed are not from the employers making the announcement; they represent examples based on estimates of the most prevalent occupations within the industry.*

- ✓ 225 jobs by Aevolve's blockchain tech operations: software developers and software quality assurance analysts and testers; customer service representatives; and computer user support specialists.
- ✓ 150 jobs by Amazon's distribution center: hand laborers and freight, stock and material movers; shipping, receiving and inventory clerks; and light truck drivers.
- ✓ 125 jobs by Gold Creek Foods' chicken processing facility: poultry cutters and trimmers; slaughterers and meat packers; and hand laborers and freight, stock and material movers.

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)): Most job creation for the 10-County Metro Area LWDAs has occurred in Management of Companies & Enterprises (25,977), Professional, Scientific & Technical Services (20,721) and Health Care & Social Assistance (19,913). Looking at the economy at a more specific sector perspective, after management of companies & enterprises, leading sectors are Warehousing & Storage (16,123), Offices of Physicians (14,915) and Computer Systems Design & Related Services (7,001).

The region's job postings from the past 12 months have most frequently been for software developers (36,717), registered nurses (28,471), sales representatives for wholesale and manufacturing (25,657), heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers (22,973) and "all other" managers (20,906). The most postings were made by large employers Wellstar Health System, Emory Health Care, Amazon, The Home Depot and Piedmont Health Care. Additional large employers include health care providers Childrens Health Care of Atlanta and Northside Hospital; retailers and distributors Publix Super Markets, The Kroger Company and Walmart; and Delta Air Lines and Emory University.

Region's Largest New Jobs Announcements July 1, 2020 through December 17, 2021: *Note the occupations listed are not from the employers making the announcement; they represent examples based on estimates of the most prevalent occupations within the industry.*

- ✓ 1,200 jobs by Intuitive Surgical Operation's medical device manufacturing facility: miscellaneous assemblers and fabricators; inspectors, testers, sorters, samplers and weighers; first-line supervisors of production and operating workers.
- ✓ 1,000 jobs by Visa's financial service office: customer service representatives; bill and account collectors; and software developers and software quality assurance analysts and testers.
- ✓ 907 jobs by FanDuel's fantasy sports betting IT office: software developers and software quality assurance analysts and testers; computer user support specialists; and customer service representatives.

Region 4 – WorkSource West Central (LWDA 8): Region 4's growth has primarily been in Transportation & Warehousing (2,176), Health Care & Social Assistance (1,786) and Accommodation & Food Services (1,609). Represented by more specific sector classifications, the most job growth has occurred within Offices of Physicians (3,628), Warehousing & Storage (1,449), and Facilities Support Services (1,388).

The most job postings have been for heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers (2,901), registered nurses (2,012), retail salespeople (1,386), hand laborers and freight, stock and material movers (1,355), and first-line supervisors of retail sales workers (931). Leading employers for postings were Wellstar Health System, Amazon, Piedmont Health Care, Assurant, and Advantage Sales & Marketing. Additional large employers in the region include health care providers Tanner Medical Center and Tanner Health Systems; manufacturers Hello Fresh, Kia Georgia, Southwire, and Yamaha Motor Manufacturing; and Security Forces, University of West Georgia and Walmart.

Region's Largest New Jobs Announcements July 1, 2020 through December 17, 2021: *Note the occupations listed are not from the employers making the announcement; they represent examples based on estimates of the most prevalent occupations within the industry.*

- ✓ 856 jobs by Remington Firearms' HQs, R&D center and manufacturing facility (combined industries to represent all three facility types): general and operations managers; project management specialists and all other business operations specialists; and miscellaneous assemblers and fabricators.
- ✓ 750 jobs by HelloFresh's pre-packaged meal distribution facility: hand laborers and freight, stock and material movers; driver/sales workers; and heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers.
- ✓ 678 jobs by Hyundai Powertech America's automobile transmission manufacturing facility: miscellaneous assemblers and fabricators, first-line supervisors of production and operating workers; and inspectors, testers, sorters, samplers and weighers.

Region 5 – WorkSource Northeast Georgia (LWDA 9): Net job growth in Region 5 has predominantly occurred within Transportation & Warehousing (5,027), Retail Trade (3,258) and Construction (2,609), with more specific sector growth most occurring within general warehousing and storage (3,868), limited-service restaurants (1,355) and other home furnishing stores (1,327).

Transportation and Warehousing is prominent in the region, with the most job postings being in the related two occupations of heavy and truck-trailer truck drivers (4,228) and hand laborers and freight,

stock and materials movers (4,110). The next most job postings are for registered nurses (2,800), retail salespersons (2,030) and customer service representatives (1,541). The most active online hiring employers are Amazon, Piedmont Health Care, University of Georgia, Marriott International Corp. and Carvana. Additional large employers in the region include health care providers Athens Regional Medical Center, St. Mary's Hospital and Wellpoint; retailers and distributors Bed Bath and Beyond, HG Georgia Merchants and WalMart; and Hire Dynamics, Pilgrim's Pride, and University of Georgia.

Region's Largest New Jobs Announcements July 1, 2020 through December 17, 2021:
Note the occupations listed are not from the employers making the announcement; they represent examples based on estimates of the most prevalent occupations within the industry.

- ✓ 7,500 jobs by Rivian's electric vehicle manufacturing facility: miscellaneous assemblers and fabricators; electrical, electronic, and electromechanical assemblers; and software developers and software quality assurance analysts and testers.
- ✓ 400 jobs by SK Group's semiconductor chip glass-based substrates manufacturing facility: electrical, electronic, and electromechanical assemblers; semiconductor processing technicians; and miscellaneous assemblers and fabricators.
- ✓ 285 jobs by Duckyang's battery module assembly facility: miscellaneous assemblers and fabricators; electrical, electronic and electromechanical assemblers; and extruding and drawing machine setters, operators and tenders for metal and plastic.

Region 6 – WorkSource Macon-Bibb (LWDA 10) & WorkSource Middle Georgia (LWDA 11):

Region 6's growth has focused in Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services (2,688), Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (1,757) and Transportation and Warehousing (1,218). More specific leading job growth sectors include Poultry Processing (1,359), General Warehousing and Storage (1,085) and Facilities Support Services (929).

Job postings over the past 12 months have been led by registered nurses (3,576), heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers (3,063), retail salespersons (1,765), sales representatives for wholesale and manufacturing (1,416) and first-line supervisors of retail sales workers (1,341). Four of the five employers with the most postings are in Health Care: Atrium Health, Hospital Corporation of America, PruittHealth and Houston Medical Center. The fifth is the Bibb County School District. Additional large employers include health care providers Georgia Health Holdings and Medical Center of Central Georgia; manufacturers Blue Bird, Frito-Lay, and Perdue Farms; retailers and distributors The Kroger Company and Walmart; and GEICO, Georgia Department of Corrections, and Mercer University.

Region's Largest New Jobs Announcements July 1, 2020 through December 17, 2021:
Note the occupations listed are not from the employers making the announcement; they represent examples based on estimates of the most prevalent occupations within the industry.

- ✓ 120 jobs by Frito Lay's snack manufacturing facility: packaging and filling machine operators and tenders; food batchmakers; and industrial truck and tractor operators.
- ✓ 100 jobs by Dean Baldwin's airplane painting operation: painters, construction and maintenance; and first-line supervisors of painters; aircraft structure, surfaces, rigging and systems assemblers.
- ✓ 65 jobs by Vision Door & Door's Millwork windows manufacturing facility: miscellaneous assemblers and fabricators; woodworking machine setters, operators and tenders; and hand laborers and freight, stock and material movers.

Region 7 – WorkSource CSRA (LWDA 12) & WorkSource East Central (LWDA 13): Region 7 net job growth has recently been strongest in Construction (7,455), Health Care & Social Assistance (2,128) and Manufacturing (808). Within those, the largest growth has been in Utility System Construction (5,860), General Medical & Surgical Hospitals (1,591) and Other Heavy & Civil Engineering Construction (1,086). Leading job-creating manufacturers are those that produce travel trailers and campers (794), cookies & crackers (508) and batteries (486).

Registered nurses (4,466), heavy & tractor-trailer truck drivers (2,623), retail salespeople (1,638), customer service representatives (1,480) and sales representatives for wholesale and manufacturing (1,410) lead recent job postings. Like elsewhere, leading on-line job posters are dominated by health care providers; in Region 7's case: Hospital Corporation of America, University Health Services, University Health Care, and Doctors Hospital of Augusta. The fifth most postings by company were by Amazon. The largest employers in the region include health care providers Doctors Hospital of Augusta, MCG Health, and University Home Health; manufacturers FPL Food and Textron; and Augusta National, Fluor Maintenance Services, Georgia Regents University, Southern Nuclear Operating Co., and Walmart.

Region's Largest New Jobs Announcements July 1, 2020 through December 17, 2021: *Note the occupations listed are not from the employers making the announcement; they represent examples based on estimates of the most prevalent occupations within the industry.*

- ✓ 199 jobs by Hart Dairy Creamery's processing facility: packing and filling machine operators and tenders; food batchmakers; hand laborers and freight, stock and material movers.
- ✓ 125 jobs by Aurubis' recycling and secondary copper smelting facility: extruding and drawing machine setters, operators and tenders for metal and plastic; metal-refining furnace operators and tenders; and multiple machine tool setters, operators and tenders for metal and plastic.
- ✓ 111 jobs by SealingTech's cyber & mobile security R&D operations: software developers and software quality assurance analysts and testers; computer programmers; and sales representatives.

Region 8 – WorkSource Lower Chattahoochee (LWDA 14) & WorkSource Middle Flint (LWDA 15): From 2016 to 2021 in Region 8, net job growth has been most significant in Administrative & Support and Waste Management & Remediation Services (1,522), Manufacturing (837) and Management of Companies & Enterprises (447). At a more specific level of industry analysis, the leading job creators have been aerospace products and parts manufacturing (1,036), call centers and telemarketers (651), and motor vehicle parts manufacturing (465).

Online job postings over the past 12 months have been most frequent for Registered Nurses (2,617), Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers (2,294), Customer Service Representatives (1,198), Retail Salespersons (1,117) and Sales Representatives for Wholesale and Manufacturing (1,055). Top five employers by job postings are Anthem Blue Cross (1,848), LifePoint Health (1,584), Piedmont Health Care (1,133), St. Francis Hospital (682) and TSYS (430). Large employers in the region also include AFLAC, Columbus State University, Pratt & Whitney Aircraft, The Medical Center, Tyson Farms, Walmart and Wellpoint.

Region's Largest New Jobs Announcements July 1, 2020 through December 17, 2021: *Note the occupations listed are not from the employers making the announcement; they represent examples based on estimates of the most prevalent occupations within the industry.*

- ✓ 500 jobs by NanoPV's solar panel manufacturing and distribution facility: electrical, electronic and electromechanical assemblers; semiconductor processing technicians; and electrical and electronic engineering technicians.
- ✓ 350 jobs by Path-Tec's logistics operations: cargo and freight agents; hand laborers and freight, stock and material movers; and sales representatives.
- ✓ 200 jobs by Kysor Warren's refrigeration equipment manufacturing facility: miscellaneous assemblers and fabricators; welders, cutters, solderers and brazers; and machinists.

Region 9 – WorkSource Heart of Georgia (LWDA 16): Region 9, a geographically large workforce area with diverse industry sectors, has experienced the most net job growth in Health Care & Social Assistance (696), Construction (488) and Professional, Scientific & Technical Services (418). Reviewing leading job growth sectors at a more specific industry classification, the region's job growth is led by Nuclear Electric Power Generation (632), Paper Mills (511) and Commercial, Industrial & Industrial Electric Lighting Fixture Manufacturing (341).

Occupations most sought via on-line job postings in the last 12 months include Registered Nurses (1,145), Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers (1,084), Correctional Officers and Jailers (474), First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers (470) and Retail Salespersons (448). Hospital Corporation of America, Corecivic, Intuit, Walmart/Sam's, and Health Care Travels lead private sector online job posts in the region. The State of Georgia and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs also fell within leading employers. The region's largest employers include Claxton Poultry, Coastal Plains Education Center, Crider, Fairview Park Hospital, Georgia Department of Corrections, Rayonier Performance Fibers, Southern Nuclear Operating Co., Trane U.S., Walmart and YKK AP America.

Region's Largest New Jobs Announcements July 1, 2020 through December 17, 2021: *Note the occupations listed are not from the employers making the announcement; they represent examples based on estimates of the most prevalent occupations within the industry.*

- ✓ 100 jobs by Wincore Window Company's windows and patio door manufacturing facility: miscellaneous assemblers and fabricators; woodworking machine setters, operators and tenders; hand laborers and freight, stock and material movers.
- ✓ 78 jobs by Chemour's mineral manufacturing facility: chemical equipment operators and tenders; chemical plant and system operators; and mixing and blending machine setters, operators and tenders.
- ✓ 75 jobs by Engineered Absorbent Materials manufacturing facility: mixing and blending machine setters, operators and tenders; packaging and filling machine operators and tenders; and chemical equipment operators and tenders.

Region 10 – WorkSource Southwest Georgia (LWDA 17): Region 10 grew the most in Transportation and Warehousing (608), Health Care & Social Assistance (514) and Manufacturing (432). Represented by more specific industry classifications, job growth has been most significant in Truck Trailer Manufacturing (406), "Other" Commercial Equipment Merchant Wholesalers (398), and Veneer, Plywood & Engineered Wood Product Manufacturing (324).

The list of online job postings in the region has been led by heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers (1,685), registered nurses (1,651), retail salespersons (745), customer service repress (634) and first-line supervisors of retail sales workers (573). Over the past 12 months, top job posters have included Phoebe Putney Health System, Intuit, Archbold Medical Center, Pruitthealth, and Management & Training Corporation. Additional large employers include Albany State University, Integra Business Alternatives, Keystone Foods, Sanderson Farms, Teleperformance USA, Proctor & Gamble Paper Products and Walmart.

Region's Largest New Jobs Announcements July 1, 2020 through December 17, 2021:
Note the occupations listed are not from the employers making the announcement; they represent examples based on estimates of the most prevalent occupations within the industry.

- ✓ 400 jobs by Danimer Scientific's PHA biopolymer manufacturing facility: chemical equipment operators and tenders; chemical plant and system operators; and mixing and blending machine setters, operators and tenders.
- ✓ 200 jobs by Tampa Bay Fisheries' seafood processing facility: fish cutters and trimmers; packaging and filling machine operators and tenders; and hand packers and packagers.
- ✓ 150 jobs by Woodgrain Millwork wood products manufacturing facility: miscellaneous assemblers and fabricators; woodworking machine setters, operators and tenders; and hand laborers and freight, stock and material movers.

Region 11 – WorkSource Southern Georgia (LWDA 18): LWDA 18 has most grown in Wholesale Trade (1,101), Transportation & Warehousing (1,012) and Construction (881). When reviewing more specific sectors, the leading job creation industries are General Warehousing & Storage (727), Manufactured Home (i.e. mobile homes) Manufacturing (649) and Limited-Service Restaurants (510).

Heavy and First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers (648) and Customer Service Representatives (566) had the most job postings in Region 11 for the past 12 months. Leading job posters were the South Georgia Medical Center, Hospital Corporation of America, Corecivic, Intuit and Pruitthealth. Large employers include health care providers Coffee Regional Medical Center and, Memorial Satilla Health; retail and distribution centers Lowe's Home Centers, Target, The Home Depot, and Walmart; manufacturers Chaparral Boats and Pilgrim's Pride; and Colbalt Group and Valdosta State University

Region's Largest New Jobs Announcements July 1, 2020 through December 17, 2021:
Note the occupations listed are not from the employers making the announcement; they represent examples based on estimates of the most prevalent occupations within the industry.

- ✓ 250 jobs by La Regina di San Marzano's pasta sauce manufacturing facility: packaging and filling machine operators and tenders; food batchmakers; and hand packers and packagers.
- ✓ 100 jobs by Amcor's plastic foam manufacturing facility: miscellaneous assemblers and fabricators; molding, coremaking, and casting machine setters, operators and tenders; and extruding and drawing machine setters operators and tenders.
- ✓ 90 jobs by Correct Craft's recreational boat manufacturing facility: welders, cutters, solders and brazers; miscellaneous assemblers and fabricators; and fiberglass laminators and fabricators.

Region 12 – WorkSource Coastal (LWDA 19): For the 2016 to 2021 period, the industries that created the most net new jobs in Region 12 were Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services (4,111), Transportation and Warehousing (4,035) and

Construction (2,049). Organization of jobs by more specific industries shows the most jobs were created within Temporary Help Services, which can include providing workers on a contract basis to manufacturers and distribution centers (2,256); call centers and telemarketers (1,623); and couriers and express delivery services (1,542).

Job postings from November 2020 through October 2021 include the most of the following occupations: registered nurses (4,882), heavy & tractor-trailer truck drivers (4,574), retail salespeople (2,847), customer service representatives (2,645) and hand laborers & freight, stock and material movers (2,446). Most active on-line job posters are Hospital Corporation of America, Anthem Blue Cross, Gulfstream Aerospace, Georgia Southern University and Marriott International. Additional large employers include Candler Hospital, Glynn-Brunswick Memorial Hospital, Gulfstream Services Corp, Marine Terminals Corporation-East, and Savannah College of Art & Design, Savannah Health Services, Sea Island Acquisition and Walmart.

Region’s Largest New Jobs Announcements July 1, 2020 through December 17, 2021:

Note the occupations listed are not from the employers making the announcement; they represent examples based on estimates of the most prevalent occupations within the industry.

- ✓ 1,000 jobs by Amazon distribution center: hand laborers and freight, stock and material movers; shipping, receiving and inventory clerks; and light truck drivers.
- ✓ 224 jobs by MSI Surfaces’ stone, countertops and tile distribution facility: heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers; molderers, shapers, and casters; and miscellaneous assemblers and fabricators.
- ✓ 201 jobs by Kat 5 film production sound stage: producers and directors; actors; and film and video editors.

(ii) Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations

Using U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and state data, Georgia Dept. of Labor (GDOL)’s Workforce Statistics and Economic Research division produces annual short-term employment projections and long-term employment projections. The most current short-term projections are for base year 2022, while the most current long-term projections are for base year 2018. Figure 5 below indicates short-term industry employment and projections for the State, 2020-2022.

Figure 5. Short Term Industry Employment and Projections, 2020 to 2022

Industry	2020 Est. Employment	2022 Projected Employment	Projected Change	Projected Annual % Change
Total Employment, All Industries	4,300,552	4,705,017	117,878	1.4%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	100,482	98,598	(1,884)	-0.9%

Industry	2020 Est. Employment	2022 Projected Employment	Projected Change	Projected Annual % Change
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil & Gas Extraction	5,342	5,377	35	0.3%
Utilities	19,453	19,309	(144)	-0.4%
Construction	199,006	207,035	8,029	2.0%
Manufacturing	400,903	395,610	(5,293)	-0.7%
Wholesale Trade	193,876	196,012	2,136	0.6%
Retail Trade	488,514	493,683	5,169	0.5%
Transportation & Warehousing	228,934	247,215	18,281	3.9%
Information	115,308	119,000	3,692	1.6%
Finance & Insurance	167,758	173,561	5,803	1.7%
Real Estate and Rental & Leasing	71,470	79,274	7,804	5.3%
Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	269,284	279,261	9,977	1.8%
Management of Companies & Enterprises	90,591	98,879	8,288	4.5%
Admin & Support and Waste Mngmnt & Remediation Svs	31,842	324,198	5,769	0.9%
Educational Services	398,049	398,615	566	0.1%
Health Care & Social Assistance	563,764	584,668	20,904	1.8%
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	51,134	52,278	1,144	1.1%
Accommodation & Food Services	436,185	452,470	16,285	1.9%
Other Services <i>except Public Administration</i>	151,330	158,472	7,142	2.3%
Federal Government	101,711	103,826	2,115	1.0%
Public Administration	68,539	68,933	394	0.3%
Local <i>Excluding Education & Hospitals</i>	147,077	148,743	1,666	0.6%

Source: Georgia Dept. of Labor

The anticipated most net new jobs will be in Health Care and Social Assistance, Transportation and Warehousing and Accommodation and Food Services; these sectors are consistent with recent online job posting activity and an economy making a strong transition out of the hardest days of the COVID-19 pandemic. These trends are also consistent with national projections except that Georgia's projected growth for Transportation and Warehousing is particularly strong compared to the nation.

By percentage growth, leading industry Real Estate & Rental and Leasing suggests an anticipated strong economy for the state. And Georgia is projected to continue to be a leading business economy with Management of Companies and Enterprises the second-fastest growing in percentage terms.

The decline projected for Agriculture, Forest, Fishing and Hunting and Utilities is consistent with national trends. And while Manufacturing is projected to decline, recent new announcement activity by the Georgia Dept. of Economic Development suggests the sector is shifting in focus more so than risking any serious further decline.

**Figure 6. Long Term Industry
Employment and Projections, 2018 to 2028**

Industry	2018 Est. Employment	2028 Projected Employment	Projected Change	Projected Annual % Change
Total Employment, All Industries	6,747,135	4,988,667	548,232	0.8%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	88,956	105,821	16,865	1.8%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil & Gas Extraction	5,199	4,218	(981)	-2.1%
Utilities	18,986	19,481	495	0.3%
Construction	188,848	202,521	13,673	0.7%
Manufacturing	405,630	427,160	21,530	0.5%
Wholesale Trade	193,097	212,011	18,914	0.9%
Retail Trade	490,659	535,836	45,177	0.9%
Transportation & Warehousing	209,012	240,467	31,455	1.4%
Information	107,910	127,434	19,524	1.7%
Finance & Insurance	162,849	177,742	14,893	0.9%
Real Estate and Rental & Leasing	67,568	74,488	6,920	1.0%

Industry	2018 Est. Employment	2028 Projected Employment	Projected Change	Projected Annual % Change
Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	2,562,999	303,292	46,993	1.7%
Management of Companies & Enterprises	72,028	82,591	10,563	1.4%
Admin & Support and Waste Mngmnt & Remediation Svs	309,361	347,626	38,265	1.2%
Educational Services	386,078	453,635	67,557	1.6%
Health Care & Social Assistance	503,824	625,697	121,873	2.2%
Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation	52,980	59,688	6,708	1.2%
Accommodation & Food Services	432,058	487,207	55,149	1.2%
Other Services <i>except Public Administration</i>	175,572	182,625	7,053	0.4%
Federal Government	99,045	96,476	(2,569)	-0.3%
Public Administration	69,985	64,504	(5,481)	-0.8%
Local <i>Excluding Education & Hospitals</i>	144,491	158,147	13,656	0.9%

Source: Georgia Dept. of Labor

Over the projected 10-year growth period of 2018 to 2028, the most job creation for Georgia is anticipated in the largely population-growth-driven sectors of Health Care and Social Assistance, Educational Services and Accommodation and Food Services.

Measured by percentage growth, again Health Care and Social Assistance is projected to continue to be a leader in job creation for the state. Interestingly Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting is projected to be the second-largest growth industry by percentage, perhaps from the corresponding growth in the state’s food processing industry and newer areas of agriculture growth including indoor lettuce and other produce farming, urban farming, and state-licensed farming for CBD-related products.

The only projected industry job declines for the state are in Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction and Government jobs, neither of which’s projected decline indicates any concern regarding the health of the Georgia economy.

Consistent with industry projections, the three fastest-growing occupations in Georgia are anticipated to all be in Health Care services: Occupational Therapy Assistants, Personal Care Aides and Physical Therapists Assistants. Educators for health care are also strong growth areas with the Top 25 fastest-growing occupation list (Figure 7 below) including postsecondary Health Specialists Teachers and Nursing Instructors & Teachers. In total, including the educators, 13 of the top 25 fastest-growing occupations are in Health Care, with three additional occupations dedicated to animal health.

Outside health care, Film and Video Editors, Interpreters and Translators, and Statisticians are the projected fastest-growing occupations for Georgia.

Figure 7. Top 25 Projected Fastest-Growing Occupations, By Annual Growth Rate, 2018 to 2028

Occupation	2018 Est. Employment	2028 Projected Employment	Projected Change	Projected Annual % Change	Projected Annual Growth	Projected Annual Replacements	Projected Annual Openings
Occupational Therapy Assistants	960	1,528	568	4.8%	57	135	192
Personal Care Aides	32,476	48,139	15,663	4.0%	1,566	5618	7,184
Physical Therapist Assistants	2,239	3,263	1,024	3.8%	103	341	444
Health Specialties Teachers, Postsecondary	4,810	6,999	2,189	3.8%	219	488	707
Film & Video Editors	1,301	1,882	581	3.8%	58	155	213
Veterinary Assistants & Laboratory Animal Caretakers	1,469	2,123	654	3.8%	65	290	355

Occupation	2018 Est. Employment	2028 Projected Employment	Projected Change	Projected Annual % Change	Projected Annual Growth	Projected Annual Replacements	Projected Annual Openings
Physician Assistants	3,529	5,084	1,555	3.7%	156	245	401
Veterinary Technicians	3,012	4,331	1,319	3.7%	132	296	428
Speech-Language Pathologists	3,348	4,743	1,395	3.5%	140	216	356
Nurse Practitioners	6,260	8,848	2,588	3.5%	259	403	662
Nursing Instructors & Teachers, Postsecondary	1,095	1,542	447	3.5%	45	108	153
Interpreters & Translators	1,867	2,622	755	3.5%	76	226	302
Statisticians	935	1,302	367	3.4%	37	86	123
Veterinarians	2,319	3,206	887	3.3%	89	107	196
Physical Therapist Aides	888	1,218	330	3.2%	33	130	163
Archivists	151	207	56	3.2%	6	19	25
Media & Communication Workers, All Other	588	805	217	3.2%	22	70	92
Media & Communication Equipment Workers, All Other	721	985	264	3.2%	26	91	117
Respiratory Therapists	4,301	5,870	1,569	3.2%	157	269	426
Information Security Analysts	2,734	3,722	988	3.1%	99	229	328
Computer Numerically Controlled Machine Tool Programmers, Metal & Plastic	179	243	64	3.1%	6	22	28
Physical Therapists	5,182	7,028	1,846	3.1%	185	255	440
Home Health Aides	12,498	16,928	4,430	3.1%	443	1649	2,092
Gas Plant Operators	249	336	87	3.0%	8	33	41
Medical Assistants	24,733	33,266	8,533	3.0%	853	3194	4,047

Source: Georgia Dept. of Labor

Figure 8 below better represents what may be Georgia’s most in-demand training opportunities as the table lists occupations by those with the most projected annual openings (vs. Figure 7 that included many small in total number occupations for the state).

The most projected annual openings for the state are in the Leisure and Hospitality occupations with typically lower than standard living wages, that is, combined food preparation and serving workers, cashiers, and retail salespersons.

From other sectors, the most openings for the state are anticipated to be hand laborers and freight, stock and material movers; customer service representatives; and stock clerks and order fillers.

Figure 8. Top 25 Projected Most Annual Openings Occupations, 2018 to 2028

Occupation	2018 Est. Base Employment	2028 Projected Employment	Projected Change	Projected Annual % Change	Projected Annual Growth	Projected Annual Replacements	Projected Annual Openings
Combined Food Preparation & Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	135,136	163,169	28,033	1.9%	2,804	26,559	29,363
Cashiers	120,472	128,773	8,301	0.7%	830	23,508	24,338
Retail Salespersons	144,121	157,034	12,913	0.9%	1,292	21,995	23,287
Laborers & Freight, Stock, & Material Movers, Hand	118,626	135,010	16,384	1.3%	1,639	17,614	19,253
Waiters & Waitresses	81,638	88,933	7,295	0.9%	729	16,370	17,099
Customer Service Representatives	106,190	111,634	5,444	0.5%	545	14,515	15,060
Stock Clerks & Order Fillers	60,198	68,973	8,775	1.4%	878	8,597	9,475
Office Clerks, General	76,000	77,400	1,400	0.2%	139	9,181	9,320
Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	64,962	75,049	10,087	1.5%	1,009	7,959	8,968
General & Operations Managers	84,823	95,953	11,130	1.2%	1,114	7,850	8,964
Janitors & Cleaners <i>Except Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners</i>	55,372	63,429	8,057	1.4%	805	7,822	8,627

Occupation	2018 Est. Base Employment	2028 Projected Employment	Projected Change	Projected Annual % Change	Projected Annual Growth	Projected Annual Replacements	Projected Annual Openings
Farmworkers & Laborers, Crop, Nursery, & Greenhouse	39,356	46,865	7,509	1.8%	751	7,038	7,789
Secretaries & Administrative Assistants <i>Except Legal, Medical, & Executive</i>	68,707	66,228	-2,479	-0.4%	(248)	7,552	7,304
Food Preparation Workers	36,336	41,617	5,281	1.4%	528	6,741	7,269
Personal Care Aides	32,476	48,139	15,663	4.0%	1,566	5,618	7,184
Cooks, Restaurant	37,538	46,993	9,455	2.3%	946	5,979	6,925
Assemblers & Fabricators, all other, including team assemblers	56,803	57,224	421	0.1%	42	6,641	6,683
Registered Nurses	77,462	94,877	17,415	2.1%	1,741	4,601	6,342
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation & Serving Workers	33,873	38,811	4,938	1.4%	494	5,547	6,041
Sales Representatives, Wholesale & Manufacturing, <i>Except Technical & Scientific Products</i>	46,951	52,310	5,359	1.1%	537	5,206	5,743
First-Line Supervisors of Office & Administrative Support Workers	49,020	52,585	3,565	0.7%	356	5,322	5,678
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	46,599	49,476	2,877	0.6%	288	5,281	5,569
Construction Laborers	43,672	47,145	3,473	0.8%	348	5,051	5,399
Sales Representatives, Services, All Other	35,758	40,231	4,473	1.2%	448	4,811	5,259
Industrial Truck & Tractor Operators	39,350	44,618	5,268	1.3%	527	4,723	5,250

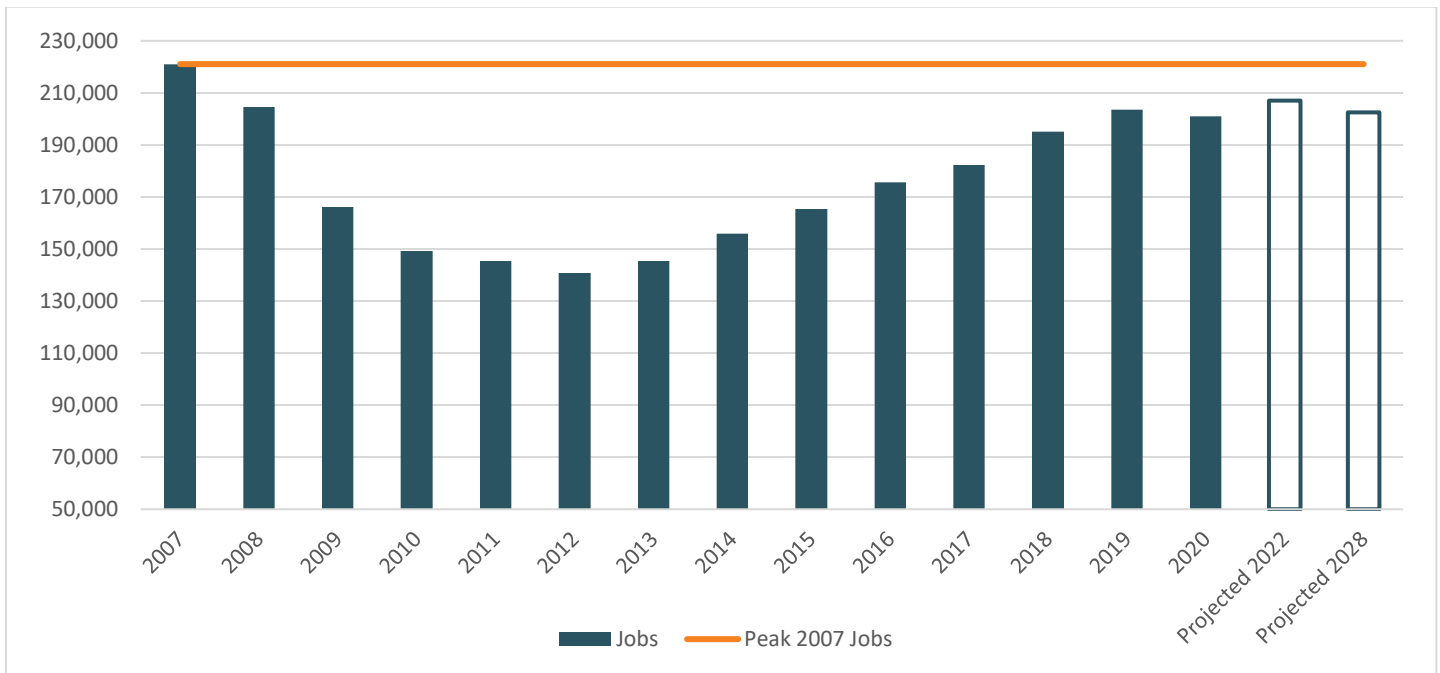
Source: Georgia Dept. of Labor

The original 2020 State of Georgia Four-Year WIOA Unified State Plan profiled the **Construction** industry, as that was the short-term projected fastest-growing industry for Georgia at the time. Within the past two most recently reported years by GDOL (2018 to 2020), the industry grew by net 3.0% despite a presumably pandemic-induced decline from 2019 to 2020.

Georgia’s construction industry suffered significant job losses during the Great Recession – over 80,000 from its peak in 2007 to its low in 2012 -- but has experienced a partial recovery. As of 2020, the industry has recovered more than 60,000 jobs.

Occupations within skilled construction trades may have a high demand for skilled labor without appearing in the fastest growing occupations projections. Georgia will need to replace an estimated 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.

Figure 9. Georgia Construction Industry Employment, 2007–2020 and Projections for 2022 and 2028



Source: Georgia Dept. of Labor

The projected growth and increasing demands on the state’s **Transportation and Warehousing** sector will result in lots of job creation, including in more emerging areas of the economy. GDOL projects that the Couriers and Messengers sub-sector will have the fastest growth in the state (at the 3-digit industry

classification level for 2020 to 2022). The sector's staffing needs resemble the whole Transportation and Warehousing industry: hand laborers and freight, stock and material movers; light-truck drivers; heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers; first-line supervisors of transportation and material moving workers; and shipping, receiving and inventory clerks.

With **Manufacturing** representing a large portion of the state's GDP (\$56.1 billion or 10.2% of the private sector),⁹ addressing hiring needs within this sector will also help sustain and strengthen the Georgia economy. Manufacturing hiring may become a particularly acute challenge – and opportunity – for areas with a large number of manufacturing job announcements. Most prominently, the opportunity in the Social Circle area (western Northeast Georgia, northern Middle Georgia, eastern Three Rivers and eastern Atlanta Regional) where Rivian will be hiring an estimated 7,500 persons once its electric adventure vehicle facility nears completion and ready to commence the manufacturing process.

The state is well positioned in Aerospace Product and Parts Manufacturing, which is the only manufacturing sector in BLS' top 20 U.S. industries with fastest projected output growth for 2020 to 2030. Georgia is home to Gulfstream Aerospace Corp. and has manufacturing facilities of Gulfstream Aerospace, Lockheed Martin and numerous aircraft parts manufacturers.

Deloitte's 2022 Manufacturing Industry Outlook found, like the Construction industry,¹⁰ Manufacturing in the U.S. has a skilled worker shortage because of retirements and other exits from the production floor. Hiring and Human Resource professionals within manufacturing reported via the Deloitte study that attracting new workers is a top priority (38% of executives surveyed). To meet hiring demands, Deloitte found that manufacturers are increasingly interested in more aggressive outreach to disadvantaged groups and easier in-person and online application processes.

In addition to aerospace and aircraft-related manufacturing, Georgia also anticipates Motor Vehicles, Parts and Supplies Manufacturing to continue to be a strong job-generator; that is, as long as the existing workforce and training for more advanced skills can keep up with prospective and existing manufacturing hiring demands. The December 16, 2021 announcement of Rivian's plans amplify this anticipated future for the manufacturing workforce in Georgia, not just for its plans to hire 7,500 but also its supply part manufacturers that may choose to locate nearby the facility. Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators represent a large portion of the motor vehicle and aerospace manufacturing workforce, as will specialists from welders to industrial engineers. As computers and electronics are increasingly integral to these vehicles and aircraft, software developers and electrical, electronic and electromechanical assemblers will be among the most in-demand and at-times hard-to-fill positions in areas of the state best suited for these facilities to locate for their acreage, logistics and workforce needs.

Countless factors point to **Computer Systems Design** and **Software Development** being key growth sectors for the State of Georgia. From being a key driver behind the projected Professional Services sector growth to software developers having the third most number of recent job postings, the tech industry is strong for Georgia. Many of the nation's leading technology companies have a large office in Midtown Atlanta; cybersecurity firms are clustering around Augusta's U.S. Army Cyber Command; and there are numerous additional software development and Internet of Things (IOT) products from

⁹ Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2020 Georgia Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in current dollars.

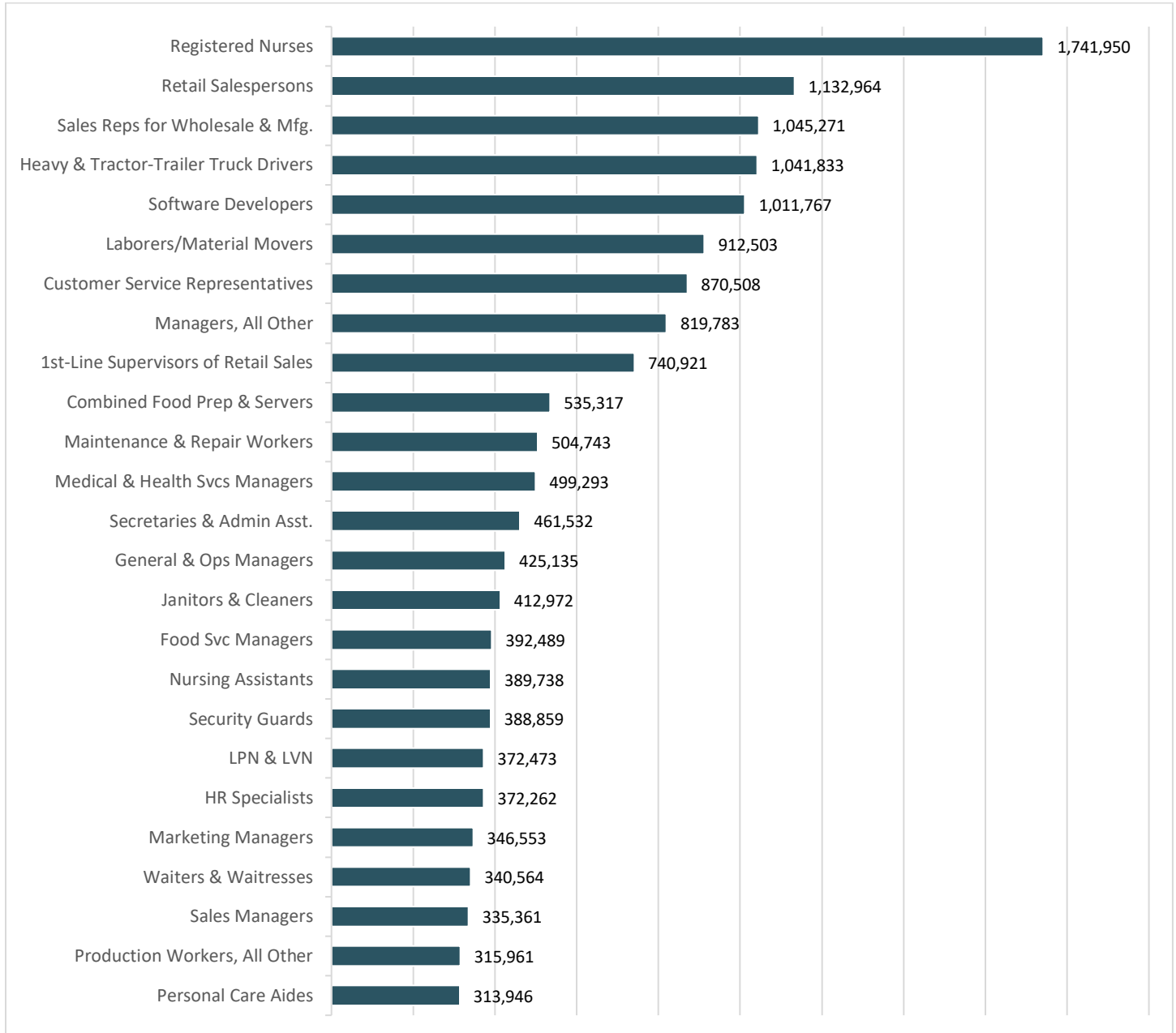
¹⁰ Source: 2022 Manufacturing Industry Outlook, Deloitte. <https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/pages/energy-and-resources/articles/manufacturing-industry-outlook.html>. Accessed 11/29/2021.

aircraft to consumer goods including the dashboard of Rivian's vehicles. All these opportunities coalesce together to make technology a key industry for Georgia.

(iii) Employers' Employment Needs

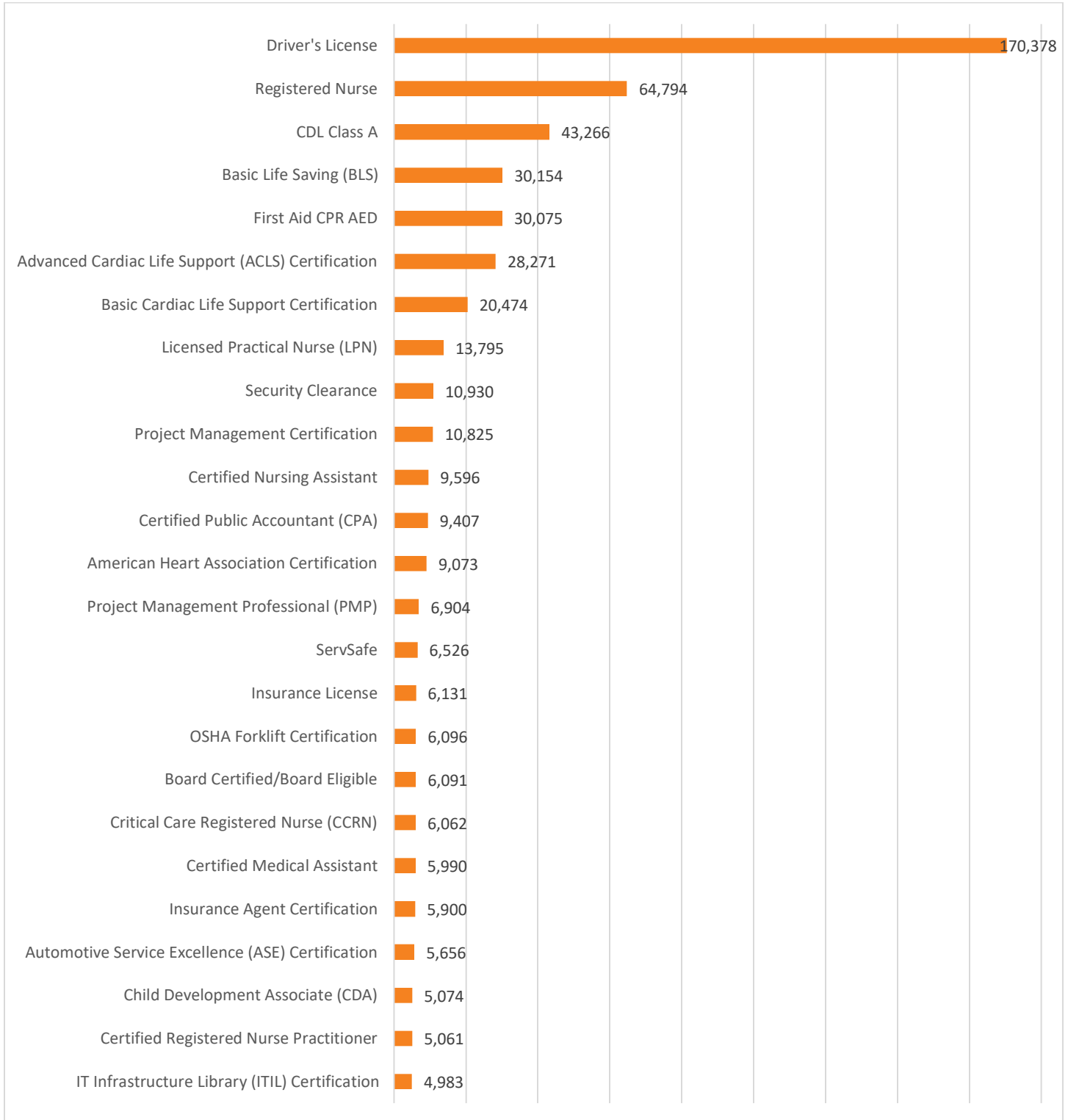
Burning Glass Labor Insights (BGLI) data provides a real-time view of existing employer needs. The following figures show the demand, top certifications, and skills of these employer needs over the past 12 months. Much of the information affirms what is highlighted elsewhere; for example, top postings being led by Registered Nurses and Retail Salespeople.

Figure 10. Postings by Top 25 Job Titles



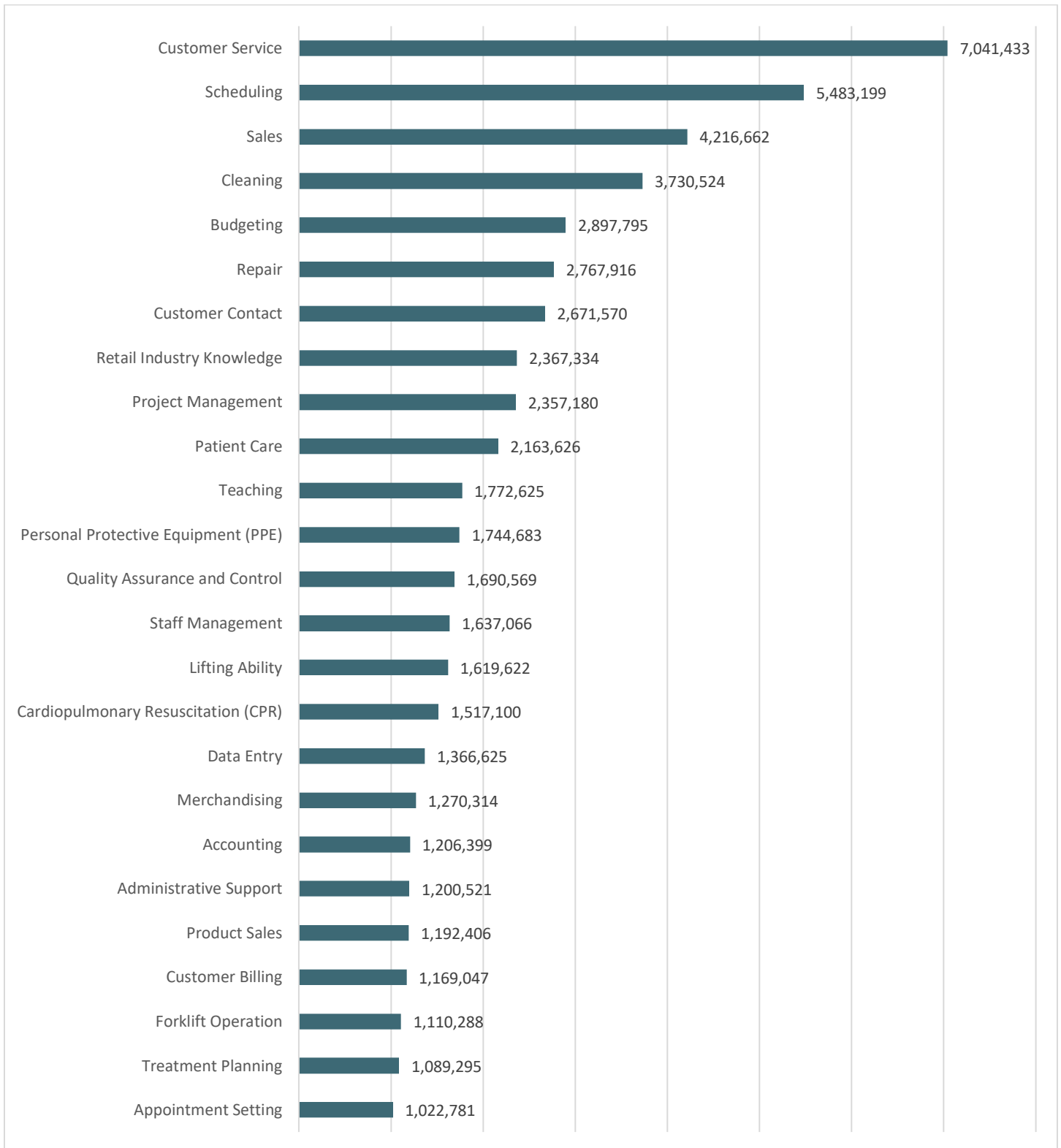
Source: BGLI, November 1, 2020 to October 31, 2021

Figure 11. Postings by Certifications in Greatest Demand



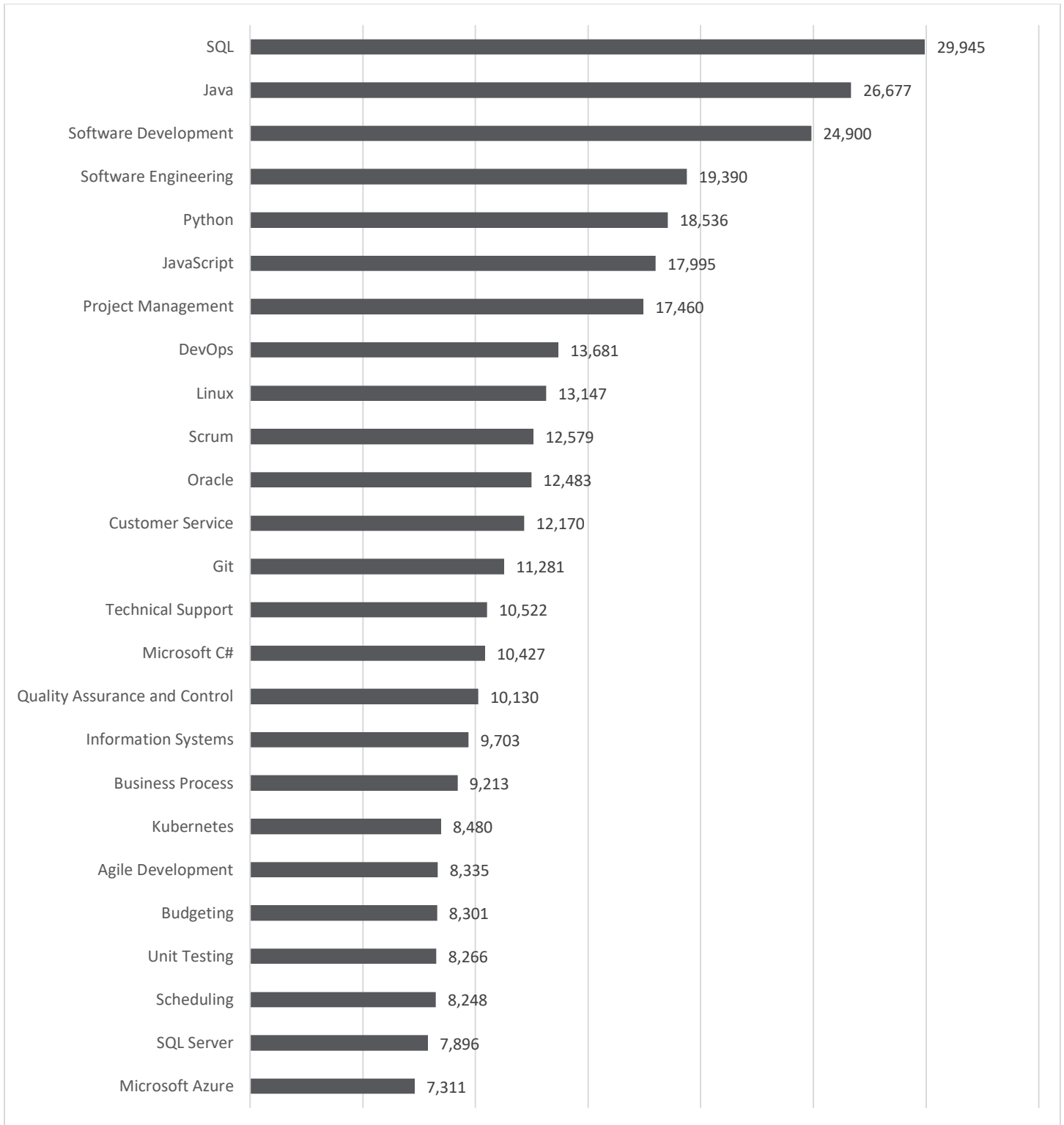
Source: BGLI, November 1, 2020 to October 31, 2021

Figure 12. Postings by Skills in Greatest Demand



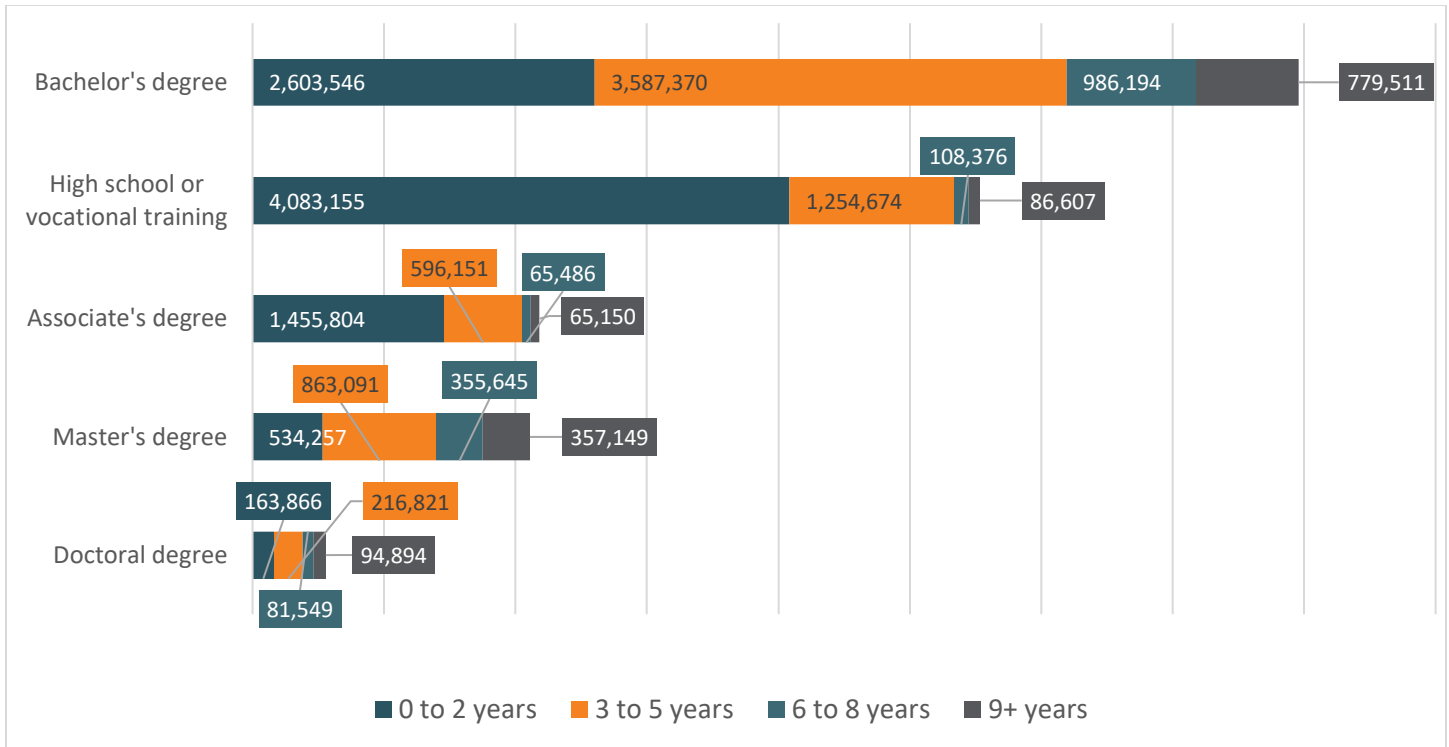
Source: BGLI, November 1, 2020 to October 31, 2021

Figure 13. Information Technology Postings by Skills in Greatest Demand



Source: BGLI, November 1, 2020 to October 31, 2021

Figure 14. Postings by Levels of Education and Years of Experience Sought



Source: BGLI, November 1, 2020 to October 31, 2021

Figure 15 below represents the most sought specialized skills by industry. Scheduling and customer service appeared in all 20 industries' lists of most frequently sought skills. Also frequently recurring skills were sales (15 industries), budgeting (13) and repair (13). These are in bold orange font where they appear in the figure.

Figure 15. Postings by Specialized Skill by Industry

Industry / Skill Sought	Postings	Industry / Skill Sought	Postings
Health Care and Social Assistance	245,984	Retail Trade	135,956
Patient Care	62,947	Customer Service	48,945
Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)	30,014	Retail Industry Knowledge	46,781
Scheduling	28,904	Sales	42,695
Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS)	28,324	Scheduling	26,862
Treatment Planning	27,773	Merchandising	24,959
Customer Service	20,288	Store Management	18,296

Industry / Skill Sought	Postings	Industry / Skill Sought	Postings
Life Support	18,984	Customer Contact	18,235
Teaching	16,335	Cleaning	15,189
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	16,182	Sales Goals	12,623
Patient/Family Education & Instruction	16,101	Lifting Ability	11,311
Accommodation and Food Services	107,714	Manufacturing	90,424
Cleaning	22,848	Repair	12,355
Customer Service	17,964	Scheduling	12,049
Scheduling	14,504	Forklift Operation	11,180
Cooking	11,986	Customer Service	9,499
Guest Services	11,556	Sales	8,720
Restaurant Experience	10,409	Project Management	8,525
Food Safety	8,896	Budgeting	8,360
Food Preparation	8,809	Packaging	6,801
Restaurant Management	7,876	SAP	6,706
Budgeting	6,264	Quality Assurance & Control	6,444
Professional, Scientific, & Tech Svcs	87,579	Finance and Insurance	86,542
Customer Service	16,596	Customer Service	19,128
Project Management	13,420	Sales	17,489
Customer Contact	10,582	Customer Contact	10,342
Budgeting	9,731	Project Management	8,408
Scheduling	9,103	Scheduling	7,696
Sales	7,630	Insurance Sales	7,549
SQL	6,705	Budgeting	7,498
Business Development	6,180	SQL	5,739
Retail Industry Knowledge	6,165	Product Sales	5,502
Software Development	5,754	Accounting	5,363
Transportation and Warehousing	80,503	Admin & Support and Waste Management & Remediation Svcs	51,583
Customer Service	7,532	Customer Service	17,125
Logistics	6,037	Sales	14,226
Scheduling	5,646	Cleaning	6,549
Forklift Operation	5,637	Customer Contact	6,435
Commercial Driving	5,062	Scheduling	4,837
HAZMAT	4,907	Outside Sales	3,414
Repair	4,487	Repair	3,408

Industry / Skill Sought	Postings	Industry / Skill Sought	Postings
Truck Driving	3,983	Prospective Clients	3,098
Customer Contact	3,270	Appointment Setting	2,921
Sales	2,801	Handling of Crisis/Emergency	2,849
Information	40,450	Educational Services	38,224
Customer Service	9,871	Teaching	13,139
Sales	7,300	Scheduling	5,299
Customer Contact	5,731	Customer Service	4,572
Project Management	5,290	Budgeting	4,296
Scheduling	4,105	Lesson Planning	3,209
Budgeting	3,624	Patient Care	2,809
SQL	3,317	Staff Management	2,796
Software Development	3,080	Project Management	2,237
Retail Industry Knowledge	2,970	Child Care	2,054
Product Sales	2,834	Cleaning	2,009
Public Administration	33,052	Real Estate and Rental & Leasing	27,759
Scheduling	5,486	Customer Service	6,929
Public Health and Safety	4,292	Property Management	5,315
Budgeting	3,829	Repair	5,172
Customer Service	3,542	Sales	4,800
Repair	3,152	Budgeting	4,070
Staff Management	2,450	Scheduling	3,500
Teaching	2,248	Real Estate Experience	3,143
Project Management	2,130	HVAC	2,430
Machinery	2,091	Cleaning	2,366
Handling of Crisis/Emergency	1,914	Plumbing	2,323
Other Services	22,966	Construction	20,277
Repair	5,625	Repair	4,756
Customer Service	4,825	Scheduling	3,851
Scheduling	3,620	Plumbing	3,302
Auto Repair	3,167	Project Management	3,129
Cleaning	2,999	Budgeting	2,763
Client Base Retention	2,126	Customer Service	2,355
Hair Styling	2,126	Construction Management	1,977
Sales	1,846	Hand Tools	1,976
Customer Contact	1,519	Carpentry	1,915
Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)	1,516	HVAC	1,890

Industry / Skill Sought	Postings	Industry / Skill Sought	Postings
Wholesale Trade	11,382	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	7,126
Customer Service	2,098	Customer Service	1,809
Sales	1,978	Cleaning	1,426
Merchandising	1,596	Scheduling	976
Lifting Ability	1,462	CPR	902
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	1,193	Sales	843
Forklift Operation	1,126	Customer Contact	580
Scheduling	1,094	Repair	572
Retail Industry Knowledge	1,083	Budgeting	510
Repair	1,032	Fitness	442
Project Management	1,003	Staff Management	426
Utilities	3,392	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil & Gas Extraction	2,273
Repair	674	Customer Service	870
Scheduling	629	Cash Register Operation	591
Budgeting	520	Cash Handling	442
Customer Service	492	Store Management	322
Project Management	488	Repair	246
Sales	390	Store Operations	242
Customer Contact	277	Scheduling	235
Hand Tools	271	Customer Contact	205
Quality Assurance and Control	246	Sales	199
Machinery	244	Equipment Maintenance	183
Management of Companies and Enterprises	1,877	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	1,648
Customer Service	416	Repair	219
Repair	350	Sales	212
Scheduling	342	Customer Service	198
Budgeting	270	Budgeting	189
Project Management	227	Scheduling	180
Accounting	212	Cleaning	154
Sales	189	Personal Protective Equipment	142
Customer Contact	170	Irrigation Systems	106
Staff Management	166	Lifting Ability	106
Administrative Support	131	Customer Contact	93

Source: BGLI, November 1, 2020 to October 31, 2021

(B) (B) Workforce Analysis

(i) Employment and Unemployment

Georgia's 2.8% seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for November 2021 is the lowest the state's rate has been since before January 1976 (the earliest month published on BLS' data tool). The low unemployment rate is due at least in part to the state's similarly historically low Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR). Georgia hit its LFPR low of 56.4% a year prior in September 2020. Clearly, the COVID-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented impact within much of the current workforce's lifetime, the duration of which is yet unknown. The November 2021 LFPR was still a low 61.5%. Since 1976, the only lower pre-pandemic LFPR for the state was during a 15-month period of the mid-2010s.¹¹

To get an idea of what portions of Georgia's workforce may disproportionately have dropped out of the non-participating labor force ages 16 years and over, U.S. BLS reports some demographic information based on age, sex, race, ethnicity and marital status for the United States. Nationally, the demographic groups that had the largest drop in the estimated LFPR from November 2019 to November 2021 were married persons (drop by 2.2% to 64.0%), persons 55 years old and over (by 2.0% to 38.4%); and White persons (by 1.6% to 61.6%). The only demographic groups to increase the LFPR during that two-year period were Asian persons (increase by 0.6% to 65.1%) and persons ages 16 to 24 (by 0.4% to 56.3%). (See figures 23 through 26 for more information on these national trends)

Labor Force Demographics

The eighth largest state in the U.S. with 10.6 million people, Georgia continues to be one of the fastest growing. From 2010 to 2019, the U.S. Census estimates Georgia grew by 9.3% (13th among the 50 states), adding 905,542 residents (5th).

While the fastest growing counties of the state range from those in the Georgia Mountains (Forsyth 38.2% from 2010 to 2019) to Coastal Georgia (Long 34.2% and Bryan 30.5%), the counties that have added the most net residents are predominately in the Atlanta Region. Nine of the top 10 largest growth counties are in the Atlanta Region (Fulton, Gwinnett, Cobb, DeKalb, Cherokee, Clayton and Henry) or immediately adjacent (Forsyth in the Georgia Mountains and Paulding in Northwest Georgia). The 10th county in the fastest-growing group is Columbia County (8th with 31,759 new residents), which is located in the East Central LWDA of the CSRA region. The largest counties in the state as of 2019 mirror the fastest-growth ones with the additions of sixth largest Chatham (Savannah in Coastal Georgia, with strong 8.9% growth) and Hall (Gainesville in Georgia Mountains with 13.6% growth).

The 2019 American Community Survey (ACS) five-year estimates indicate that Georgia's Poverty Rate (15.1%) is higher than the U.S. (13.4%). Both Georgia and the nation's poverty rates have consistently declined since 2013, with Georgia's declining by a larger amount (3.4%) than the U.S. (2.2%).

¹¹ Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). From January 2015 to March 2016 Georgia's seasonally adjusted LFPR ranged from 60.7% to 61.4%. From the pandemic period starting April 2020 through October 2021, the rate has ranged from 59.4% in Sep 2020 to 61.7% in October 2020. The highest rates since January 1976 were during the tech-fueled economic boom of the February 1998 to May 2020 period when rates ranged from 69.0% to 69.3%.

Figure 16 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 16. Populations with Barriers to Employment

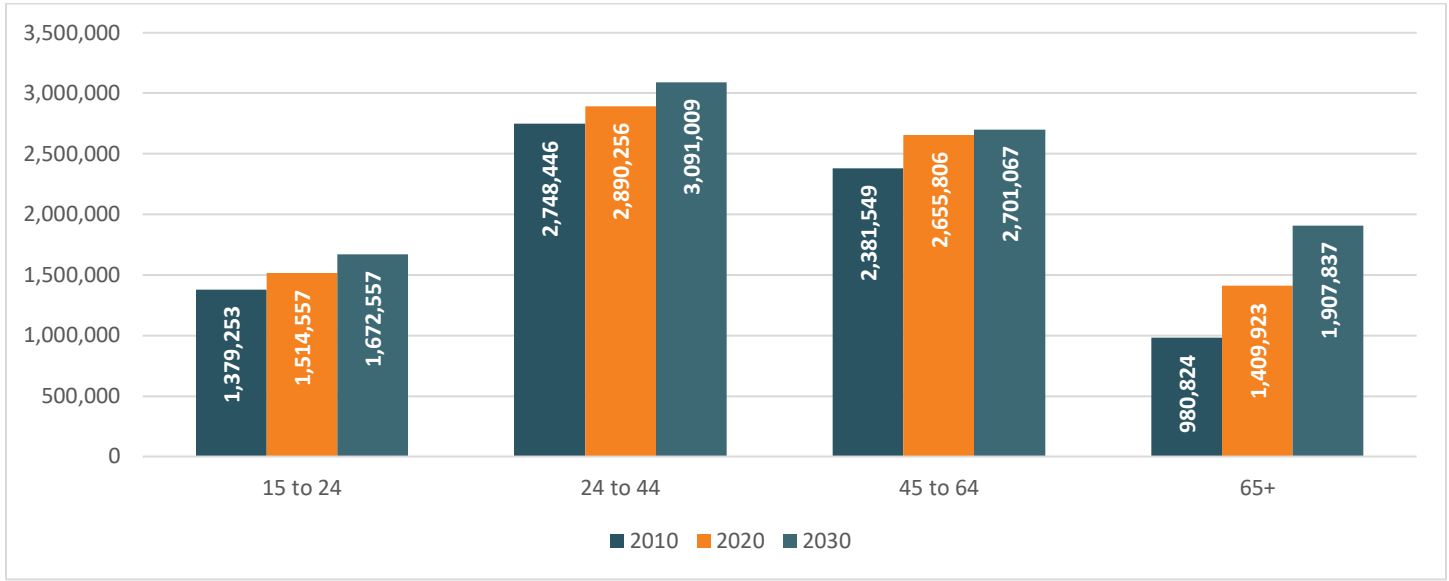
Population	Georgia Number	Date and Source of Estimate
Total Population	10,617,423	2019 U.S. Census Population Estimates
Veterans	629,302	2019 ACS 5-Year Estimate*
American Indians and Alaska Natives	53,087	2019 ACS 5-Year Estimate
Native Hawaiians or Other Pacific Islander	10,617	2019 ACS 5-Year Estimate
Individuals with Disabilities	1,217,186	2019 ACS 5-Year Estimate for population age 16 and over with a disability
Older Individuals (65+)	1,518,291	2019 ACS 5-Year Estimate
Ex-Offenders	15,413	FY2021 Georgia Dept. of Corrections inmates release data
Homeless	10,234	2020 U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness estimate for people experiencing homelessness
Youth Aged out of Foster Care	18,103	2019-2021 Georgia Dept. of Human Services data for sum of number of 17 year olds in foster care in 2019, 2020 and 2021
English Language Learners	541,568	2019 ACS 5-Year Estimate for population who speak English less than "very well"
Low Levels of Literacy	2,407,586	2017 National Center for Education Statistics estimate for at or below level 1 literacy
Single Parents	307,046	2019 ACS 5-Year Estimate for sum of male and female householders with children in the home without a spouse or partner present
Persons below Poverty Level	1,412,117	2019 ACS 5-Year Estimate
Disconnected Youth	48,000	2019 National Kids Count estimate for teens 16 to 19 not in school or working
SNAP Recipients	3,758,798	2019 ACS 5-Year estimate of households

*ACS is abbreviation for the U.S. Census' American Community Survey

As illustrated in Figures 17A and 17B below, each cohort of Georgia's working age population grew from 2010 to 2020. Projections are each will grow again from 2020 to 2030. These comprehensive growth trends are occurring while the available workforce is aging, which is consistent with national trends.

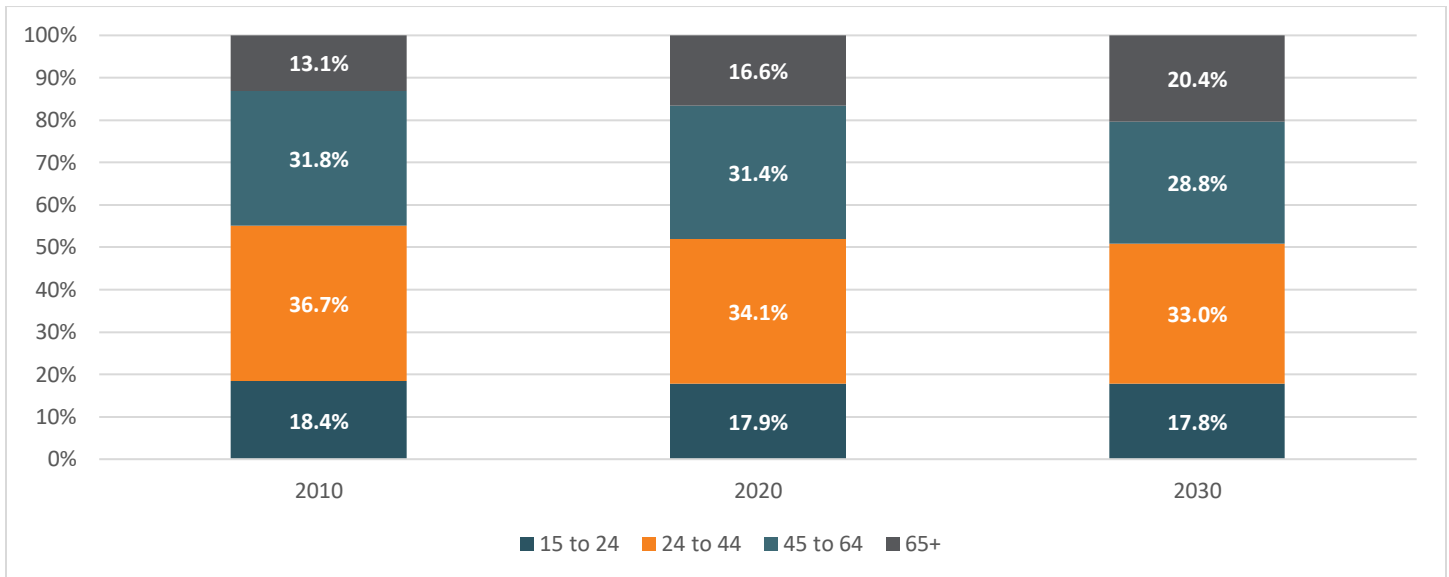
As a percentage of the total, the cohorts of 15 to 24, 24 to 44 and 45 to 64 each represented their respective highest percentage of the total in 2010 (of the time periods illustrated in Figures 17A and 17B), while the 65+ group is projected to grow to its highest share of 20.4% by 2030.

Figure 17A: Georgia Population by Age, Totals



Source: Centers for Disease Control & Prevention

Figure 17B: Georgia Population by Age, Percentage of Total



Source: Centers for Disease Control & Prevention

In 2000, the median age was 33.4. Today, the most recent median age estimate for Georgia is 36.7.¹² This upward trend is due to a proportional increase in the number of older individuals. 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 health care professionals, particularly for the elderly and aging

¹² Source: 2000 Decennial Census and 2019 ACS 5-year estimates.

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 filling openings from growth. And national estimates indicate many have already left the workforce in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, yet some may still return to the participating labor force (see Figure 23).

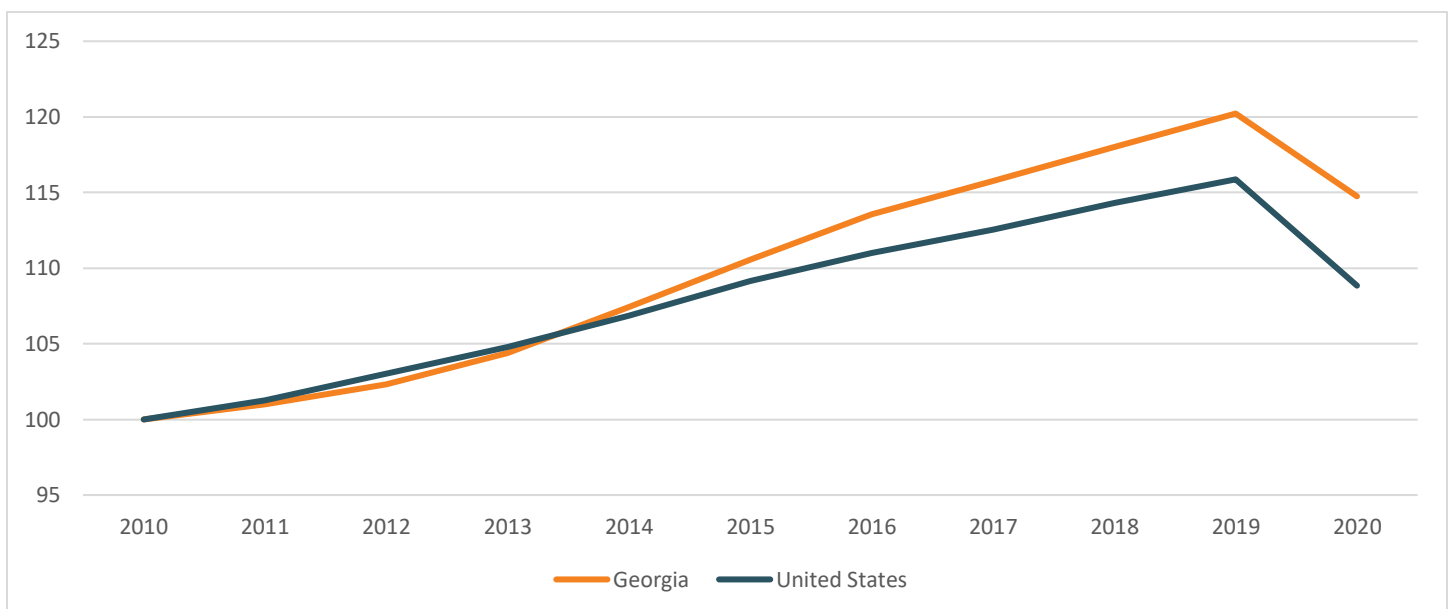
Georgia’s population has limited language barriers, with only about 2.6% of households without a member over the age of 14 who speaks English. The overall state population is predominantly Caucasian (58.6% of total population). The largest minority group is Black/African American (31.6% of the population). Asian and other minority groups make up about 9.8% of Georgia’s population. Of the total population, 9.5% are Hispanic (the racial demographics of non-Hispanics are 52.7% Caucasian, 31.2% African American and 6.5% Asian and other minority groups).

One of Georgia’s most valuable labor resources is the military veteran population. Georgia has one of the largest active duty populations with around 70,000 personnel stationed in various corners of the state. As many military remain in the community in which they are based when honorable discharged, the state also has a large veteran population of 616,527. Many of these military veterans possess core competencies, which correlate directly to civilian occupations in Georgia’s high demand industries. The attractiveness of veteran talent to employers is evident from the relatively low for 2019 unemployment rate of 4.9% for Georgia’s veterans.

Georgia’s Economic Base

As the below Figure 18 job growth index illustrates, since 2015 Georgia’s job growth outpaced the nation’s up until the 2020 pandemic job losses.

Figure 18. Change Index for Total Non-Farm Employment, 2010 to 2020

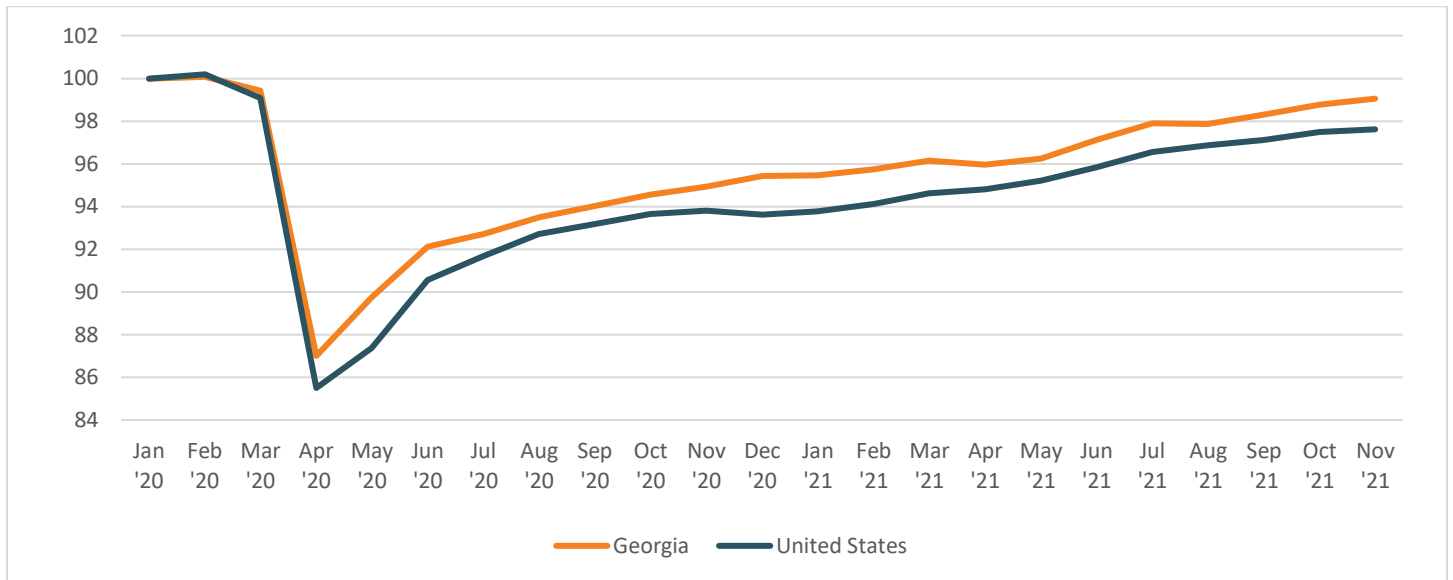


Source: BLS, Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages

Seasonally-adjusted monthly employment offers a view of how the Georgia economy has fared to date in the COVID-19 pandemic. And as Figure 19 shows, after the very steep March to April 2020 job decline, BLS data demonstrates that Georgia has continued its post-2015 trend of outpacing national job growth.

Figure 19. Change Index for Total Non-Farm Employment, January 2020 to November 2021

The November 2021 employment number is a preliminary estimate for Georgia, and the October and November 2021 estimates are both preliminary for the United States.

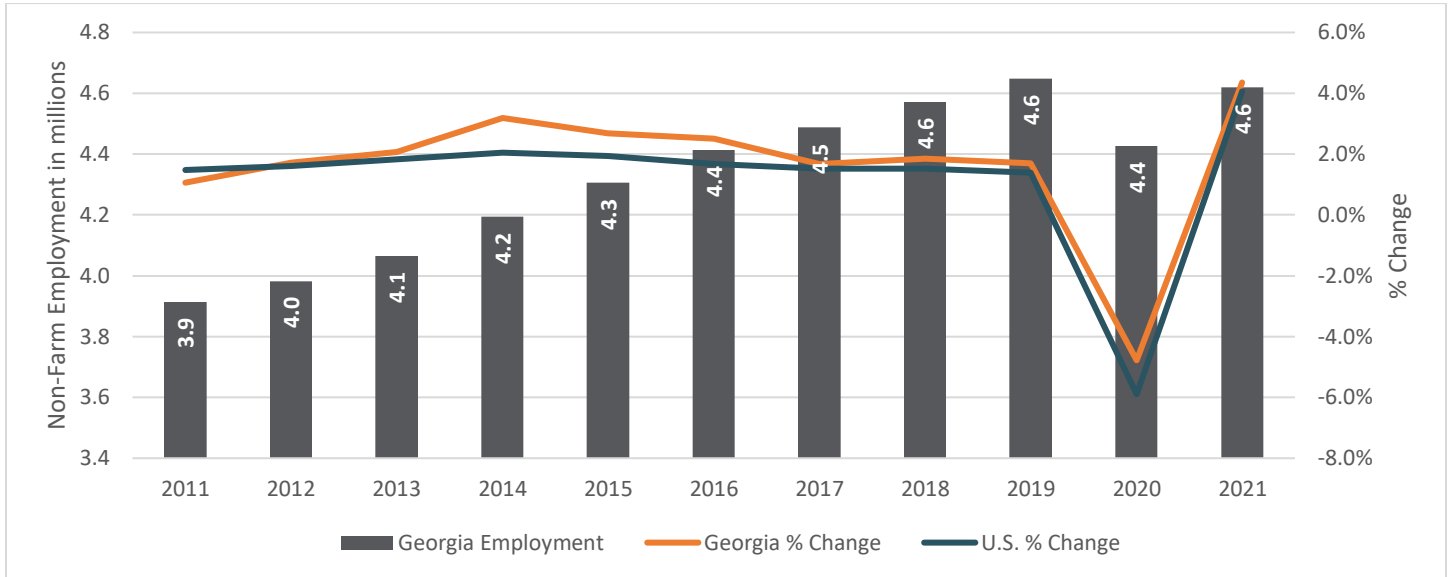


Source: BLS, Current Employment Statistics

Estimates are Georgia's employment was 4.6 million jobs as of November 2021, which is 99.4% of the November 2019 number, or just 29,500 fewer jobs. Clearly, the State has had a very strong bounce back of jobs since the huge drop off in Spring 2020.

Figure 20. Total Non-Farm Employment with Percent Change, November 2011 to November 2021

Each year represented as the seasonally adjusted number for November; the November 2021 number is a preliminary estimate.

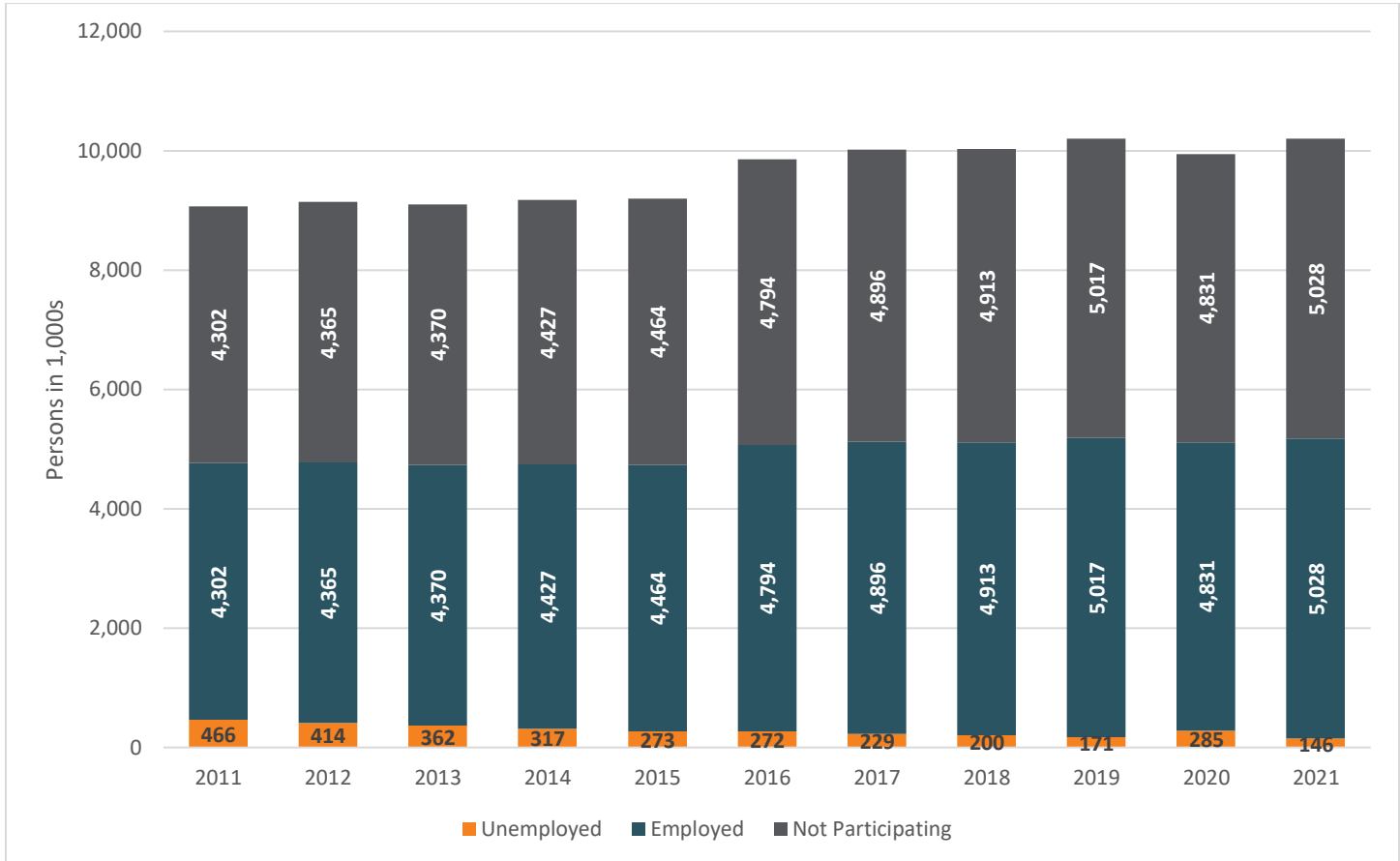


Source: BLS, Current Employment Statistics

As of November 2021, Georgia’s labor force is 5.2 million persons, with very low unemployment of 146,218 persons. While unemployment was also less than 200,000 in 2019, this November 2021 unemployment number is still quite low in the context of the last 10 years illustrated in Figure 21 below. Further, Georgia’s employed persons number – 5.0 million – is at its highest during this time period, suggesting a very strong economy in Georgia leading into the 2021 holiday season.

Figure 21. Working Age Population by Unemployed, Employed and Non-Participating, November 2011 to November 2021

Each year represented as the seasonally adjusted number for November; the November 2021 number is a preliminary estimate.

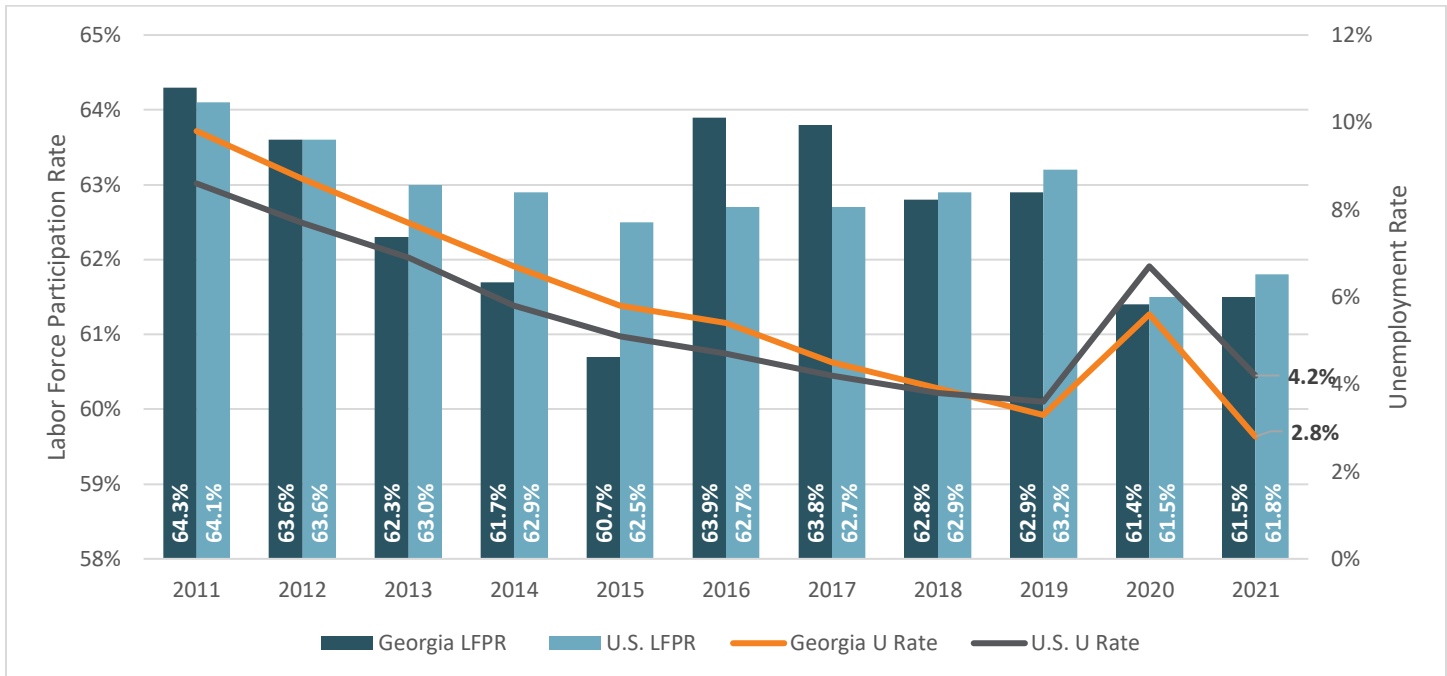


Source: BLS, Local Area unemployment Statistics and Current Population Survey

Figure 22 compares the unemployment and labor force participation rates of Georgia to the U.S. in the month of November from 2011 to 2021. The state's unemployment rates were consistently higher than the U.S. prior to 2019, but were lower in Novembers 2019 and 2020 and the preliminary estimate for November 2021 (2.8% in Georgia vs. 4.2% in U.S). With the Labor Force Participation Rates (LFPR) similar for Novembers 2020 and 2021, it seems Georgia is closer to full employment of the whole working age population than the U.S. This comparison suggests a comparatively stronger economy in Georgia, and more favorable to workers seeking jobs.

Figure 22. Unemployment and Labor Force Participation Rates, November 2011 to November 2021

Each year represented as the seasonally adjusted number for November; the November 2021 number is a preliminary estimate.



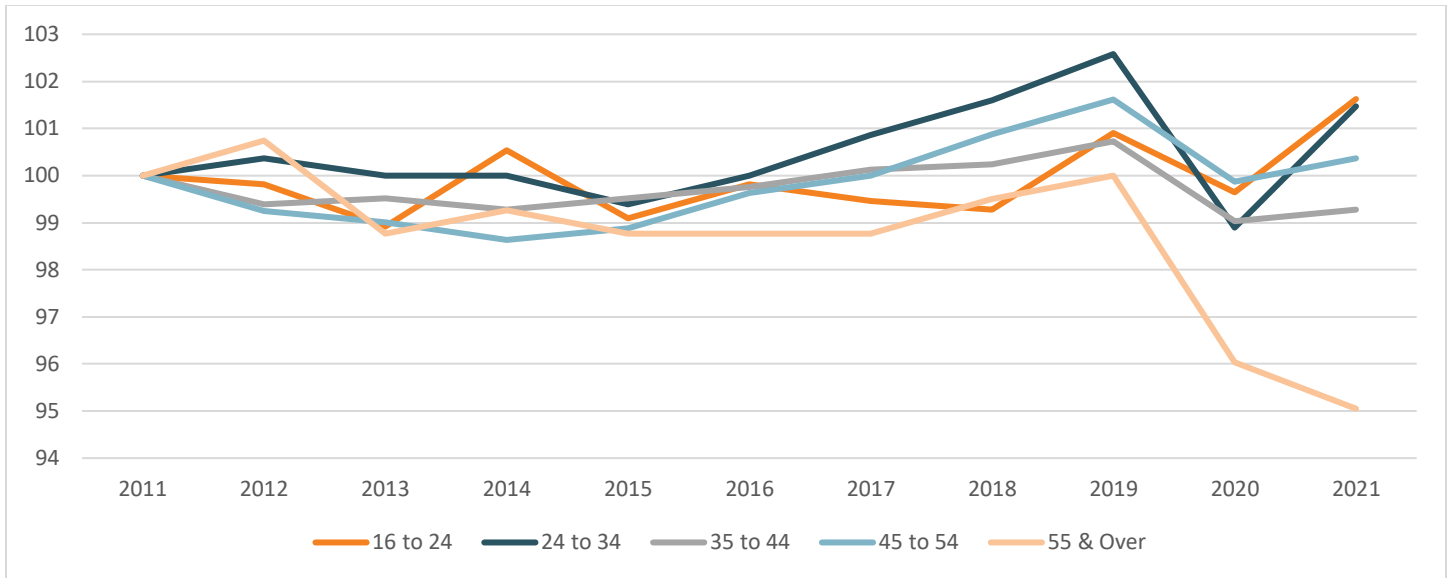
Source: BLS, Local Area unemployment Statistics and Current Population Survey

National estimates regarding the demographics of those not participating in the labor force can provide an idea of Georgia’s circumstance in the absence of reporting state-specific estimates.

From an age perspective, the portion of the labor force that has not returned after dropping out during the pandemic is most notably the 55 and over population. Given this likely represents unprecedented numbers of persons choosing early retirement, this may be the most challenging portion of the workforce to encourage and support a return to the workforce.

On a more positive note for employers, the 2021 age 16 to 24 age cohort’s participation rate was the highest for the month of November during the 2011 to 2021 time period. If this age cohort continues this trend, the entire working age population’s participation rate will naturally increase in time as this group ages.

Figure 23A. Change Index for National Labor Force Participation Rate by Age, November 2011 to November 2021



Source: U.S. BLS Current Population Survey

Figure 23B. National Labor Force Participation Rate by Age; High, Low and Most Recent for November 2011 to November 2021

	16 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 & Over
November 2021	56.3%	82.6%	82.0%	80.8%	38.4%
10-Year High	2021 (56.3%)	2019 (83.5%)	2019 (83.2%)	2019 (81.8%)	2012 (40.7%)
10-Year Low	2013 (54.8%)	2020 (80.5%)	2020 (81.8%)	2014 (79.4%)	2021 (38.4%)

Source: U.S. BLS Current Population Survey

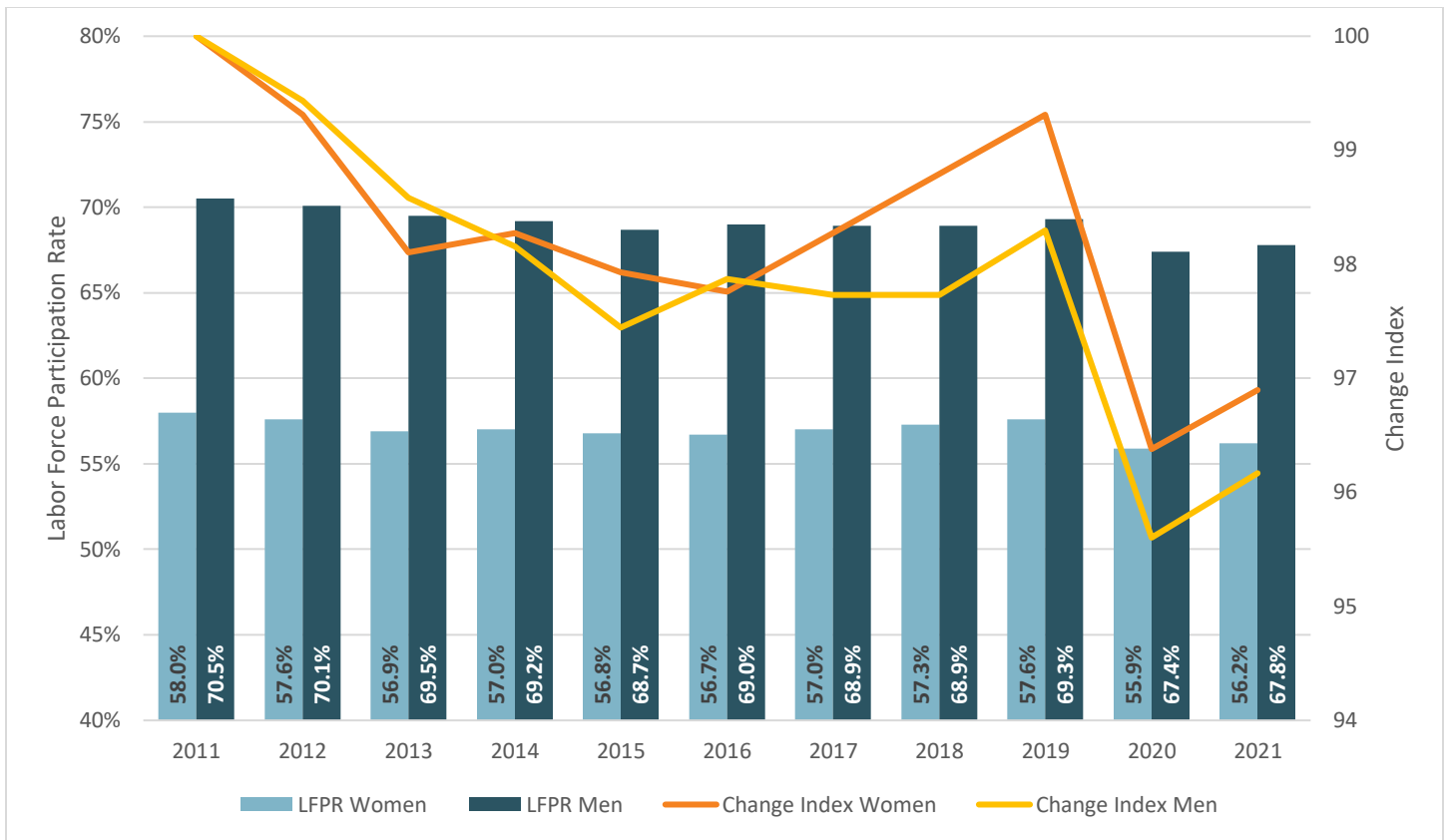
The national married labor force population's participation rate declined each year from 2011 to 2016. The increases from 2017 to 2019 reached 66.2%, which was not quite a return to the 67.5% rate from 2011. The low 2020 rate of 64.2% declined even further to 64.0% in 2021. (Non-married and separated married person estimates were not published)

**Figure 24: National LFPR for Married Persons,
Nov'11 to Nov' 21**

Year	Nov. LFPR for Married Persons
2011	67.5%
2012	67.0%
2013	66.4%
2014	65.8%
2015	65.6%
2016	65.4%
2017	65.5%
2018	65.9%
2019	66.2%
2020	64.2%
2021	64.0%

Both men and women had their 10-year high November participation rate in 2011, which they both were approaching again as of 2019 after a number of years of decline. Not surprisingly both hit a notable low participate rate for 2020, from which both have recovered by similar amounts (women's rate increased by 0.3% and men's by 0.4% from November 2020 to November 2021).

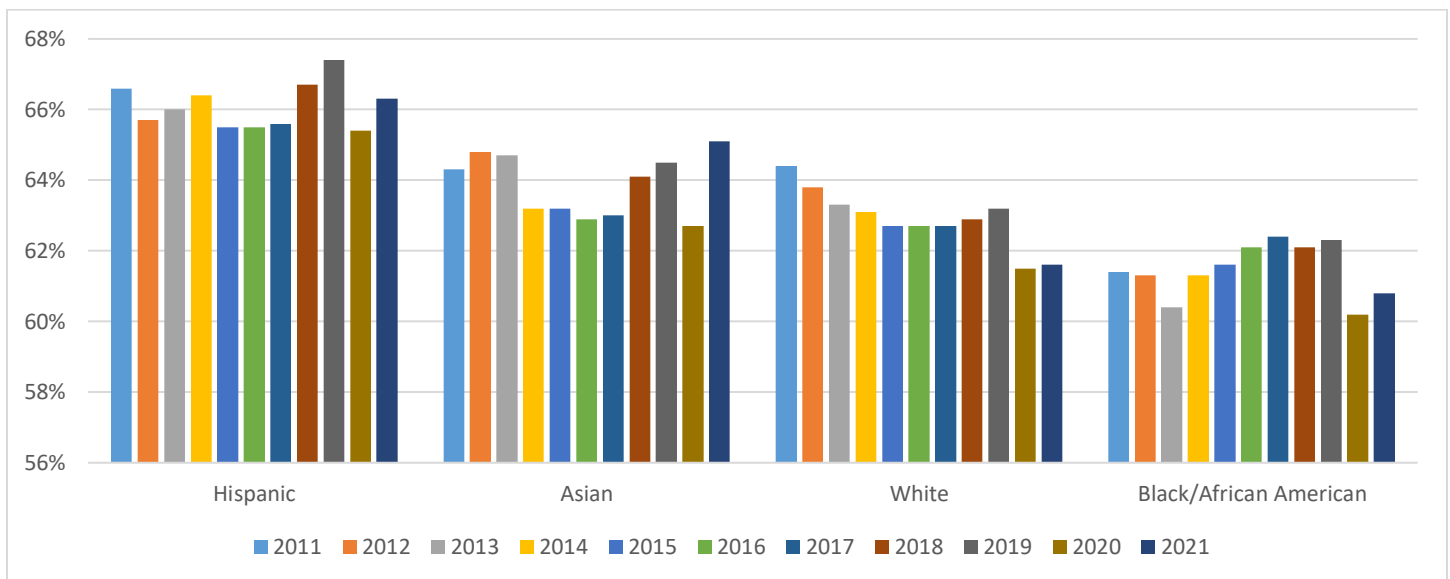
Figure 25. National Labor Force Participation Rate for Women and Men, November 2011 to November 2021



Source: U.S. BLS Current Population Survey

Reviewing national labor force participation rate data by race and ethnicity, first it is no surprise that the lowest November estimate during the 10-year period of 2011 to 2021 for each of the reported four races or ethnicities was in 2020. From November 2020 to November 2021, the largest return to the workforce as represented by a LFPR increase was in the Asian labor force (by 2.4% to 65.1%), followed by Hispanic (by 0.9% to 66.3%), Black/African American (by 0.6% to 60.8%), and White (by 0.1% to 61.6%). While the White population had its highest LFPR in 2011 (64.4%), each of the other races/ethnicities had their high more recently: Asian in 2021 (65.1%), Hispanic in 2019 (67.4%) and Black/African American in 2017 (62.4%).

Figure 26. National Labor Force Participation Rate for Reported Race and Ethnicities, November 2011 to November 2021

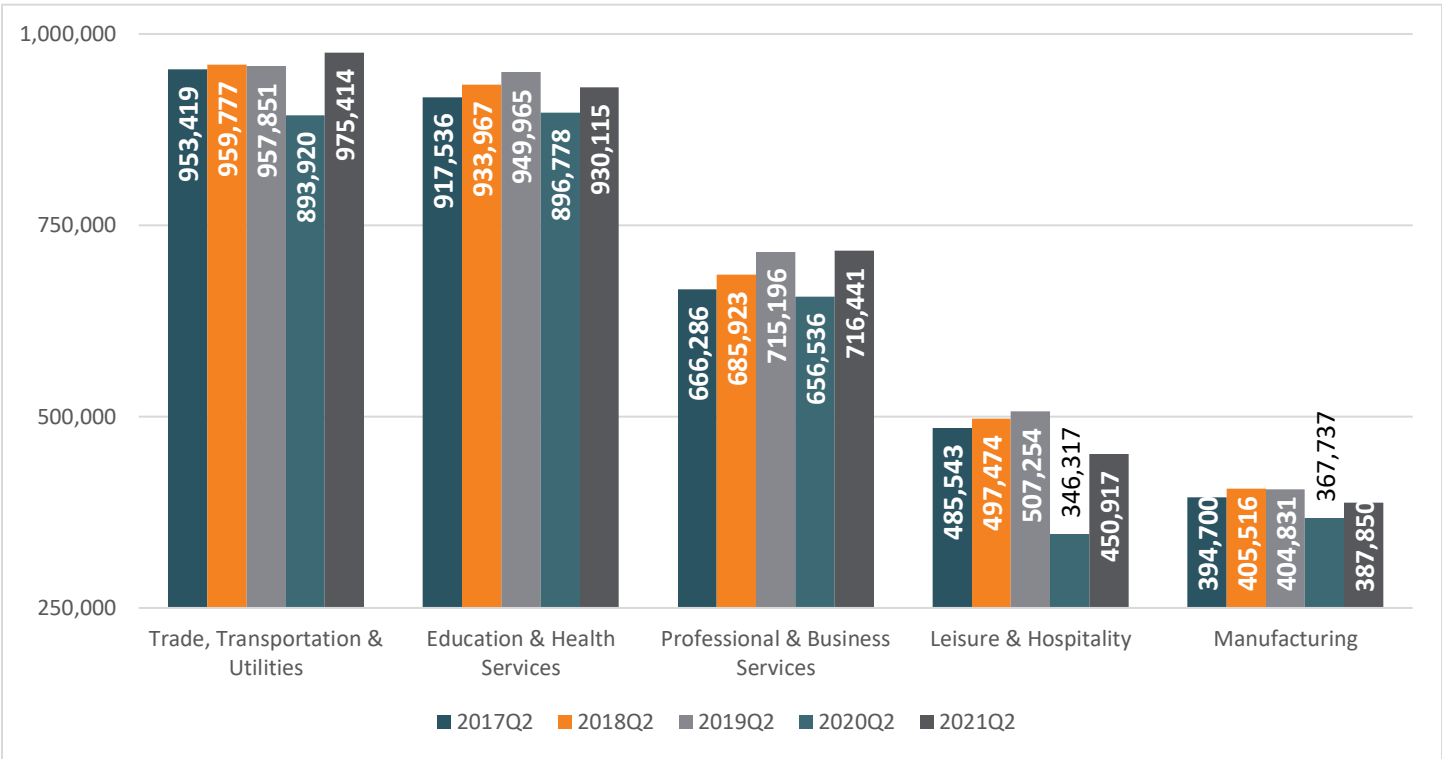


Source: U.S. BLS Current Population Survey

(ii) Labor Market Trends

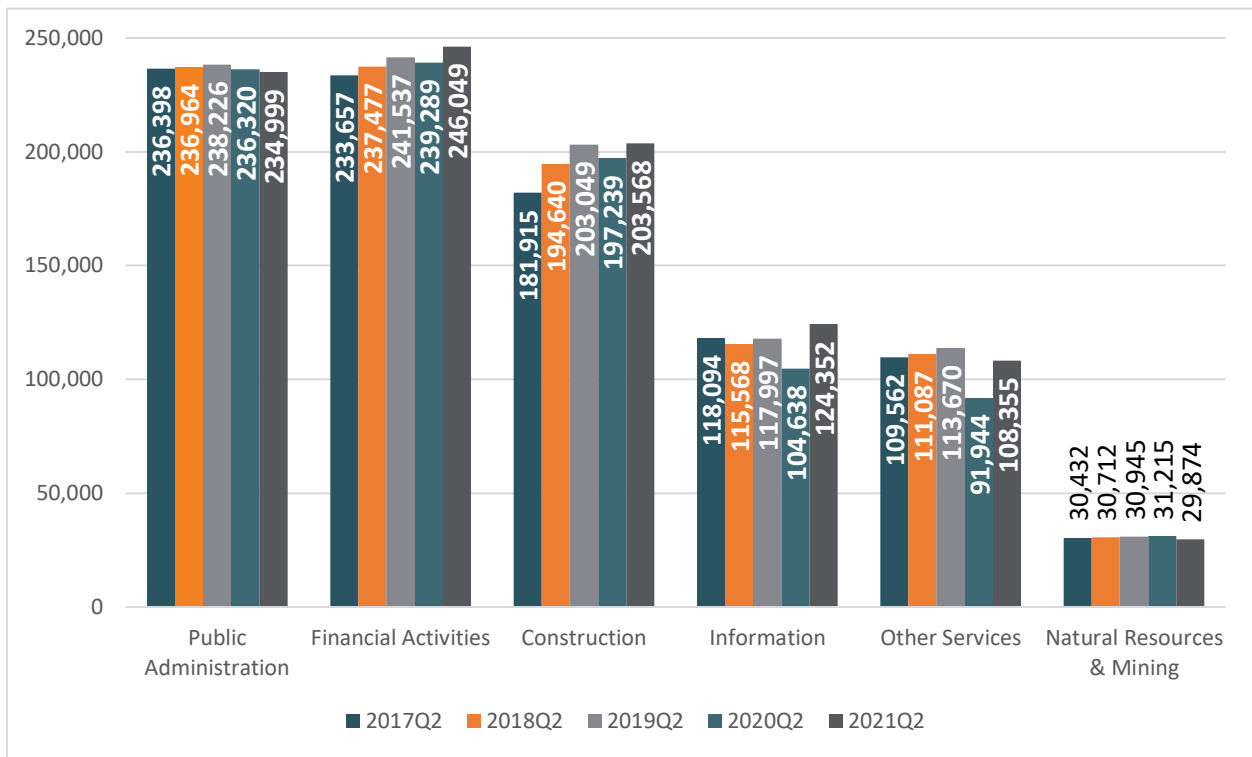
To illustrate the most recently available data on the COVID-19 pandemic jobs recovery, Figures 27A and 27B illustrate five years of Georgia employment by industry for the second quarter of each year. Several sectors have not only recovered the jobs lost in spring 2020, but as of 2021Q2 have already surpassed pre-pandemic 2019Q2 totals. Specifically, those sectors are Trade, Transportation and Utilities (by 17,563 jobs); Information (6,355); Financial Activities (4,512); Professional and Business Services (1,245); and Construction (modest 519 jobs).

Figure 27A. Total Nonfarm Employment by Industry Trends, 2017Q2 to 2021Q2



Source: GDOL, Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages

Figure 27B. Total Nonfarm Employment by Industry Trends, 2017Q2 to 2021Q2



Source: GDOL, Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages

Occupational trends illustrated in Figure 28 point to fast growth in construction laborers (115.3% growth), restaurant cooks (98.4%), and industrial truck and tractor operators (80.6%). In numbers, the most growth was in hand laborers and freight, stock and material movers (58,970 jobs); cashiers (29,833 and heavy and tractor-trailer truck drivers (29,799).

Figure 28: Leading Occupations Five-Year Trends. 2010 to 2028¹³

SOC	Title	2010	2015	2020	2022	2028	Est. Change 2010 to 2028	Est. % Change 2010 to 2028
35-3021	Combined Food Prep & Serving Workers	93,470	102,380	114,070	n/a	163,169	69,699	74.6%
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	141,690	142,150	124,150	141,798	157,034	15,344	10.8%

¹³ Some jobs have been re-classified from one year to the next, resulting in numbers that do not match up in a year-to-year comparison.

SOC	Title	2010	2015	2020	2022	2028	Est. Change 2010 to 2028	Est. % Change 2010 to 2028
53-7062	Laborers & Freight, Stock, & Material Movers, Hand	76,040	112,080	123,620	132,955	135,010	58,970	77.6%
41-2011	Cashiers	98,940	106,190	111,930	113,614	128,773	29,833	30.2%
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	90,780	98,700	108,860	113,237	111,634	20,854	23.0%
11-1021	General & Operations Managers	73,380	86,410	76,650	87,251	95,953	22,573	30.8%
29-1141	Registered Nurses	65,390	68,980	73,230	83,694	94,877	29,487	45.1%
35-3031	Waiters & Waitresses	65,320	80,220	66,710	85,519	88,933	23,613	36.1%
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	81,980	81,330	70,870	75,761	77,400	-4,580	-5.6%
53-3032	Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	45,250	51,980	62,390	68,688	75,049	29,799	65.9%
43-5081	Stock Clerks & Order Fillers	54,310	57,430	61,060	n/a	68,973	14,663	27.0%
43-6014	Secretaries & Admin Assistants	43,480	60,210	61,890	67,457	66,228	22,748	52.3%
37-2011	Janitors & Cleaners	46,680	49,550	51,030	56,585	63,429	16,749	35.9%
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers	48,120	50,670	43,610	50,418	61,497	13,377	27.8%
51-2098	Assemblers & Fabricators, all other, including team assemblers	37,190	45,960	54,960	#N/A	57,224	20,034	53.9%
43-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Office & Admin Support Workers	47,600	38,250	43,960	49,913	52,585	4,985	10.5%
41-4012	Sales Representatives, Wholesale & Manufacturing	54,880	55,340	46,140	44,663	52,310	-2,570	-4.7%
11-9013	Farmers, Ranchers, & Other Agricultural Managers	6,390	9,750	40	45,031	50,439	44,049	689.3%
41-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	36,780	38,780	34,290	43,617	49,476	12,696	34.5%
49-9071	Maintenance & Repair Workers, General	41,930	43,270	40,240	46,508	49,152	7,222	17.2%
39-9021	Personal Care Aides	8,810	16,370	n/a	n/a	48,139	39,329	446.4%

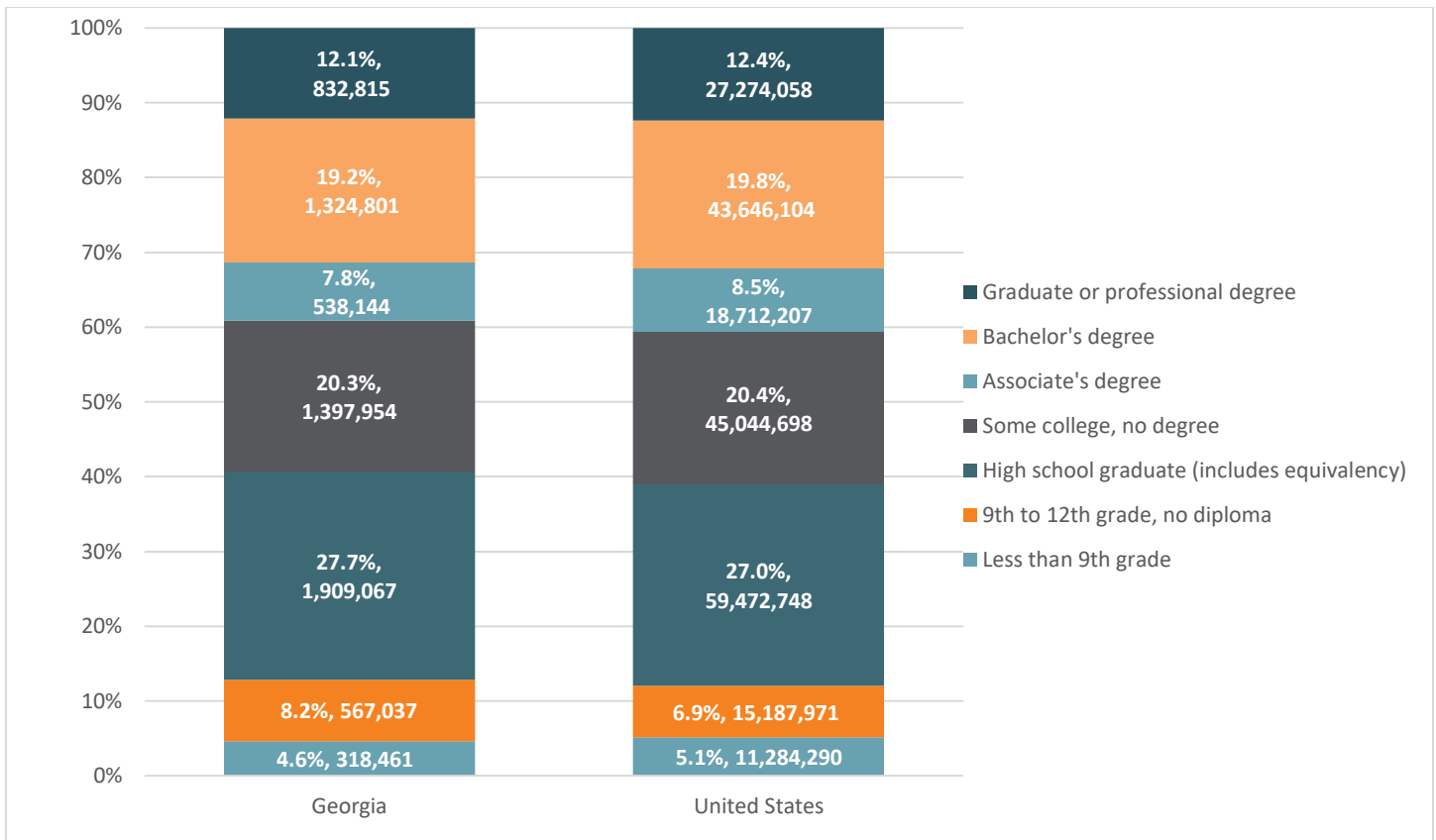
SOC	Title	2010	2015	2020	2022	2028	Est. Change 2010 to 2028	Est. % Change 2010 to 2028
13-2011	Accountants & Auditors	29,500	37,590	34,800	40,576	47,673	18,173	61.6%
47-2061	Construction Laborers	21,900	33,450	26,890	42,151	47,145	25,245	115.3%
35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant	23,690	31,210	31,990	41,067	46,993	23,303	98.4%
53-7051	Industrial Truck & Tractor Operators	24,710	26,580	33,080	39,692	44,618	19,908	80.6%

Sources: BLS Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, May 2010, May 2015 and May 2020; GDOL 2020-2022 Short and 2018-2028 Long-Term Occupational Employment Projections

(iii) Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce

Figure 29 represents the level of educational attainment in Georgia’s population 25 years and older. The percentage of the total Georgians at each level of educational attainment is very similar to the nation’s. The most differentiation is that a slightly lower percentage of Georgians have an Associate’s degree or Bachelor’s degree, and slightly more have completed a portion of high school without attaining a diploma.

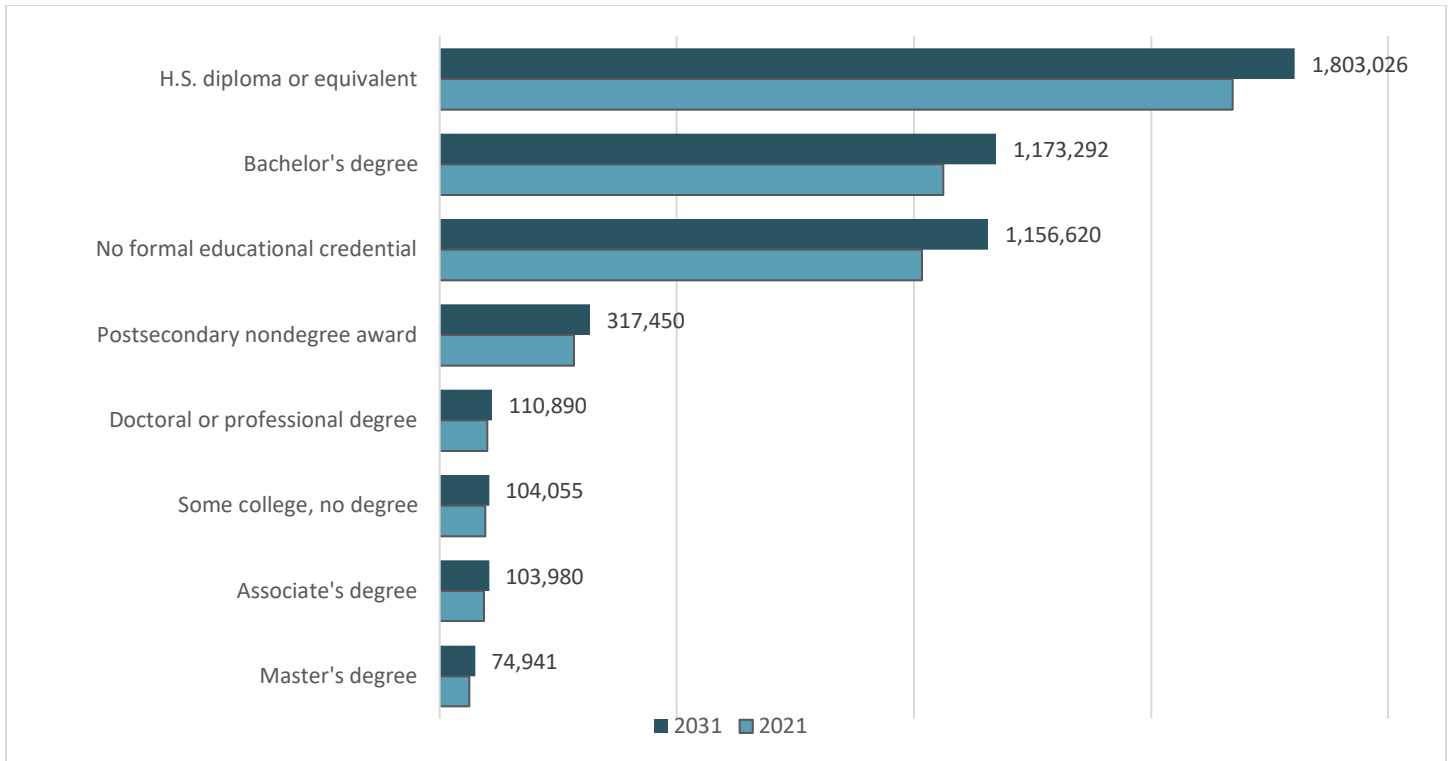
Figure 29: Educational Attainment for Population 25 Years and Over



Source: Census 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimate

The largest number of projected jobs for 2031 estimates require at least a H.S. diploma or equivalent, reinforcing the importance of at least a minimum formal education for employment opportunities. Bachelor's degree numbers are the largest degree-attainment category, but Associate's degrees will grow at a faster rate from 2021 to 2031 (11.2% vs. 10.5% for Bachelor's). The fastest growing attainment level is the smallest: Master's degree (19.7%). The slowest growth is anticipated for the category of some college without a credential (7.4%), evidence of the increasing importance of a credential (12.1% growth for postsecondary non-degree award) or degree award for meeting employers' hiring requirements. These trends are illustrated in Figure 30 below.

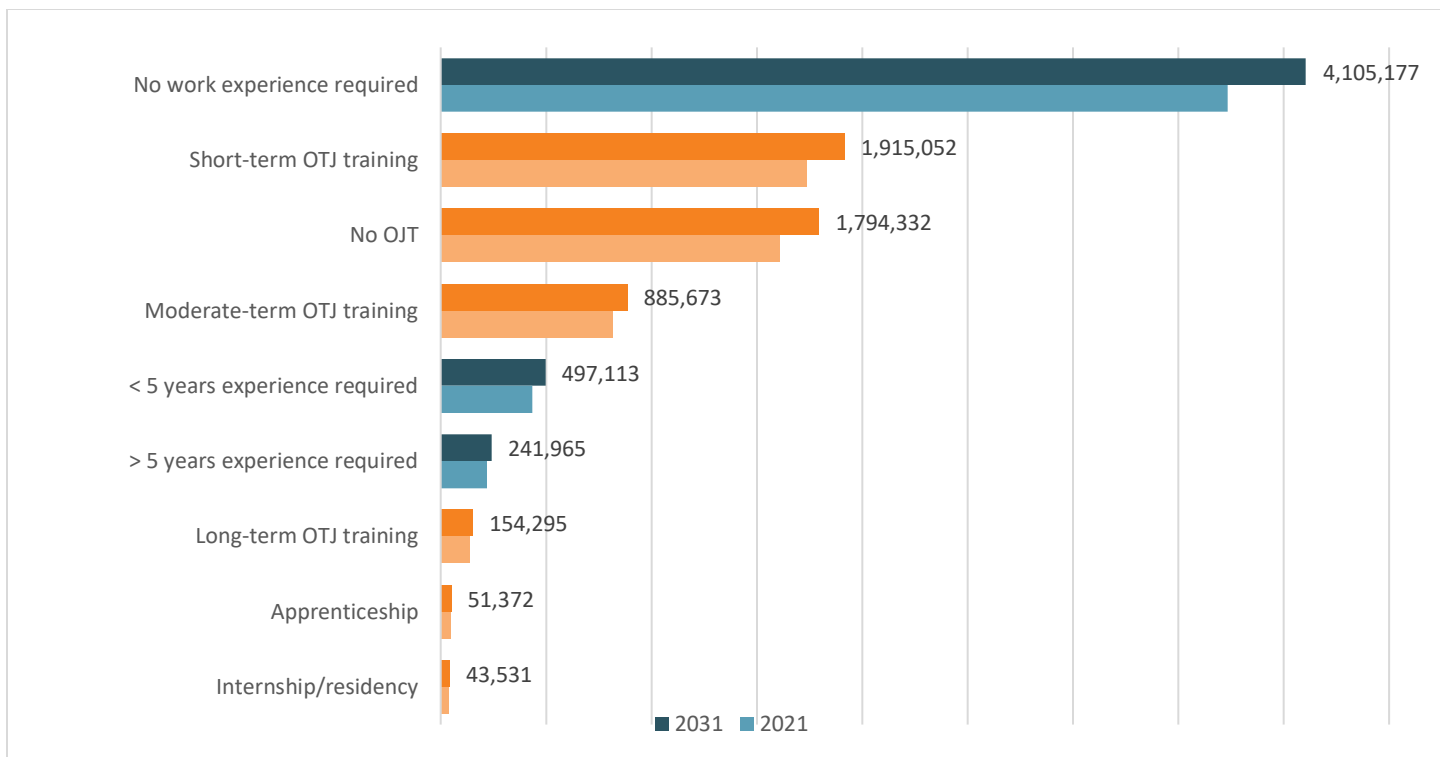
Figure 30: Projected 2031 Jobs by Required Entry-Level Education. 2021 to 2031



Source: Emsi Q4 2021 Data Set

As illustrated in Figure 31 below, the most new jobs are anticipated among those that require no directly related experience and no or at most short-term On-The-Job (OTJ) training. This suggests the real potential attainability of these jobs, as long as the requisite educational requirements are met. The fastest-growing category illustrated in Figure 31 is “< 5 years experience required” (14.6% from 2021 to 2031 estimates), further accentuating the point that there will be strong growth in these more easily attained positions (in terms of non-education attainment-related requirements).

Figure 31: Projected Jobs by Experience and On-The-Job (OTJ) Training Required, 2021 to 2031



Source: Emsi Q4 2021 Data Set

(iv) Skill Gaps

For a number of years now there has been an understanding among employers and workforce development professionals that the aging of the workforce is contributing to a skills gap in the work force, particularly in the middle-skill range of jobs that require a credential or maybe two-year degree but not a bachelor’s degree. As written in the original 2020 version of this plan, the National Skills Coalition estimated 54% of jobs require middle skills, or skills that require post-secondary education but not a 4-year degree. In Georgia at the time, only an estimated 42% of the state’s workers are trained at the middle skill-level. High skill jobs (those that require a Bachelor’s degree or higher) accounted for 32% of the jobs in Georgia but 36% of workers are considered ‘highly skilled’.

The COVID-19 pandemic has only accelerated the need for middle-skill trained persons, as found by an McKinsey Global Survey on reskilling.¹⁴ In the survey employers reported that they have “doubled down on their efforts to reskill or upskill employees.” Sixty-nine (69%) of respondents reported an increased focus on skill building during the pandemic, a greater percentage than those who are redeploying employees to other jobs, hiring, laying off, or outsourcing work via contracts. Employers

¹⁴ “Building workforce skills at scale to thrive during – and after – the COVID-19 crisis.” McKinsey & Company April 30, 2021 Survey. Accessed December 22, 2021 at <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/people-and-organizational-performance/our-insights/building-workforce-skills-at-scale-to-thrive-during-and-after-the-covid-19-crisis>.

report a new priority is social and emotional skills including developing leadership, critical-thinking, decision-making and project-management skills. Specific to health care service providers, employers have become more than twice as likely to focus on empathy and interpersonal skills in their workforce development efforts.

Digital skills have become an increased priority during the pandemic as so many jobs and job functions have moved to telework or are now automated more frequently. From the 2019 to 2021 skill surveys, there was a 16-percentage point increase for the number of companies reporting that basic digital skills are a priority for their employees.

Figures 23A and B illustrated how the pandemic has had a comparatively dramatic drop off in labor force participation among the population 55 years old and over. This change likely has dramatically widened the middle-skill gap caused by retirements occurring at a faster rate than equivalently trained (and experienced) persons have entered the labor force.

The below Figure 32 illustrates estimated employers' demand for credentials and degree attainment in the current and projected future workforce. While jobs that require a graduate or professional degree are projected to tie the no-formal-educational-credential required jobs as the projected fastest growing, the middle-skill jobs will continue to be a core component of Georgia's workforce. Meeting that demand in the context of the strong drop in labor force participation and pre-pandemic skills gaps will likely be one of the greatest challenges for employers, higher educational institutions, additional training providers, and workforce development professionals over the next few years.

Figure 32: Projected Jobs and Labor Supply by Education Attainment, 2021 to 2031

	2021 Jobs	2031 Jobs	Growth	% Growth	Annual Openings	2031 Persons
No formal educational credential	1,016,800	1,156,620	139,820	13.8%	1,826,403	888,588
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	1,672,759	1,803,026	130,267	7.8%	2,107,634	2,156,802
Some college, no degree	380,053	421,505	41,452	10.9%	445,684	1,578,485
Associate's degree	93,535	103,980	10,444	11.2%	99,720	712,808
Bachelor's degree	1,061,933	1,173,292	111,359	10.5%	1,000,487	1,720,817
Graduate or professional degree	163,261	185,831	22,570	13.8%	136,540	1,162,208

The GDOL data (from which EMSI calculated its 2031 educational attainment data illustrated in Figure 32 above) suggests 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 2031 illustrate that there will be a need for individuals with all levels of education.¹⁵

Gaps between Supply and Demand

Nationally, the largest inherent gaps in the labor force resulted from a deficiency in the development of basic skills. That continues to be true with the pandemic-driven need for stronger digital, interpersonal and project management skills in even more demand than ever before. Educational attainment is an issue both nationally and in Georgia with post-secondary degree attainment around 39%. 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 Figures 30 and 31 illustrate the skill levels needed for the entire economy, the data also mask important workforce needs as described by the McKinsey survey and previous studies. A report referenced in the original 2020 planning document 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.” Pre-pandemic studies confirm that employers are substituting the attainment of a college degree with having the motivation and soft skills potential for successful employment. How much these employers’ hiring trends may change in the pandemic context of historically low rates of unemployment and labor force participation rates is uncertain for the long-term, but short-term the pressure to fill open positions is likely to change these hiring practices.

¹⁵ 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 address 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.

Figure 33. Labor Demand by Educational Attainment, 2021 to 2031

	2021 Jobs	2031 Jobs	Change	Annual Openings
No formal educational credential	1,016,800	1,156,620	139,820	1,826,403
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	1,672,759	1,803,026	130,267	2,107,634
Some college, no degree	380,053	421,505	41,452	445,684
Associate's degree	93,535	103,980	10,444	99,720
Bachelor's degree	1,061,933	1,173,292	111,359	1,000,487
Master's degree	62,609	74,941	12,332	62,732
Doctoral or professional degree	100,653	110,890	10,238	73,807

Source: Emsi Q4 2021 Data Set

In February 2021, the McKinsey Global Institute noted in a report how the COVID-19 impact has been quite different from prior major disruptions to the workforce brought on by technology or globalization.¹⁶ The jobs that have been most affected are those which require the most physical proximity to other persons to perform the work; for example, medical care, personal services, retail, restaurants, and hotels. While the immediate need to socially distance will continue to lesson as COVID-19's pervasiveness further subsides, the consumer habits and lessons of the pandemic will likely have a long-standing impact on the nature of work for many occupations. As described in the McKinsey report, these trends include:

- Retail shopping, banking and shipping moving to e-commerce and other digital formats;
- Business professionals choosing virtual meetings over travel; and
- Telehealth, telework and similar practices becoming the norm, although presumably at lower levels than in 2020.

All three of the above will mean fewer jobs for in-person customer service-skill jobs of retail, hospitality and even potentially health care while simultaneously increasing the need for skills for employment in IT services, and potentially computer systems design and manufacture, and software development. The McKinsey report finds the jobs that will most likely return to a workplace at least a few days a week will be those that involve tasks most effectively done in person, which McKinsey identified as negotiations, critical business decisions, brainstorming sessions, providing sensitive feedback and onboarding new employees. Of course, those jobs least affected by the pandemic because they

¹⁶ "The future of work after COVID-10." McKinsey & Company April 30, 2021 Survey. Accessed December 22, 2021 at <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/future-of-work/the-future-of-work-after-covid-19>

predominantly occur outdoors – for examples, construction, farming, and grounds keeping – will continue to have relatively little change in how they perform their work.

For the U.S. workforce, McKinsey estimates food service and customer support jobs may decline by 4.3 million. Transportation-related jobs are estimated to grow by 800,000, an insufficient number to alone make up for the losses in food and customer service positions.

According to McKinsey, the higher-skill fields of health care and STEM occupations may grow more than anticipated prior to the pandemic, “reflecting increased attention to health as populations age and incomes rise, as well as the growing need for people who can create, deploy and maintain new technologies.”

All of this should be a wakeup call for those in workforce development, higher education and additional training providers. The McKinsey report included the following statistics and findings:

- Globally, an estimated 1 in 16 workers will need to find a new occupation by 2030 due to the shift to a greater portion of total jobs in need of higher-skills.
- “Roughly half” – or 8 of those 16 workers referenced above – will need to advanced their skills to move one or even two wage brackets higher (as the brackets are defined in the McKinsey report).
- In advanced economies like the U.S., the number of persons who will need to be trained for a higher-skilled occupation is estimated to be up 25 percentage points in 2021 vs pre-pandemic estimates.
- Specific to the United States: “Workers with less than a college degree, members of ethnic minority groups, and women are more likely to need to change occupations after COVID-10 than before.” And, “people without a college degree are 1.3 times more likely to need to make transitions compared to those with a college degree, and Black and Hispanic workers are 1.1 times more likely to have to transition between occupations than white workers.”

McKinsey’s report concludes with the policy recommendation that the political will of government and the private sector to respond to the pandemic perhaps can be “harness[ed] to retool the workforce.” Georgia is already well set up to work with these in-demand occupations because they align with its work to date, the state’s growth sectors, and the strategic industries of focus for the Governor and Georgia’s government agencies. So with the state’s WIOA, 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:

(C)(A) The State’s Workforce Development Activities

Title I: Training Services

Training Services in Georgia are administered by the Technical College System of Georgia's (TCSG) Office of Workforce Development (OWD) through the WorkSource Georgia network. Despite the many changes COVID-19 brought to the State's workforce system, the State maintained enrollment numbers. For PY20, over 15,568 distinct individuals, including carryovers, received services. Of these, 10,497 new individuals registered using the WorkSource Georgia Portal (via the Geo Solutions Virtual One-Stop System platform), with 7,344 individuals enrolling in training under WIOA in PY20.

An analysis of PY20 training provided to WIOA participants indicates that truck driving continues to be the single largest training occupation. In PY20, 986 individuals entered truck driving training. The healthcare field continues to be in high demand, with 2,553 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. Additionally, 527 individuals entered training in computer operations and office support.

Unlike previous years, OWD saw a noticeable increase in training offered virtually or hybrid models. In PY20, 124 individuals participated in employer-based on-the-job training (OJT), and 1,783 participated 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 LWDAs 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 to offer services from July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2021. 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 2020-2021, 475 adult education students participated in IET programs focusing on industries such as manufacturing, welding, hospitality, nursing assisting, information technology, and more.

In November 2020, OAE closed its competitive grant round for the next four-year cycle. To ensure services are available across the entire state, OAE also relaunched its IELCE grant competition from March 2021 to April 2021. OAE awarded grants to 30 providers throughout Georgia to offer services from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2025. Of these 30 providers, 27 offer adult basic education and secondary education, 24 offer English language acquisition activities, and 12 offer Integrated English Language and Civics education. All providers offer at least two activities concurrently and workplace preparation activities, including IET. 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

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. Thus, Georgia's workforce system provides easy access through a variety of entry points. While a large amount of WP referrals come from Unemployment Insurance (UI), GDOL also utilizes Business Services Unit to identify and attract customers.

Regardless of which workforce system entry point is chosen, 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, Trade or Adult Education Services.

Ongoing collaboration and coordination efforts will increase the numbers of WIOA job seeker customers accessing 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 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 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-based learning, workplace readiness, 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.

GVRA services are provided in all areas of the state by a skilled rehabilitation team in coordination with community rehabilitation providers. GVRA 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 is strongly allied with partners of the statewide workforce development system and maintains cooperative agreements and working partnerships with entities outside the core workforce development system. Through community outreach, GVRA educates consumers on our services and refers to other partners in the workforce development area.

(D) (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. In addition, the inclusion of the COVID-19 National Dislocated Worker Grant has become a pillar for assisting the impacted dislocated workforce of Georgia. This grant has both increased the visibility of services and allowed for new employment options for participants affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The State will continue to increase awareness and grow these successful programs to meet the needs of employers and jobseekers.

Despite the initial effects of COVID, the state's economy continues to thrive and grow. This 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, weaknesses in the visibility of the state and local workforce system were identified as 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. In the last two years, however, the workforce system has had to address the ever changing services delivery needs facing clients in the midst of the COVID-19 outbreak. Physical integration and in-person services delivery were not enough to serve clients. The system had to quickly pivot to electronic service delivery, and as health conditions warranted, transition back to electronic service delivery and in-person services. The state's new goal for the next two years is to meet customers where they are with a mix of in-person and electronic services. Ensuring the quality customer services regardless of how someone is accessing services or what the current health conditions are, is of the highest priority.

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 two 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.

OWD continues to utilize 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 LWDA's 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 LWDA's 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.

(E)(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.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the WorkSource Academy offerings were mostly in-person sessions; however, OWD pivoted to fully virtual trainings for 2020 and 2021. Workshops were offered via Zoom for easy access, and each session was recorded and is available on the TCSG OWD website for future viewing. The State plans to hold an in-person Academy conference in 2022, but of course will adjust plans if necessary to ensure the health and safety of attendees. The pivot to virtual trainings has been wildly successful and will continue to be a feature of the WorkSource Academy. The State's focus will continue to be on offering the most effective learning options for the various roles within the workforce system. In PY20 alone, OWD hosted 14 webinars with a total of 848 attendees. Offerings included:

- *Better Serving Those Who Served*
- *Strategic Communications during COVID-19: MailChimp Basics, Canva Basics, and Later Basics*
- *WorkSource Business Services Strategies for Economic Recovery*
- *Business Services 101*
- *Disability Awareness in the COVID Environment*
- *Subrecipient Monitoring Training*
- *Identifying Recognized Credentials*
- *Local Workforce Development Boards – Requirements & Best Practices*
- *Re-opening Public Spaces in the COVID Environment*
- *WIOA Equal Opportunity – Back to Basics*
- *How to Move Standardized Testing to a Virtual Platform (HiSET, GED, TABE)*
- *Career Service Assessments*
- *An Overview of Human Trafficking*

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

The Georgia Department of Labor Workforce Solutions and Unemployment Insurance Divisions continue to collaborate in ensuring staff are trained in Employment Services and Unemployment Insurance programs. Staff development remains a primary focus to support Georgia's commitment to integrated workforce services, ensuring comprehensive and consistent services are provided to all job seekers. Coordination with staff and partners ensure job seekers receive seamless services designed to facilitate their return to employment.

GDOL conducts ongoing training and needs assessments of staff to ensure compliance with any federal and state requirements. In assessing staff, individual training requirements are established for staff to complete. The training courses are structured to provide staff with a foundation to support programs and to provide valuable services to both jobseekers and business. Training consists of program specific trainings, as well as detailed system training that provides a wealth of information on resources available to guide job seekers. Additional trainings are provided to assist with service delivery to job seekers. These trainings include but are not limited to: 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, how to write an effective résumé, and employment counseling to address barriers to employment and to assist with career selection.

Staff training to support business customers includes: 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 presentation skills training, as well as business writing and customer service skills training to enhance services to jobseekers and businesses. Through the online Learning Management System managers and staff can easily access individualized training records, enroll in training, and manage training plans to ensure training needs are met.

GDOL also collaborates with and provides support to partner staff, offering training, technical assistance, and support to those who serve local job seekers and employers collectively working together to deliver services. This ensures that all stakeholders 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 has offices in both metropolitan and rural areas to assist in the workforce development of individuals with disabilities. Along with adults, GVRA serves both youth and students with disabilities to better prepare them to become an integral part of Georgia's workforce. GVRA offers an array of services to every Georgia public school district to help students transition to successful competitive integrated employment. GVRA 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 engages employers statewide to determine their workforce needs and educates them on the value and benefits of hiring an individual with a disability. GVRA collaborates with a large provider community to offer 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. Develop a streamlined and regionally integrated workforce system that delivers efficient services to both businesses and individuals.
3. Capitalize on Workforce System strengths to create opportunities for all Georgia communities to prosper.
4. Continuously align workforce and education system objectives to current and future occupational skill requirements.
5. Expand the pool of available employees by increasing the participation of WIOA 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.

Further Develop a Streamlined and Regionally Integrated Workforce System

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.

Create Opportunities for all Georgia Communities to Prosper

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.

Expand the Pool of Available Employees

Georgia's 61.5% preliminary November 2021 Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR) is the third lowest rate in Georgia since at least November 1976 (the oldest year published on U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' data tool). For that same month, the state has an even more dramatically unprecedented 2.8% seasonally adjusted preliminary unemployment rate (the lowest by 0.5% since before 1976). Georgia's labor crunch is consistent with the nation (61.8% LFPR and 4.2%

unemployment rate) as everywhere large numbers of people have not returned to the workforce after dropping out due to COVID19 pandemic impacts to their family or pre-pandemic occupation. The labor shortages are perhaps more acute in Georgia given the national unemployment rate is a full 1.4% higher than Georgia's as of November 2021.

With worker shortages causing more challenges for many employers than ever before in their working age lifetime, the need to help individuals reenter the workforce with skills training and other support services is a critical economic need entering 2022 like never before. And from the workers' perspectives, the opportunity to advance their employability for higher paying positions is more plentiful than ever. 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 final negotiated performance goals 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

OWD ensures the overall effectiveness of the workforce system primarily through the annual monitoring review of the nineteen (19) LWDA's. The State conducts annual monitoring to satisfy its oversight responsibilities under the law, but also utilizes these reviews to inform technical assistance and training offerings throughout the year. As federal, state, and local guidance is released on a rolling basis, the annual monitoring ensures that LWDA's maintain up-to-date, compliant service delivery structures, policies, and practices. The monitoring process typically begins mid-August or early-September and concludes in April. The evaluation process includes, but is not limited to, a desk review of key documents, such as policies, procedures, LWDB bylaws and minutes, as well as contracts; interviews of LWDA staff; and an inspection of electronic case files and other relevant documents for the Program Year in review. This process evaluates the workforce activities both at the 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 to participants. The review is conducted by a multi-disciplinary team consisting of staff from OWD's Programs, Grants, and Compliance team.

The desk review portion of monitoring can begin as soon as the requested documents are submitted by the LWDA, usually two weeks to one month ahead of the monitoring week. The monitoring week consists of three to four final days of testing, to include an entrance meeting with LWDA staff, follow-up on any missing information, staff interviews regarding key roles and procedures, and an exit meeting with LWDA staff to communicate deficiencies, notable practices, and/or recommendations from OWD. At the conclusion of the monitoring week, a final report is produced to explain all findings and observations. The corrective action follow-up takes place in the weeks and months after the monitoring week, depending on the issues identified and the actions necessary to correct them.

Annual 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 also utilizes other mechanisms to evaluate the WIOA services around the state, such as desk reviews outside of annual monitoring, regular contact with LWDA Directors and staff through monthly calls, and convening focus groups to evaluate proposed guidance, communicate training needs, and more.

OWD staff also conduct LWDB certification every two years. During this period, OWD ensures that the LWDB roster satisfies federal criteria. Staff also read meeting minutes ensure that LWDBs 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. State 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 consideration of all criteria, 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 then reviews certification packets during the annual monitoring process ensure all certification is up-to-date, and that re-certification is conducted in accordance with the local MOU requirements, 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 WorkSource Portal 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 required annual audits, GDOL submits regular reports on expenditures and drawdowns to federal agencies responsible for oversight of grants received by GDOL. Regular reports are also submitted to the state Office of Planning and Budget (OPB) along with the State Accounting Office (SAO). Agency financial program managers maintain responsibility for day-to-day management of grant expenditures in their respective programs. This measure is to ensure compliance with prescribed funding guidelines along with meeting the agency mission.

STAR Review Team

To assess and ensure staff are providing services in accordance with State and Federal requirements and to facilitate continuous improvement, the GDOL Staff Technical Assistance Review (STAR) team continuously review staff activities. The team has an established process for reviews that allows them to identify staff training needs and areas where processes can be streamlined in service delivery. The process is a four-day review conducted in two phases, which includes a desk review and subsequent on-site review. Technical assistance teams are comprised of subject matter experts responsible for conducting reviews and providing immediate technical assistance training directly to staff in the career centers. The team evaluates and analyzes recorded services and case notes in GDOL's electronic system remotely, documenting findings prior to the Career Center visit. While on-site, the team will review the direct service delivery to job seekers and employers. The immediate on-site training is based on the results of the findings. The direct training while on-site, affords staff the opportunity to communicate directly with the STAR team, to identify programmatic misunderstandings quickly and immediately. This allows the STAR team to address concerns from the review through training and open discussion while at the career center.

The STAR team consults with the management team throughout the review process, and conducts an exit meeting to discuss feedback reports. A technical assistance plan is developed in consensus with management to address, correct, and/or improve any process or programmatic deficiencies. The STAR team subject matter experts set follow-up visits to be conducted at random during the six-month period immediately following the technical assistance review. This is to ensure quality improvements are implemented. On-going technical assistance is offered and accessible through the team during implementation. The STAR review process also provides insight into offices best practices across the state which are documented and utilized in developing process improvements in service delivery.

GVRA

GVRA monitors the performance of service delivery staff members as well as service providers to ensure all efforts lead to successful competitive integrated employment for participants. GVRA will

also monitor employer satisfaction to ensure that individuals with disabilities seeking employment meet businesses' skill requirements and that the services provided through GVRA align with the needs of Georgia's employers. GVRA utilizes technical assistance from the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Centers for Quality Management and Quality Employment and from the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition to ensure improvement in the areas of performance management and quality assurance.

Based on the most recent Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, an evaluation of GVRA by a private consulting firm, feedback from individuals with disabilities, providers, and rehabilitation professionals, as well as the Rehabilitation Services Administration Monitoring Report and performance data, GVRA continues to make changes to its structure, policies, processes, procedures, staffing patterns, and professional development. These changes are being consistently reviewed and improved while others are being implemented in order to provide Georgians with disabilities quality services in a timely manner to secure competitive integrated employment.

(c) State Strategy

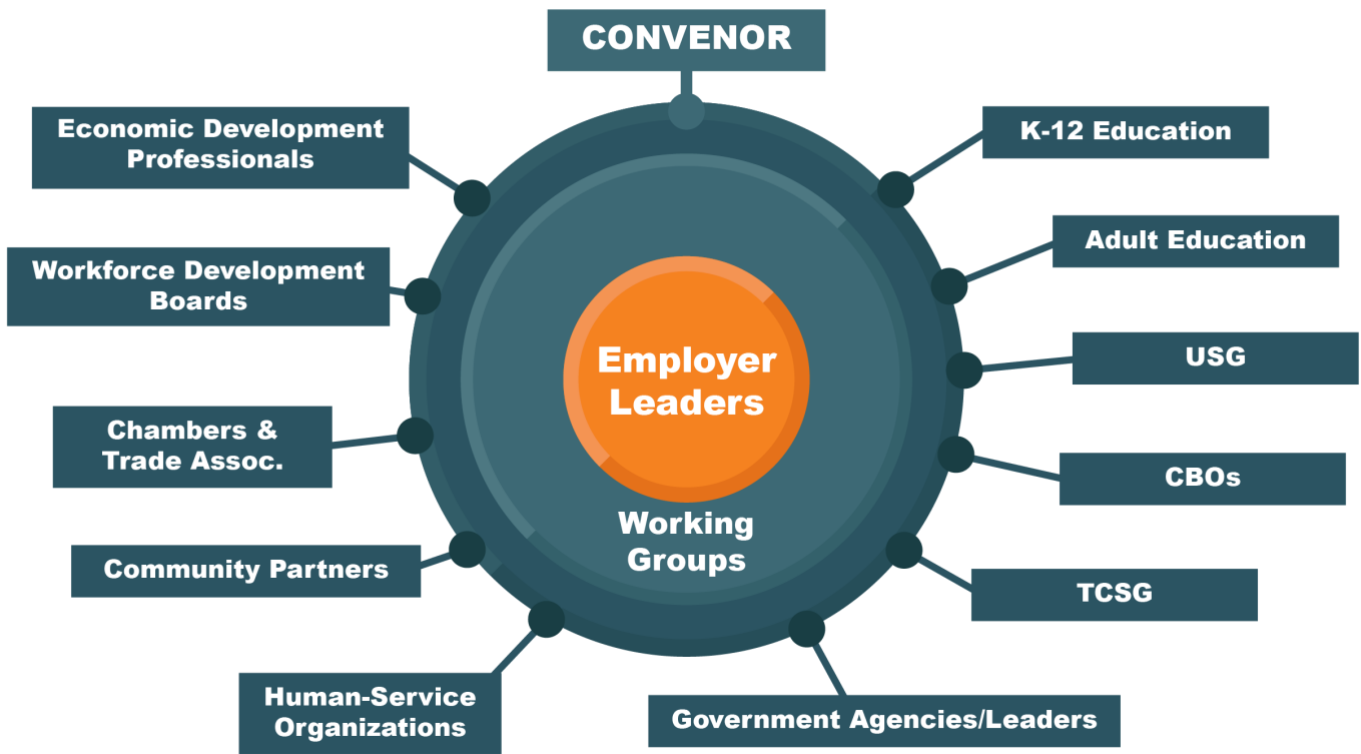
The State will continue to work to create a truly unified public workforce system over the next four years. This strategy will include efforts to further enhance integration across core partners, expand that integration to partners beyond those in the core, strengthen the public workforce system's alignment 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.

One of the most effective strategies to achieve all of these goals is through sector partnerships. 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 three 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 and 2021, the second rounds and third of grant funds were awarded, respectively. 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.

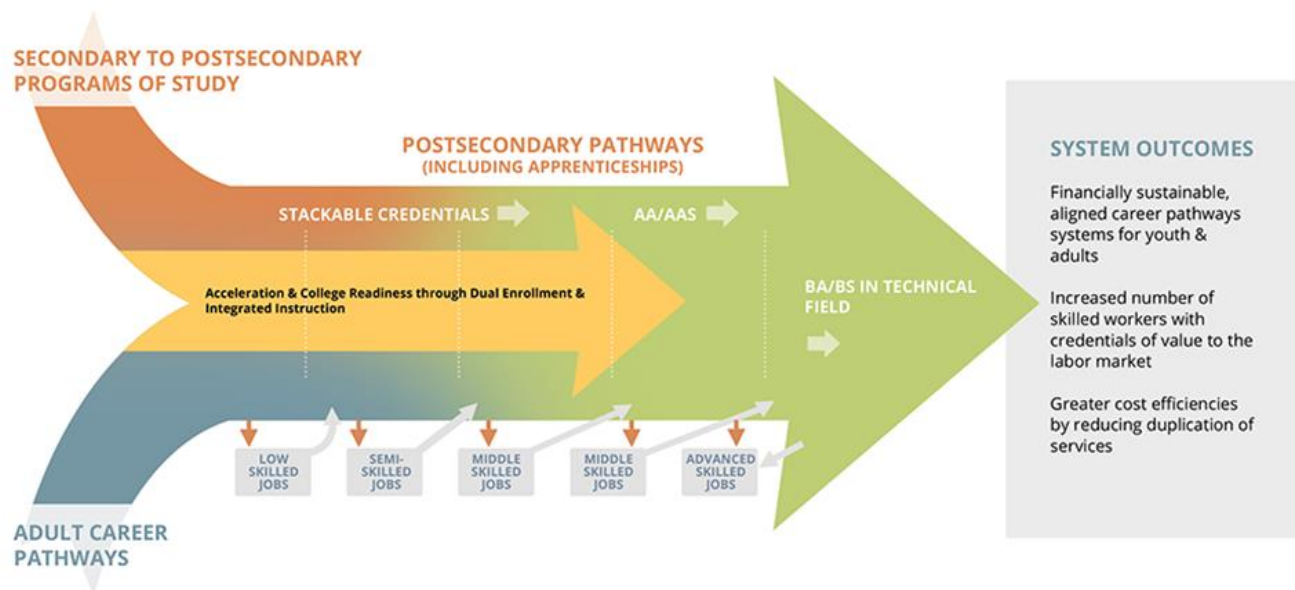
Sector partnerships are a proven approach to aligning the training and education programs in a community with the employee skills and competencies needed by employers in a given industry sector. Consequently, the State has determined that WorkSource Sector Partnerships are the ideal tool to ensure the 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

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 operationalize at least one IET opportunity per quarter 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, one-stops, and employers.	Sector Partnerships (1) Regional Integration (2)	One-stop MOUs; participate in LWDB meetings; workplace literacy classes
Promote enhanced learning opportunities for students such as dual enrollment and distance education.	Education Alignment (4) Strategic Populations (5)	Distance education, postsecondary dual enrollment, Career Plus HSE
Expand high school equivalency (HSE) options for Georgians.	Education Alignment (4) Strategic Populations (5)	Career Plus HSE, HiSET
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 inception and launch of the Georgia Department of Labor's (GDOL), Business Services Unit, represented a new emphasis and direction on a service delivery focused on employers, driven to provide access to market driven staff, and dedicated to fulfilling the needs of Georgia employers. This realignment of the agency's vision and purpose, allowed GDOL to refocus and commit to the business community and provide resources and paths to more proactive and employer friendly partnerships.

Regional Coordinators (RC) – The RC program partners with local, regional, and statewide economic developers by executing prompt turnaround data and customized solutions to workforce issues. Those that serve in this position, assist economic developers to identify data critical for the successful location and expansion of industry.

Business Services Recruiters (BSR) – The BSR program aids in the development and maintenance of relationships with employers, the identification of talent pools for target industries, as well as the identification of employer talent requirements and matching talent with employer hiring needs.

Special Workforce Assistance Team (SWAT) – The SWAT program derived from a great need across the state to fill the gaps and barriers to employment faced by many job seekers. The team works closely with local Chambers of Commerce, Industrial Authorities, and Economic Developers in this endeavor. Events coordinated by this program typically feature a plethora of services to job seekers aiding in the removal of barriers to employment. Event services may include a combination of workshops to include interviewing, networking, social media use, and more. The SWAT team are trained and/or certified résumé experts able to assist job seekers in the development of marketing tools necessary to impress hiring managers.

Regional Career Expos – These events are tailored based on local requests to targeted industries, job seekers, skill requirements, as well as general community events. Based on the local needs and requests, staff target businesses and job seekers as appropriate to solicit their attendance in the effort to secure matches between employers and job seekers. Additionally, the team collaborates and coordinates with the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) on the FastTrack program which focuses on the creation of short-term training programs providing certification in Manufacturing, Basic Construction Fundamentals, Welding and Industrial Maintenance.

Customized Recruitment (CR) – The Customized Recruitment program, targeted solely to new businesses opening or relocating to Georgia, is a service aimed towards the streamlining of the company's candidate search and recruitment process. This is achieved through the efforts of a team of highly successful GDOL recruiters, working on the employer's behalf. The team partners with project managers, economic developers, and businesses to ease the recruitment process by providing screening assistance, thus alleviating direct applicant contact with the employer for the initial qualifications screening of candidates. Candidates encounter several checks and balances put in place by the team to ensure their qualifications, and that applications or resumes are

consistent in matching with the needs of the employer prior to the provision of next steps of the recruitment process.

Customized Recruitment X (CRX) – Evolving from the CR program, CRX was implemented as a specialized resource to meet the needs of existing Georgia companies experiencing growth and needing to expand their workforce. Modeled after the extremely successful and highly sought CR program, CRX provides the same level of expert services to Georgia’s businesses for a multitude of reasons is experiencing expansion. Candidates undergo a process similar to the established CR checks and balances, ensuring qualifications, applications and resumes are screened prior to referral. This process also establishes the next screening steps or sends candidates directly to the employer for assessment or recruitment.

Regional Summits – Titled “Employers in the Know” are annually held summits, designed to help business owners, hiring professionals, management professionals and others in gaining a better understanding of compliance challenges in the workplace and a means to eliminate or mitigate those challenges. Summit attendees meet and hear from the Commissioner of GDOL as he shares information on current GDOL initiatives and programs deemed to be of great value. Summits also provide Labor Law updates from experts in the field with regard to federal policies and legislation that help in the implementation of policies, procedures, and practices that promote compliance and fiscal growth in the upcoming years. Attendees are provided information about other Georgia state agencies and their respective initiatives aimed at promoting job growth and economic development.

GeorgiaBEST is a business employability skills training program that was created and administered by the Georgia Department of Labor focusing on equipping Georgia’s current and future workforce with the skills needed to succeed in the global marketplace. The program consists of training in 15 attributes that were identified by employers as critical needs in the workplace. The importance of attendance, integrity, teamwork, effective communication, and problem solving are key competencies addressed. The program has a three-pronged approach: 1. **GeorgiaBEST@School** (for Pre-K through Post-Secondary classrooms); 2. **GeorgiaBEST@Work** (for facilitated training for those who are currently in the workforce); and 3. **GeorgiaBEST@Home** (for individuals who want to brush up on their own skills or for faith-based organizations/civic groups who wish to conduct training sessions within their communities). GeorgiaBEST has a strong presence in Georgia schools and our goal for the future is to strengthen the GeorgiaBEST@Work program by launching a pilot program with a manufacturer or similar employer group.

GVRA

In September 2021, GVRA updated their Strategic Plan. The Agency’s mission is to assist Georgians with disabilities to gain employment and independence and GVRA is committed to transparency, empowerment, accountability, compassion and honesty. Goals of the strategic plan include: improve workforce development and continuity, increase service delivery and customer satisfaction, improve technology and infrastructure, and develop a data driven culture. The major focus of GVRA is to increase its capacity to meet the needs of individuals with significant disabilities in their goal of achieving competitive integrated employment. This can be achieved by expanding collaborative partnerships within the state and increasing education and access to services. Some examples of initiatives include focused recruitment, collaboration with the Department of Behavioral Health and

Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) and other state agencies, public on-line informational forums held twice weekly, development of an on-line referral process, and creation of a GVRA data unit to focus on performance measurements, trends and fiscal forecasting.

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

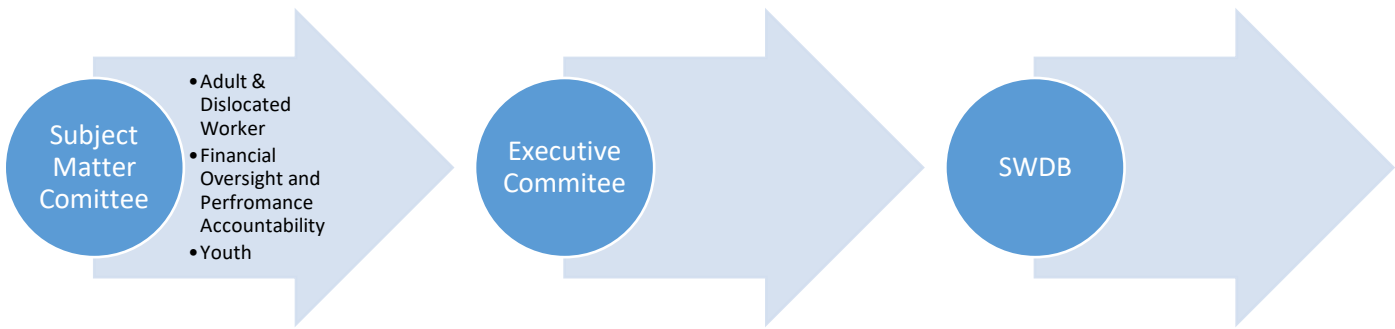
SWDB is required to comply with federal and state conflict of interest policies and sunshine provisions. The federal conflict of interest policy states that a member of SWDB may not vote on a matter regarding the provision of services by such member or a measures that would provide financial benefit 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 SWDB, the SWDB committees vet them. There are currently three 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, Youth Committee, and Performance & Performance 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.
- **Finance & Performance Committee:** The Financial & Performance Committee receives information pertaining to the receipt of WIOA Title I funding and the distribution of the funds to local workforce providers throughout the state. The committee is also charged with utilizing performance data to help drive the decisions before the SWDB, monitoring the State Eligible Training Providers, as well as reviewing the progress and results of the annual LWDA monitoring.
- **SWDB Executive Committee:** Once an action is vetted by the appropriate subject matter committee, it is placed on the agenda of the SWDB Executive Committee. There are currently three (3) 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, Finance & Performance Committee, and Youth 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

(F)(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 a third 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 third 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 all 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. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, a library of virtual training sessions, including recordings of sessions previously mentioned, has been published online to promote more accessible and relevant technical assistance and training to frontline workforce development professionals.

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.

Create Opportunities for all Georgia Communities to Prosper

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 LWDA’s 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 LWDA’s 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://tcsq.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 they 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 a Streamlined & Regionally Integrated Workforce System

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 LWDA's. 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 LWDA 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.

Expand the Pool of Available Employees

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 LWDA's 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 LWDA's. The team currently has dedicated staff to focus on veterans and individuals with disabilities, in addition to a Strategic Populations Specialist tasked with identifying and building out a contact network and developing resources to serve other populations with unique barriers to employment. These additional populations include individuals who have 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 LWDA's 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.

OWD's Strategic Populations Team will also continue partnering with the OWD 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. In addition to examination of the data, this goal will be accomplished by creating trainings for LWDA's serving these populations to address unique needs and ways the workforce system can meet those needs. For example, individuals experiencing homelessness have a bevy of needs that must be addressed prior to securing employment. While each person's experience is different, the State can develop best practices to guide the sequence of service, identify the types of organizations that can address unique needs (i.e., food banks, shelters and housing assistance, child care, clothing, physical and mental health assistance, etc.), and other ways to leverage partner resources to fully address the individual's needs. Where possible, the State will also consider additional funding requests for those programs that seek to address the needs of special populations.

GDOL's BSU places an emphasis on employer-driven service delivery along with access to market driven staff dedicated to fulfilling the needs of Georgia's employers. In partnership with economic developers, employers, and businesses, the team works to identify talent pools for targeted industries, customizes solutions for specific workforce issues faced in local communities, and assists with critical industry expansion needs. Labor Market Information is also provided by the state to employers through self-access and web subscription services to promote the workforce system as a tool for employers to meet their needs. Presentations, marketing materials, and outreach services are some of the steps taken to help educate employers on the resources available.

Under guidance from the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration (ETA), Workforce and Labor Market Information Grants to States (WIGS), GDOL's Workforce Statistics division develops and disseminates essential state and local WLMI for a range of customer groups, including job seekers, businesses/employers, workforce and labor market intermediaries such as employment, school, and career counselors, and case managers at American Job Centers (AJCs). These various workforce partners and groups help individuals find a job or make career decisions, or engage businesses seeking skilled workers. Program and service planners at educational institutions and community-based organizations, policy makers, including state and local workforce development boards (WDBs), partners, such as economic development entities and human resource professionals, and other customers, including recipients of workforce development grants, researchers, commercial data providers, and the media rely on labor market data produced by GDOL's Workforce Statistic's division.

The Workforce Statistics division populates, updates, and maintains a Workforce Information Database (WID) to include the most important workforce-related data elements and defines them consistently, ensuring comparability across jurisdictions. The division also produces state and local industry and occupational employment projections. Projections are used to identify in-demand industry and occupations for career guidance, to plan employment, education and training, and economic development programs. Additionally, the division also produces economic analysis reports. Economic analysis reports 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.

	Adults					Dislocated Workers				
	Serv ed	Empl. Q2	Empl. Q4	Credent ial	Skill Gai ns	Serv ed	Empl. Q2	Empl. Q4	Credent ial	Skill Gains
Male	2,405	75.6%	73.9%	78.8%	60.8 %	959	82.9%	86.0%	81.8%	67.2%
Female	4,940	86.2%	82.6%	78.1%	64.5 %	993	87.0%	86.8%	73.3%	59.1%
Back / African American	4,454	79.7%	78.1%	74.5%	58.6 %	1,141	85.0%	84.6%	72.6%	55.4%
White	2,451	87.6%	82.7%	84.5%	72.9 %	632	84.2%	88.4%	84.0%	71.7%

Hispanic	400	85.8%	77.7%	79.0%	70.8%	121	70.9%	86.5%	83.3%	54.5%
American Indian / Alaska Native	93	79.2%	69.0%	70.0%	63.6%	27	90.9%	80.0%	80.0%	87.5%
Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	18	70.6%	50.0%	69.2%	83.3%	10	83.3%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
More Than One Race	164	85.7%	77.1%	79.1%	65.8%	47	90.0%	90.9%	81.8%	66.7%
Veteran	248	84.6%	77.4%	77.8%	20.0%	92	87.5%	72.0%	78.9%	50.0%
Disabled	294	59.7%	48.4%	59.7%	62.4%	42	86.4%	80.0%	66.7%	64.3%
Low Income	6,280	81.1%	78.1%	77.8%	63.7%	1,046	83.2%	85.5%	74.6%	59.7%
Ex-Offender	748	74.2%	67.1%	81.5%	68.7%	28	84.0%	95.7%	65.0%	46.2%

The following tables highlight WIOA participant characteristics and outcomes from PY20 for adults and dislocated workers as well as targeted populations within the youth program.

	Youth				
	Served	Employment Q2	Employment Q4	Credential	Skill Gains
16-18	2,629	73.0%	74.4%	73.5%	47.8%
19-24	2,446	75.8%	76.4%	68.7%	39.1%
Male	2,319	71.3%	74.1%	70.5%	42.4%
Female	2,967	77.0%	76.4%	71.2%	47.0%
Limited English	3,791	75.5%	75.9%	70.5%	47.1%
Single Parent	371	74.8%	77.0%	68.6%	40.2%
Parenting Youth					
Ex-Offender	421	63.1%	65.9%	67.1%	29.6%
Homeless/Runaway	165	60.7%	67.6%	64.7%	40.7%
Disabled	288	69.1%	77.6%	77.0%	46.2%

An example that displays OWD's Strategic Populations Team's commitment toward providing ongoing assistance and support to the LWDA's is the development of a series of policy guidance, virtual trainings and case management tools that target topics such as data validation for individual with barriers to employment, disability awareness, the creation of accommodation guides for TABE,

GED and HiSET standardized tests, and youth work experience among many others. OWD’s Strategic Populations Team is developing a more robust method to deliver technical assistance to LWDA staff and providers across the state. The goal of the robust technical assistance structure, in addition to provide training, is to increase programmatic access for individuals with barriers to employment (e.g., youth, English language learners, justice-involved individuals, individuals with disabilities, veterans, etc.) to WIOA Title I services, specially to career services.

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, LWDA’s 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 operationalize at least one IET opportunity per quarter 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, one-stops, and employers.	Sector Partnerships (1) Regional Integration (2)	One-stop MOUs; participate in LWDB meetings; workplace literacy classes
Promote enhanced learning opportunities for students such as dual enrollment and distance education.	Education Alignment (4) Strategic Populations (5)	Distance education, postsecondary dual enrollment, Career Plus HSE
Expand high school equivalency (HSE) options for Georgians.	Education Alignment (4) Strategic Populations (5)	Career Plus HSE, <i>HiSET</i> ®
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 operationalize at least one Integrated Education & Training (IET) opportunity in each quarter of every year 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 were 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).

OAE will continue to support IET implementation by offering training and technical assistance – including a webinar series 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 at or above the living wage, 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, one-stops, and employers, 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 OWD 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. Given the 2021 updates to the National Reporting System, OAE has also released and will continue to provide training and support for programs to establish workplace literacy classes with local employers.

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.
- **Career Plus HSE (CPH):** OAE is piloting the CPH program that allows individuals to combine previously earned high school credits, completed portions of the GED® or *HiSET*® exam, and technical college credentials to receive a high school equivalency (HSE) diploma.
- **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 most recent competitive grant round, applicants discussed their plans for distance education. OAE will provide professional development and support programs in piloting different approaches to distance education.

In an effort to ensure more Georgians can obtain their HSE and obtain jobs in in-demand industries, Georgia is also expanding HSE options for Georgians. Georgia now offers the *HiSET*® exam and the GED® test both in-person and online and is piloting the CPH program at five colleges.

Finally, in order to elevate the quality of career services provided to students, 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.

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.

(G) (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 Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) 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. OWD will encourage partnerships and collaboration through policy cross-training for local and agency staff, encourage co-location of TANF and WIOA staff, and work toward a streamlined referral process for customers eligible for WIOA services.

To encourage and strengthen partnerships and collaboration, OWD facilitates quarterly partnership meetings, including TANF, SNAP E&T, Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS), Adult Education (Title II), Vocational Rehabilitation, and Workforce Development (Title 1). Our first step in creating a strategic partnership was drafting an agency service identification guide, which identified services provided by each agency. In the subsequent meeting, OWD led a conversation examining shared resources and possible opportunities to braid funding.

OWD created a WorkSource Partner Referral tool to streamline state agencies and community partners' referrals directly to the corresponding LWDA. The referral tool is located using the following link worksourcegeorgia.com/referral.

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 businesses 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 Registered Apprenticeship sponsors of approved RAPs 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 and expanding existing successful 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 RAP registration process. To further promote the expansion of RAPs throughout Georgia, OWD recently administered the American Apprenticeship Initiative (AAI) Grant, and is currently administering the Apprenticeship State Expansion (ASE) Grant, both of which are federal apprenticeship grants aimed at increasing high-quality apprenticeship opportunities for Georgia's workforce.

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.

(H)(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 to provide better access to the various core programs services and improve long-term employment outcomes for individuals seeking assistance. One-Stop staff serves 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. However, many LWDA's have included multiple Comprehensive One-Stops throughout their area.

Additionally, all LWDA's 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.

COVID-19 impacted service delivery across the State's workforce system. At the beginning of COVID-19, all One-Stop centers transitioned to provide virtual services to current and new participants. Many LWDA's found their virtual service-based models to be successful and effective. There was also a trend to provide WIOA services at partner agency sites which were open to the public with restrictions during the pandemic. OWD plans to see more innovative virtual One-Stop services offered across the State and incorporated in LWDA's service delivery models.

In line with the statutory requirements, the career and training services provided through the One-Stop centers comprise WIOA Title I and Title III Wagner-Peyser funded services that must be available for the universal population in all designated areas One-Stop centers. OWD continues to coordinate with partners to increase the 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 LWDA's 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 LWDA's 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 headers highlight Georgia's targeted population programming:

Supportive Services

Supportive services are services which are reasonable and necessary to enable a WIOA participant who cannot afford to pay for such services to participate in career and training activities funded under WIOA. These services can be an essential way to ensure that individuals can stay engaged in program offerings and reach their goals. The provision of supportive services must be determined on an individual basis; however, the State Policy Manual includes guidance on allowable types of supportive services. These include, but are not limited to:

- Assistance with transportation;
- Assistance with childcare and dependent care;
- Assistance with housing;
- Reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities;
- Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and related tools, including eyeglasses and protective eye and ear gear;
- Emergency auto repair (LWDA policy must ensure that the repair is necessary for the participant to attend training and is the most economical option for the participant's transportation needs);
- Emergency healthcare and medical services (LWDA policy must ensure that these types of payment are only provided when necessary for the participant to participate in training).

Additionally, supportive services are allowable after training in order to obtain employment. These include, but are not limited to:

- Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and related tools, including eyeglasses and protective eye and ear gear;
- Tools, work clothing, and boots/shoes required for employment;
- Drug testing required by employer;
- Financial counseling; and,

- Auxiliary aides and services necessary for persons with disabilities to obtain and retain employment.

For the full State Supportive Services policy, please see Section 3.4.4. of the TCSG OWD Policy Manual.

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 LWDAs, and monitors adherence through the annual monitoring process. Additionally, in order to provide these individuals are aware of and able to receive services, the State and LWDAs continue to utilize partnerships to identify and attract participants meeting the low-income requirement. For example, LWDAs 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 LWDA to understand the challenges faced by the population they are seeking to serve and ensure their service delivery is designed to meet the population's needs.

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 LWDAs. Specifically, the Strategic Populations Disability Services Lead works with the LWDAs to evaluate their practices, highlight best practices from around the state and country, and facilitate effective implementation of those practices. GVRA's team of rehabilitation professionals also provides accessibility guidance to the LWDAs as requested. GVRA maintains offices statewide, in both metropolitan and rural areas, and is present in the local workforce development areas providing access to services distinctly focused on individuals with disabilities. In January 2022, GVRA will launch an on-line referral portal to increase access to services.

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 through the WorkSource Georgia Employment Network. SSA beneficiaries will have a direct connection to Title I services such as training, education, pre-employment and post-employment services.

Additionally, this opportunity creates an additional income source for the participating LWDA which is not related to WIOA Title I grant funds and serves as a bridge in closing the funding limitations associated with service demands. The impact, in terms of return on investment, is significant. There is a potential for LWDA to generate more than \$25,000 from SSA for each successfully employed participant. Moreover, through collaborative partnerships developed with a diverse selection of community service providers to feed enrollment, 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

GDOL has been an authorized Employment Network (EN) provider for the Ticket to Work (TTW) program since PY18. During PY20, GDOL renewed its Ticket Program Agreement with the Social Security Administration for an additional ten years. The new agreement included revised policies to help better serve Ticketholders and eliminate any operational uncertainties for ENs. The goals of the TTW 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 will 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.

As with most across the country, Georgia's TTW PY20 activities were met with the challenges and effects of the pandemic. Ticketholders already facing significant medical barriers were reluctant to return to work and many services were adapted for virtual delivery. Increased in-person service delivery and enrollment activities will ensue in PY22 and beyond, while some virtual options will remain when best suiting a customer's needs.

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 supports core partner programs in their efforts to provide services to 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 has offices in many rural areas and ensures those areas without offices are served by professional rehabilitation staff members from other locations. In January 2022, GVRA will launch an on-line referral system to expedite the referral/application process.

Youth with Disabilities

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 also cooperates with the DBHDD to provide the services needed to help mutual clients reach their competitive integrated employment goals. GVRA continues to participate with all school systems in the provision of Project Search, pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) and/or GVRA funded and provider delivered transition services.

Georgia's one-stop system engages youth in customized career pathways through collaborative partnerships between GVRA and Ga DOE. GVRA also provides transition services to out of school youth.

Formerly Incarcerated Individuals

Georgia is committed to help 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. GDOL staff also provides assistance to businesses seeking to interview and hire these skilled workers.

In order to support citizens returning to the labor market from incarceration, GDOL also provides 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.

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. TANF contributes to the quarterly partnership meetings and has utilized the WorkSource Partner Referral tool. As such, OWD and DFCS will continue to strengthen communication and collaboration at the state level to create opportunities to braid funding and provide wrap-around services to eligible participants in the workforce system as part of Georgia's goal to address a strengthen the labor market. TANF recipients may need multiple supports to ensure long-term success in the workforce, and 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 Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialists provide direct services to Georgia's Veteran Treatment Court system to help address the numerous barriers to employment of veterans convicted of non-violent crimes. While the individual is on probation, the DVOPs work directly with the court to provide individualized career services, employment and training opportunities, as well as additional resources available in Georgia's one-stop system, delivered

through a comprehensive case management process, 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 are highly encouraged to co-enroll 100% of their HVRP participants with 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 HVRP grantee representative to provide ongoing support, reemployment services, and connection to supportive partner resources. DVOPs maintain routine communications between all parties, documenting all services provided and follow-up notations accordingly, in order to reduce duplicative efforts and minimize redundancy. 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 works with the LVERs and Business Services team to connect veteran clients to employers who have a need for the skills and education the veteran has acquired.

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 nonprofit organizations or public agencies with the mission of combatting low literacy levels in their respective communities. 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 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.

(I) (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

GDOL – Business Services Unit: Regional Coordinators cover and serve all regions across the entire state’s one-stop system reflecting an emphasis on the employer-driven service delivery, and access to market driven staff dedicated to employer need fulfillment. BSU staff manage and coordinate the Job Readiness Program (SWAT), Career Expos, Customized Recruitment Services, Regional Summits, Georgia Employer Committees and coordinate with programs administered through the Georgia one-stop system. Additionally, BSU staff’s efforts are devoted towards developing and maintaining relationships with employers, identifying regional talent pools for target industries, coordinating the identification of employer talent requirements and matching those requirements with hiring needs. More information on GDOL’s BSU, including a list of services provided can be found in the Appendix.

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. The OWD Business Services Team is ultimately responsible for creating and maintaining all resource guides and toolkits for service programs. Beginning in 2020, the management of the COVID-19 National Dislocated Worker Grant and its reporting requirements have been a primary responsibility for the team.

TCSG, OAE

Each adult education program is required to have approved IET opportunities in each quarter of the fiscal year for their students. IET provides students with adult education, training, and workforce preparation activities concurrently, with the goal of helping students earn postsecondary and industry-recognized credentials to 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. OAE also provides training and support for providers to establish workplace literacy classes with local employers that aim to improve the productivity of the workforce.

GVRA

GVRA employment specialists collaborate 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 employment specialists also interface 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.

(J) (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.

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 GVRA 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 services in schools. GVRA provides

support to eligible students in their pursuit of achieving their post-secondary academic and vocational training.

(K)(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

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 provide approved IETs during each quarter of the fiscal year for their students. IET provides students with adult education, training, and workforce preparation activities concurrently, with the goal of helping students earn postsecondary and industry-recognized credentials to 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 simultaneously delivers the training component of the IET.

(L)(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.

(M) (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).
- Career Plus HSE (CPH): The CPH program allows individuals to combine previously earned high school credits, completed portions of the GED® or *HiSET*® exam, and technical college credentials to receive a high school equivalency (HSE) diploma.
- 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: Georgia now offers the *HiSET*® exam in addition to the GED® test, both of which are available in-person and online. Georgia is also piloting Career Plus HSE at several colleges.

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's through the use of ITAs to cover the RTI costs associated with RAPs. Furthermore, several LWDA's 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's 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.

(N)(I) 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 encourages local and regional partnerships with economic development organizations and entities, specifically through WorkSource Georgia Sector Partnerships. As economic development professionals throughout the state work to bring new or expanded employment opportunities to their respective regions and communities, it is critical that frontline business service staff are actively engaged in this process to promote the use of WIOA work-based learning services and inform local strategies to train and upskill current and incoming WIOA participants for the in-demand jobs in their communities.

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.

Finally, local adult education providers can collaborate with their local 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

(O) (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 (EG) for data collection and reporting. GWS and EG capture an array 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. The systemic capture of this data and outcomes allows for the evaluation and progress achievement 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>. Critical labor market information for employers and job seekers is also built in to GDOL's Employ Georgia labor exchange tool at <https://employgeorgia.com>

As emerging changes and burdens within the workforce system evolve, GDOL has and will continue to implement responsive on-line services to improve customer experiences. These include, but are not limited to:

EmployGeorgia (EG) Responsive Design

With an increasing number of web searches and transactions occurring on mobile and tablet devices, GDOL is ensuring its state-of-the-art employer and job seeker EG labor exchange services are fully compatible. EG's employer (Career Talent) and job seeker (Career Explorer) portals are being 'responsively redesigned' to ensure all network connection, screen sizes, types of interaction (touch screens, etc.,) and graphic resolutions are compatible with such mobile devices. As hardware technologies evolve in PY2022 and beyond, so too will GDOL's labor exchange software responsiveness to ensure ease of customer use.

WebEx Translation Service

Georgia services a wide range of customers with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and has historically taken steps to provide LEP accommodations to job seeker and employer customers with in-person and telephone dialogues. With the increasing use of virtual meetings and events, GDOL has committed to expand similar accommodations via those delivery systems as well.

In PY2021, GDOL implemented (and will continue to expand upon in PY2022 and beyond), real-time translation within its Webex Meetings and Webex Events platforms, allowing customers to have more inclusive and engaging meetings and events. If a customer does not speak English proficiently or has trouble understanding the speaker, those virtual platforms translate English to more than 100 other languages in closed captions for the viewer. As people speak, everything they say is automatically translated into captions that appear above the meeting or event controls. The intent is to enhance the exchange of information for customers with these specific language translation needs.

WOTC Out-of-State Partner Portal

Work Opportunity Tax Credits (WOTC) are an essential financial incentive to encourage employers to hire job seeker populations experiencing difficulties entering the labor force (e.g., ex-felons, disabled Ticket-to-Work holders, SNAP/TANF recipients, Veterans, etc.). To expedite the processing of WOTC out-of-state wage/benefit confirmations and SNAP/TANF requests of state partners, an on-line WOTC Partner Portal is being deployed to allow other states the capacity to upload tax credit applications. The portal will have the capacity to securely return requested information with minimal staff intervention, increasing the turnaround time of the out of state tax credit applications.

GDOL Staff Learning Center

GDOL is steadfast in its commitment to strategically lead staff development to ensure GDOL employees are well equipped to provide high-quality services to Georgia jobseekers and businesses. The Department's Office of Staff Development sponsors a wide variety of on-line developmental opportunities, which are cataloged/internally credentialed, within GDOL's Learning Center.

Areas of instruction include (but are not limited to): Cyber Security, Utilizing GDOL's Virtual Agent, Virtual Leadership for Managers, **Providing Customer Service Care During Business As Unusual Realities**, Sexual Harassment Prevention, etc.

Job specific training is also available such as, Utilizing EmployGeorgia's System to Assist Job Seekers and Employers, Intensive Interviewing Techniques, Administering Career Assessments, Accessing and Interpreting Labor Market Information, Résumé Writing Expertise, Etc. All are maintained in an on-demand/on-line Professional Development Center Library.

Upgrade Existing Telephone Systems and Implement a Virtual Agent

GDOL is upgrading its existing VOIP system and call center to the cloud for expanded capacity by leveraging artificial intelligence to incorporate an intelligent bot for call triage, incorporating unified communications for more efficient use of resources, and integrating the phone system into the existing Customer Relationship Management (CRM). GDOL strives for a more seamless customer interface.

Legacy UI Tax and UI Benefits Systems

The existing UI Tax and Benefits systems will be modernized through methodical updates of each sub-system and utilizing a micro-services approach, which is the more efficient method of implementing large scale applications. This will increase service efficiency to job seeker and employer customers.

Increase Customer Accessibility to GDOL

Completing a single sign-on portal for job seekers, employers, and third-party administrators to replace the multiple existing entry points for customers to access applications.

Distance Learning Program (DLT)

GDOL will continue to implement Distant Learning Technology (DLT) through eight (8) career centers located in rural counties/cities/towns where customers can attend remote training offered by either GDOL or external partners.

Eight Career Centers provide comprehensive workforce services to 26 Georgia counties. This technology equips GDOL to provide customers and staff in these rural counties access to the latest training and information via the use of technology. The goal is to address the needs of individuals who currently have little to no access to critical training and enrichment opportunities. The eight Career Centers will be equipped with video conferencing technology, computer hardware and software; audio and video equipment (including interactive audio/ video equipment); computer network components; telecommunication terminal equipment; data terminal equipment; and inside wiring.

The DLT program will facilitate improved services to our customers, GDOL staff, and LWDB customers, 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.

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 sites at <http://dol.georgia.gov/employers> and <http://employgeorgia.com>, by providing access to valuable, accessible information and candidate matching opportunities. 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.

With the burgeoning importance of the Entertainment industry in the State's economy, GDOL's Minors in Entertainment Unit offers an on-line registration system for employers and minors in the industry. Video and materials are also available describing the registration process, state rules and regulations, and other topical tools.

GDOL continues to provide and expand an array of resources, services and information in as many social media formats as possible to reach the most businesses and job-seeking customers. Instructional videos have been available to employers and job seekers related to the use of the Employ Georgia labor exchange system, Minors in Entertainment system, etc. Updated information related to reemployment and unemployment activities and requisites are published through the Department's presence on Facebook, You Tube, Twitter and RSS Feed. Smart phone applications for real-time labor market information and job matching services continue to be expanded.

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 general ledger of record for GVRA. For all VR case management and participant information, including participant related service provider obligations and tracking services authorized and provided, GVRA utilizes the Alliance case management system (AWARE). GVRA has agreements for both intrastate and interstate (SWIS) data exchanges with GDOL.

(P)(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 State Wage Interchange Information System (SWIS) 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 WIA PIRL file to GDOL, who runs the file through the USDOL/ETA E-WIPS system 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 WIPS on OWD's behalf.

2. 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.

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), TCSG's Banner system, the National Student Clearinghouse, the State Wage Interchange System, 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

Georgia's Employ Georgia (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, RESEA 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. This robust, centralized data collection system is coupled with extensive staff experience with Federal Grant reporting.

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.

GDOL has successfully submitted all federally-required USDOL-ETA Wagner-Peyser, Veterans, Trade, RESEA and Agriculture reports over the past two decades, along with 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's data collection and reporting system is an electronic case management system (AWARE) and the data collected is specific to individuals served through the GVRA Program. This system collects all required federal reporting data but 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://tcsq.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 operations 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 originally issued WGI LS-19-015 in November of 2019, which was revised in November 2021 to reflect the updated criteria approved by the SWDB. This WIG, titled One-Stop Certification Guidelines, provides guidance regarding the minimum criteria for the certification of comprehensive and affiliate one-stops throughout Georgia. This WIG provides background on the American Job Center network and lists the categories of WorkSource Georgia's One-Stop Certification, which are used to evaluate the one-stop for effectiveness: customer flow of services, 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, with 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-19-015R 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.

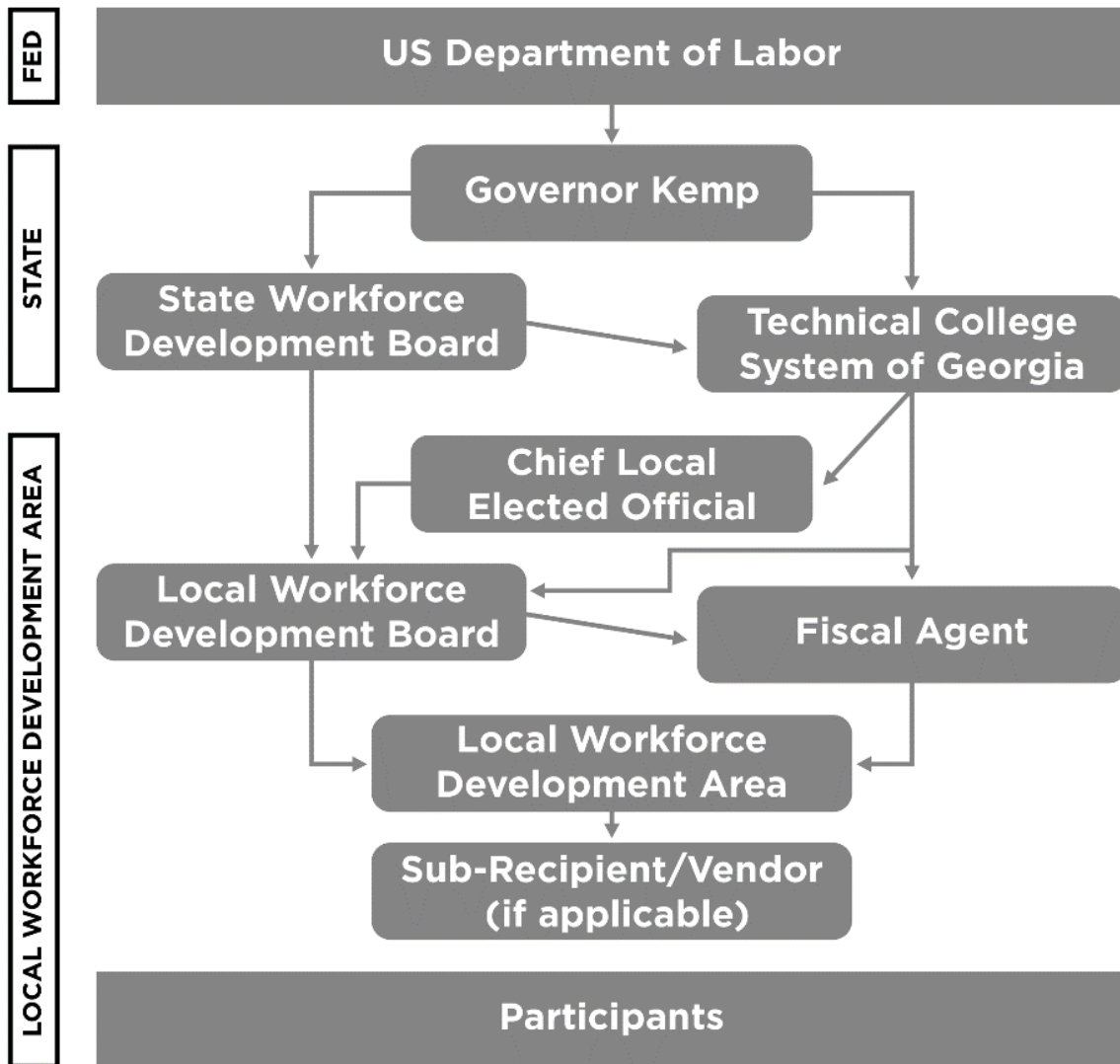
WorkSource Georgia Academy Trainings

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, which 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.

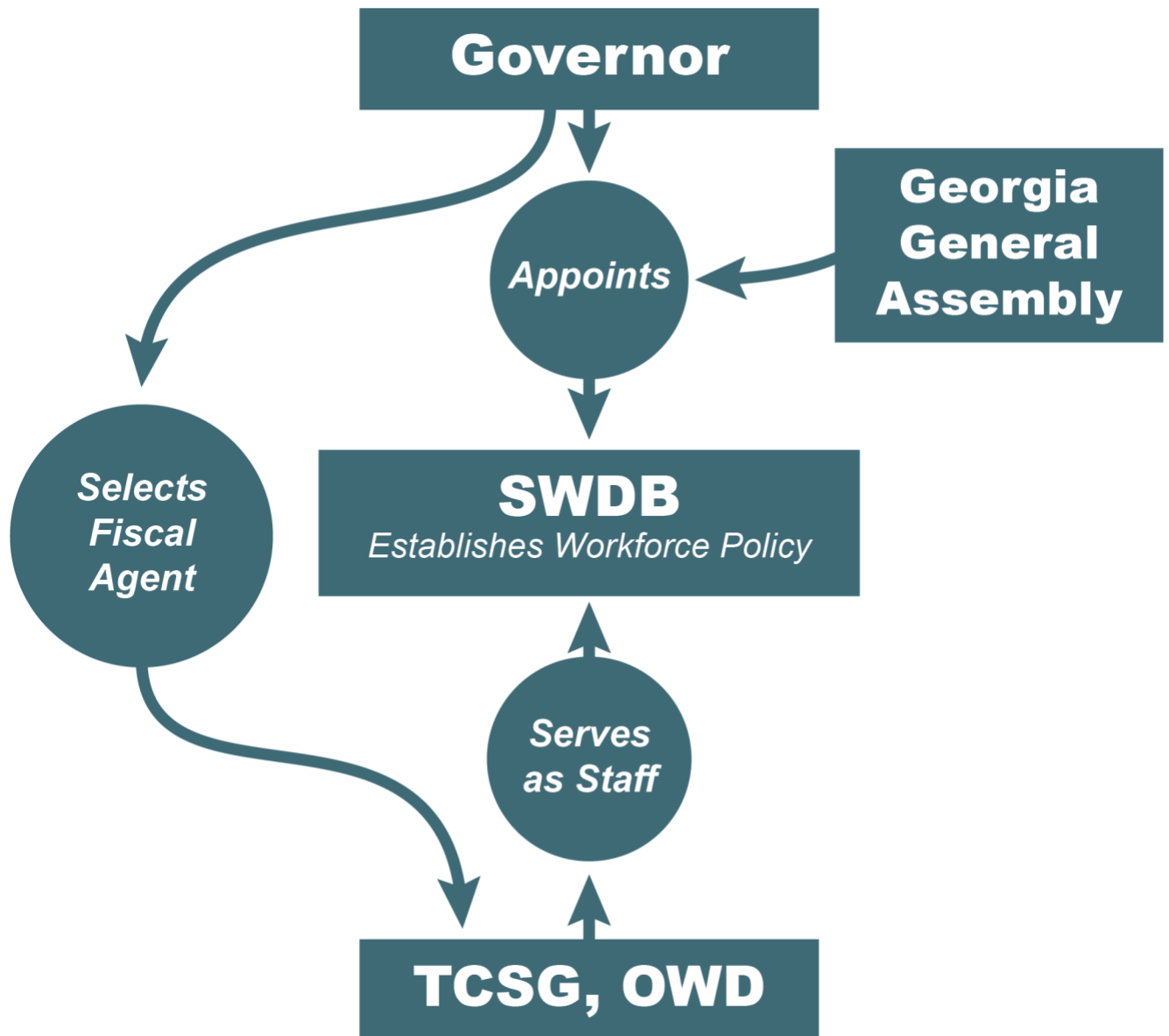
(3) State Program and Board Overview

(Q) (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 LWDAs.



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 LWDAs. Local Elected Officials (LEO) in those LWDAs 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

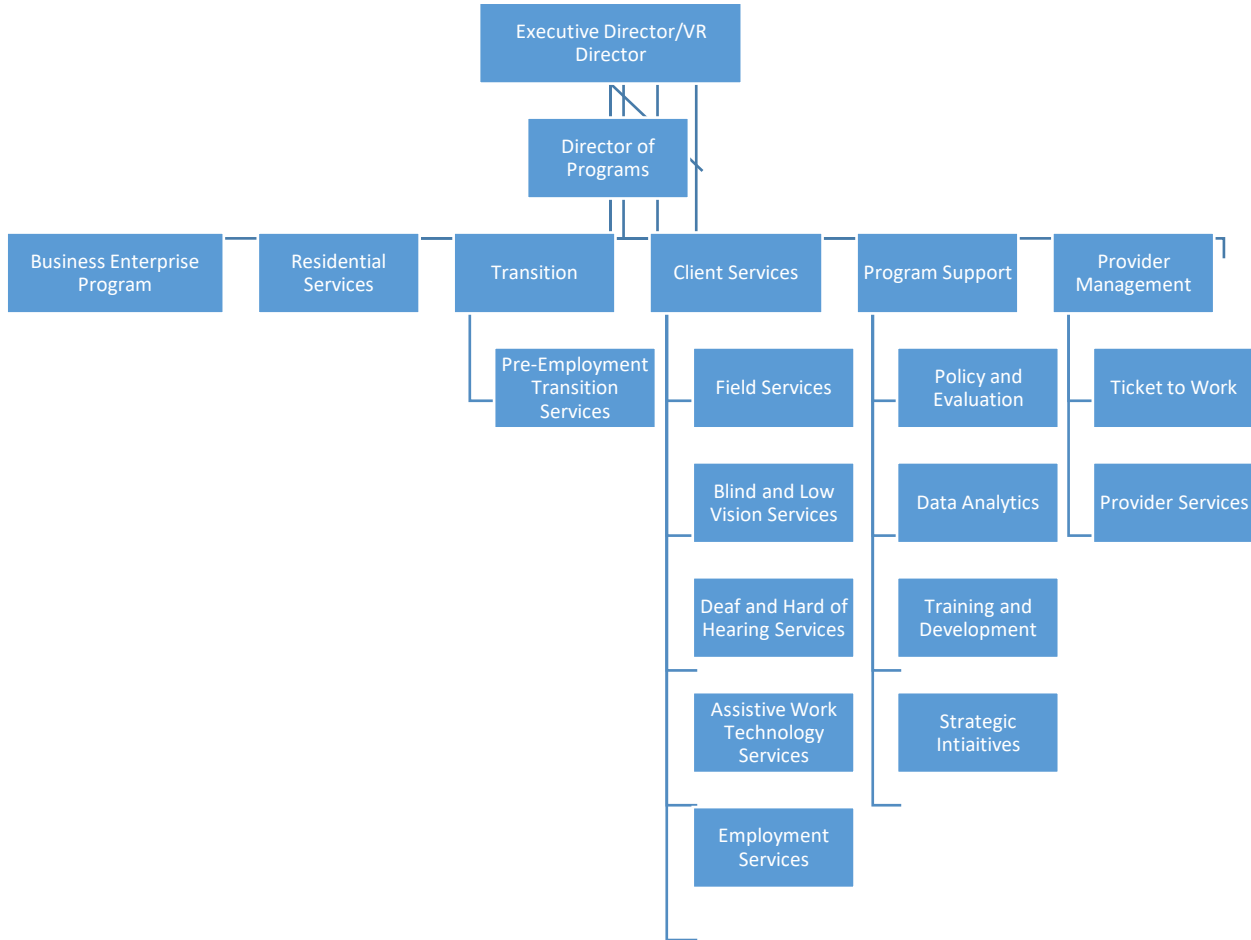
The Technical College System of Georgia’s Office of Adult Education is the State’s pass-through entity for WIOA Title II funds. OAE is responsible for administering funds to eligible adult education providers and overseeing sub-recipient program performance. OAE provides funding to eligible local entities 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, 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.



(R)(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
Chris Wells	Executive Director, GVRA	Vocational Rehabilitation

Candice Broce	Commissioner, DHS	SNAP, TANF
Wendell Dallas	Southern Gas Company	Business Representative
Jay Cunningham	Superior Plumbing	Business Representative
Phil Sutton	Kubota	Business Representative
Frank S. Newman	Batson Cook	Business Representative
Stuart Countess	Kia	Business Representative
Kellie Brownlow	First Step Staffing	Business Representative
Downing Barber	Barberitos	Business Representative
Theresa Fisher	Southwire Company	Business Representative
Logan Leslie	Northern Rock, Inc.	Business Representative
Sam McCachern	Thomas & Hutton	Business Representative
Dell Keith	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
Tyrone Oliver	Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice	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
Pending	Atlanta Electrical Contractors Assn.	Apprenticeship
Pending	Veterans Services	CBO
James Wilburn	VET ²	CBO
Bart Gobeil	Board of Trustees, Georgia Conservancy	CBO
Roy Edward Taylor		
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 measure 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.

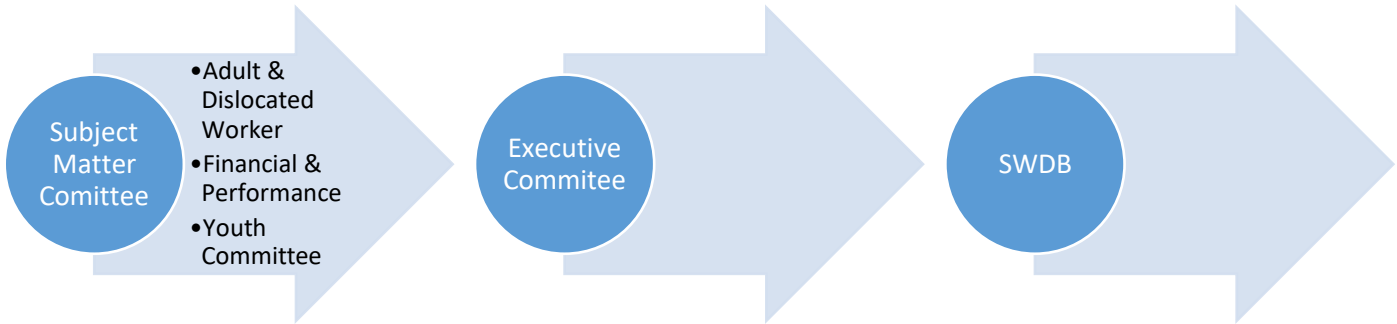
SWDB meets at least four times a year and at such other times as the chairperson determines or as provided by the rules of the board. A member of the board can designate another person to attend meetings of the board on such person's behalf. Such designee may participate in the activities and discussions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

Before actions are voted on by the SWDB, the SWDB committees vet them. There are currently three (3) 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, Finance & Performance Committee, and Youth 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.
- Finance & Performance Committee: The Finance & Performance Committee receives information pertaining to the receipt of WIOA Title I funding and the distribution of the funds to local workforce providers throughout the state. The committee is also charged with utilizing performance data to help drive the decisions before the SWDB, monitoring the State Eligible Training Providers, as well as reviewing the progress and results of the annual LWDA monitoring.

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
(S) (A) Assessment of Core Programs

TCSG, OWD

In addition to the assessments of the workforce system described in Section II(b)(4), LWDAAs, 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) 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.

Target Negotiation and Strategic Improvement Plans: OAE negotiates enrollment and performance targets with all providers annually. The purpose of the target negotiation process is to allow providers to negotiate reasonable, but ambitious, targets while still ensuring OAE fulfills its roles and responsibilities as a pass-through entity of WIOA funds. Programs that are not on track to meet their targets during the year will receive additional technical assistance, reporting requirements, or monitoring visits. Programs that do not meet their targets at the end of one year may be placed on a Strategic Improvement Plan. Programs that do not meet all targets for two consecutive years will experience a financial sanction involving a reduction in federal 231 funds per 2 CFR 200.339.

GVRA

GVRA negotiates performance goals with the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). Goals are established statewide with local accountability. Once these goals are finalized, GVRA monitors the data and develops plans of action to improve or enhance performance.

On an individual level, GVRA plans to provide personalized metrics to staff on a regular basis so that performance data is consistently available. Supervisors will monitor the performance and take action as necessary to ensure services to individuals with disabilities are provided timely and appropriately.

Quality Assurance Specialists are being hired to enhance the case review process which addresses accuracy and compliance to improve service delivery and increase successful employment outcomes. In addition, to aid in performance, GVRA's training unit has been revitalized to ensure quality and consistent training is provided to all staff.

GDOL

GDOL utilizes the USDOL-ETA negotiated performance goals (See Section II(b)(3)) for its basis of assessment, and has not developed any additional state-level performance measures. GDOL assessments will evaluate programmatic activities based on WIOA's federally negotiated Title III 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

(T)(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.

(U)(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 LWDA's 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

PY19		Actual	Negotiated Rate
Q2 Entered Employment Rate	Adults	86.8%	77.0%
	Dislocated Workers	88.1%	79%
Q4 Entered Employment Rate	Adults	83.1%	70.5%
	Dislocated Workers	84.2%	76.0%
Q2 Median Earnings	Adults	\$6,556	\$4600
	Dislocated Workers	9,468	\$5150
Credential Attainment Rate	Adults	76.6%	42.0
	Dislocated Workers	76.2%	64.0
Measurable Skill Gains	Adults	49.4%	Baseline
	Dislocated Workers	43.0%	Baseline
Q2 Entered Employment/Education/Training Rate	Youth	80.6%	62.0%
Q4 Entered Employment/Education/Training Rate	Youth	78.9%	62.0%
Q2 Median Earnings	Youth	\$3,251	Baseline
Credential Attainment Rate	Youth	67.3%	72.5%
Measurable Skill Gains	Youth	38.5%	Baseline

PY20		Actual	Negotiated Rate
Q2 Entered Employment Rate	Adults	82.5%	77.5%
	Dislocated Workers	84.7%	78.0%
Q4 Entered Employment Rate	Adults	79.6%	75.0%
	Dislocated Workers	86.4%	75.0%
Q2 Median Earnings	Adults	\$7,096	\$6,000
	Dislocated Workers	\$9,997	\$6,800
Credential Attainment Rate	Adults	78.3%	60.5%
	Dislocated Workers	77.5%	65.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	Adults	64.5%	38.0%
	Dislocated Workers	62.9%	29.0%
Q2 Entered Employment/Education/Training Rate	Youth	74.4%	68.0%
Q4 Entered Employment/Education/Training Rate	Youth	75.3%	67.0%
Q2 Median Earnings	Youth	\$3,220	\$2,700
Credential Attainment Rate	Youth	70.9%	60.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	Youth	45.1%	38.6%

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 in the first year. In the second year, OAE negotiated targets for all performance indicators. The table below displays the previous assessment results for the last two program years (PY) with complete sets of data:

Performance Indicator	PY19 Negotiated	PY19 Actual	PY20 Negotiated	PY20 Actual
Employment 2nd Quarter after Exit	Baseline	42.72%	41.00%	41.38%
Employment 4th Quarter after Exit	Baseline	40.93%	40.70%	42.58%
Median Earnings (2nd Quarter after Exit)	Baseline	\$3,939.65	\$3,764.00	\$4,234.13
Credential Attainment Rate	Baseline	57.32%	43.40%	59.98%
Measurable Skill Gains	57.00%	37.49%	53.70%	40.41%

Measurable Skill Gains performance was significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on the assessment results, OAE will continue 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. Through the local program target negotiation process, OAE will place programs failing to meet annual targets on Strategic Improvement Plans. 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 is assessed by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). As data for the new common performance measures is submitted, GVRA leadership developed key performance indicators to capture productivity goals (number of applicants, eligibility determinations, and individual plans for employment completed annually), timeliness of effort (eligibility determination, work plans developed, and securing employment after service completion), quantity and quality of employment outcomes, the percentage of potentially eligible students that become participants or otherwise transition successfully, and examining re-service and attrition rates. GVRA continues to evaluate its strengths, weaknesses and needed process changes. Measureable Skills Gains was the only performance measurement applicable for PY 2020 and PY 2021. RSA and GVRA leadership negotiated a measureable skill gain rate of 25.8% for PY 2020 and 28.5% for PY 2021. All measurements are being negotiated for PY 2022 and PY 2023.

	Served	Exited	MSG	Neg'd Level for MSG	Q2 Empl. Rate	Median Earnings	Q4 Empl. Rate	Credential Attainment
2017	21,095	5,850	38.6%					
2018	22,583	6,347	24%		48.6%	\$3,231		
2019	21,887	7,447	34.1%		46%	\$3,284	44.3%	0%
2020	16,495	5,037	30.3%	25.8%	45.4%	\$3,489	40.7%	23.2%

GDOL

GDOL utilizes an analysis of key data indicators to assess the effectiveness of its reemployment activities, in addition to USDOL-ETA negotiated performance goals and supporting regression models for program assessment.

Prior to drafting our WIOA Title III Wagner Peyser planned activities for PY2022-23, GDOL carefully analyzes 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 post Covid-19 Pandemic economy have provided an increasing abundance of job openings in PY21, our workforce system will be 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. An increasing number of job seekers are also seeking to pursue career redirection, while many employers simultaneously seek to re-skill their workforce.

As a result, we recognize 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.

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.

Even with all of the above, our previous assessment and experience 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 will continue to expand its ability to avail critical self and staff-assisted services remotely, when best addressing a customer's needs.

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.

(V) (D) Evaluation

The workforce system will continuously assess its core programs and evaluate them on their effectiveness and efficiency; some examples of these assessments include, but are not limited to: constant monitoring of local and state performance measures, the State Workforce Development Board's Finance & Performance Committee meetings, 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 calls with LWDA leadership and staff. 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
(W) (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.

(X)(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 could apply for the following grant opportunities:

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	Integrated English Language & Civics Education in combination with Integrated Education & Training

To demonstrate effectiveness, applicants were required to submit a completed demonstrated effectiveness table that included 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.
- training.
- Applicants were required to meet the minimum threshold in each area to be eligible to apply. OAE only reviewed applications for applicants that demonstrated effectiveness.

Grant applications were due in November 2020 to accommodate for the COVID-19 pandemic. Upon receipt, a team of external reviewers reviewed and scored applications from eligible providers using the General Adult Education, IELCE, Corrections, and Family Literacy rubrics. Specifically, the rubrics required 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 considered the extent to which each eligible provider’s application demonstrated 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 (LWBD) local plan, LWDBs reviewed 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 provided feedback on how the applicant could better align their services with the local plan. OAE considered the LWDB feedback as part of consideration four in determining the extent to which the applicant's proposed activities aligned with the LWDB's local plans and the one-stop provider's activities.

OAE awarded 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>).

OAE then made funding adjustments based on negotiations with awarded providers and previous funding history, if applicable. Both general adult education grants and IELCE grants are for a four-year period, from July 2021 to July 2025. 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, ability to meet their performance targets, and previous funding history.

(ii) Direct and Equitable Access

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

- Published 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;
- Hosted a technical assistance day for all eligible providers prior to opening the application. OAE also recorded the technical assistance day and posted the recording on its website so that all eligible providers had access to the information, even if they were unable to attend the technical assistance day in person; and
- Answered applicant questions directly on TCSG's website in a public forum, so that all applicants had access to the answers.
- In addition, OAE used 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.

(Y) (C) Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation

GVRA 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

(Z)(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

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(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 LWDAs, 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), TCSG's Banner system, the National Student Clearinghouse, the State Wager Interchange System, 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 uses the Alliance data system for case management and federal reporting. The system also tracks co-enrollment for quarterly reporting purposes.

(AA) (B) Assessment of Participants' Post-Program Success

TCSG, OWD

OWD contracted with EMSI to conduct an economic value assessment for the state office and each of the 19 LWDA's. The analysis including a ROI on government expenditures and an economic impact analysis of the organizations. Through its comprehensive analysis, EMSI found a 2.04 benefit-cost ratio for the state's WIOA programs and a ratio of 2.4 for Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. With a \$2.04 value for every \$1 spent after various adjustments for non-WIOA program factors and government savings on benefit program expenditures, the state and its LWDA's have every reason to feel the success of their efforts on behalf of the participants and as responsible stewards of government dollars. The study also found that the impact of the income of OWD's 40 employees results in an economic impact to the state of an additional 249 jobs and \$20.0M in total income (\$18.8M in labor earnings and \$1.2M in other income).

TCSG, OAE

OAE's GALIS system is set up to conduct regularly scheduled data matches with Navigator, TCSG's Banner system, National Student Clearinghouse, the State Wager Interchange System, 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.

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

Through EG and GWS data collection and wage matching, GDOL conducts quarterly analysis of progress toward achieving negotiated performance goals on common measures. Through contractual agreement with TCSG, GDOL also provides federal reporting services for the latter.

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.

(CC) (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 follows all applicable laws and has written policies and procedures regarding confidential information as outlined in CFR § 361.38 and found in the *Client Services Policy Manual*.

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

GDOL

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 POS.

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

POS 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, and may also be provided electronically to the customer if being assisted in a virtual environment.

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 POS for covered persons. GDOL staff have the capability of completing a new customer registration, updates, POS verification and documentation virtually, if it is more desirable or preferable for the customer.

All veterans and eligible persons who have been identified as eligible for POS will have their customer information files documented to reflect POS it has been provided, along with any additional services provided.

GDOL administers the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) program authorized under Title 38, United States Code, Section 4102A (b) 5 (38 U.S.C. §4102A(b)5). The program staffs Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist who provide direct assistance to

qualified veterans, Local Veteran Employment Representatives (LVER) who work with businesses on behalf of job seeking veterans and eligible persons, and Consolidated specialist who perform the role of both DVOP and LVER. The program offers ongoing formal and informal training, technical assistance and operates mandatory Incentive Award activities to better prepare and incentivize the JVSG staff to not only excel but to go above and beyond when assisting those who have served.

In efforts to closely monitor POS provisions, State JVSG staff conduct daily log reviews to ensure all veterans and eligible persons received POS. The GDOL Labor Exchange System is designed to assist with monitoring by identifying any individuals who might be eligible to receive POS. AJC staff review the customer file and validate that POS information was provided. The State has also created a daily exception report which alerts management within 24 hours of any potentially eligible person receiving staff assisted services, without a POS documented in their file. In addition, the State’s technical assistance staff provides ongoing technical assistance for the JVSG program and monitors POS administration during onsite reviews.

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 by a Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialist. After confirmation, Wagner Peyser staff will “warm handoff” the Veteran/Eligible Spouse to a DVOP Specialist for the provision of services, which are delivered through Case Management.

In order for the veteran or eligible spouse to be provided DVOP Specialist services, they 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.

<p style="text-align: center;">Significant Barriers to Employment (SBEs) include:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Special Populations include:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A special disabled or disabled veteran 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Veterans aged 18-24
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homeless 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vietnam-era veterans
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An offender who is currently incarcerated or has been released from incarceration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Transitioning Service Member (TSM) in need of individualized career services

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A recently-separated service member, who has been unemployed for 27 or more weeks in the previous 12 months • Lacking a high school diploma or equivalent certificate • Low-income individual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
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Wagner-Peyser (WP) staff provide services to veteran customers who do not identify a Significant Barrier to Employment, or do not wish to see a DVOP Specialist. Veterans may also receive reemployment services from the GDOL through the UI Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program. RESEA staff 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.

OWD

WIOA Title 1 establishes a priority requirement with respect to funds allocated to LWDA’s for adult and employment training activities in accordance with TEGL’s 10-09, TEGL 19-16 and TEGL 20-13. The Office of Workforce Development has developed trainings and webinars outlining Priority of Service implementation and collaborative efforts for education and training assistance to ease the transition of military service members from active duty to civilian life. Successful partnerships with other Veteran Service Organizations, creation of outreach strategies, meaningful connections, intake and co-enrollment processes allow local workforce areas to not only meet the Veterans training and employment needs, but basic fundamental needs such as, housing, medical/ counseling and other interim needs that may be preventing them from entering and maintaining long-term employment.

(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 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. For example, OWD offered training webinars on "Disability Awareness in the COVID Environment," as well as "How to Move Standardized Testing to a Virtual Platform" which included training on accommodations for 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, three LWDA's – specifically Northeast Georgia, East Central Georgia Workforce Development 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. Interprettype 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 ADA 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

To best serve customer needs, robust LEP services are routinely provided in local areas that serve significant LEP populations. Bi-lingual 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 bi-lingual staff are unavailable on-site, One-Stop staff members are instructed to use GDOL's Multi-Lingual Directory. A Multi-Lingual Directory of personnel is maintained and distributed, facilitating immediate assistance for the LEP individual in accessing services. In some cases, these services are provided to groups of individuals (e.g., a Rapid Response Employee Information Session).

GDOL also 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.

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.”¹⁷ 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.¹⁸ 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 report their LEP status 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. Bi-lingual 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 bi-lingual 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 Education (IELCE)

¹⁷ Regulation 29 C.F.R. § 38.9(a)

¹⁸ Regulation 29 C.F.R. § 38.9(b)

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, GVRA, as well as the State Workforce Development Board. Additionally, the group sought feedback from the state's local workforce development areas and business representatives. 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.

Approval & Submission Process for 2022 Modification

For the required two-year modification, the same working group convened in October 2021 to begin discussing necessary edits to the plan ahead of the March 2022 deadline. All edits were incorporated into the plan and presented to the SWDB Executive Committee on January 5, 2022, and the plan was approved for posting to allow for public comment.

Throughout the public comment period, comments will be addressed by the appropriate partner and any additional edits incorporated into the plan. At the conclusion of the public comment period, the plan will be taken down and presented, along with a summary of comments received, to the SWDB for final approval on February 17, 2022.

After final SWDB approval of the plan, the working group responsible for compiling the State Plan will meet regularly to evaluate the goals, strategies, and partnerships throughout 2022 and 2023. These meetings began after submission of the 2020 plan and have been fruitful, especially in addressing the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, as the group was able to discuss their challenges and successes over the past two years. Though the workforce system has been challenged by the pandemic, emphasizing the shared goals of partners and ensuring open communication has been key to Georgia's success.

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

(DD) (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

(EE) (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 LWDAs 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 LWDAs 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 LWDAs 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 LWDAs 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.

(FF) (C) Local Area Designation Appeals Process

OWD designated all LWDAs 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.

(GG) (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

(HH) (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://www.tcsg.edu/worksource/resources-for-practitioners/policies-guidance/>. All substantial changes made to the guide are reviewed and approved by SWDB. In order to inform LWDAs 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 LWDAs.

In order to better disseminate information relating to the WIOA transition, OWD created the Workforce Implementation Guidance (WIG) Letter. WIGs were designed to replicate USDOL TEGs. WIGs are created by OWD staff and enable staff to provide standardized technical assistance to LWDA's 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://tcsq.edu/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://tcsq.edu/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://tcsq.edu/worksource/resources-for-practitioners/helpdesk/>.

(II) (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 2021, nearly 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, Returning Citizens, and Out-of-School Youth. 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 returning citizens within the skilled trades 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 since PY18. Georgia's Rapid Response strategy, coordinated with State and local workforce development partners, delivers services designed to avert a planned layoff and/or minimize disruption for individuals and communities in actual dislocation events, as well as to mitigate layoffs that may occur. The primary intent is to quickly identify major layoffs and customize an approach of resources and services to help workers transition to new jobs as quickly as possible.

Entities in need of pre-layoff aversion services included Employers who generally fell in three categories: faltering companies, companies facing unforeseen business circumstances and companies affected by natural disasters.

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). LWDAs 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 LWDAs and service providers.

Georgia Department of Labor staff also 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.

GDOL's Rapid Response team is responsible for receiving all WARN notifications, as well as any early warning notifications gathered, 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. 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

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.

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.

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:

- Informational and reemployment services for workers
- Solutions for businesses in transition (growth and decline)
- Convening, facilitating, and brokering connections
- 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.

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 LWDAs 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.

(JJ) (C) Rapid Response: Responding to Disasters

At the center of the State's Rapid Response layoff aversion strategy is the development of successful partnerships, as these relationships and connections provide the foundation for a successful response when disaster strikes. Unforeseen natural disasters can render long-term damage 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.

GDOL's Rapid Response team leverages its flexibility and mobility to assist in recovery efforts in the event of natural disasters. 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. This list is updated and disseminated to GDOL's LWDA partners. 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.

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. OWD can also 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.

(KK) (D) Rapid Response: Trade Adjustment Assistance

When layoffs and business closings occur, including those with a foreign trade impact for which Trade petitions are submitted to USDOL, GDOL works closely with OWD. 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 event, early-intervention services provided by GDOL Rapid Response may include discussions with employers about TAA before a petition is filed. Trade-related information is also shared directly with impacted employees during Rapid Response Employee Information Sessions. Once a petition is filed, TAA staff notify all key 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 – often in coordination with Rapid Response activities - to inform the workers about the benefits and services they may receive as well as the eligibility requirements associated with each benefit. This includes the co-enrolling with partner programs, designed to increase the likelihood that dislocated workers will achieve successful outcomes and obtain suitable employment as soon as possible.

Dislocated 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:

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 up to five separate résumés and access thousands of job opportunities listed by employers. Trade services are tracked in GDOL's Georgia Workforce System and are 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.

TAA maintains established partnerships with:

- WIOA for the provision of assessments, case management, and supportive services;
- Vocational Rehabilitation Services to assist trade-affected individuals with disabilities attain skills and support to help them prepare for, secure, and retain employment;
- Veterans Services to ensure priority of service to eligible trade-impacted workers;
- Technical College System of Georgia and other eligible training providers to facilitate access to quality certifications, credentials, and affordable higher education
- Community-based organizations; and
- The U.S. Department of Labor to ensure proper administration and continuation of TAA grant funding

TAA staff provide ongoing technical support and training to participants, employers, GDOL and WIOA staff throughout the lifespan of a Trade certification.

(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 RAP registration process. To further promote the expansion of RAPs throughout Georgia, OWD recently administered the American Apprenticeship Initiative (AAI) Grant, and is currently administering the Apprenticeship State Expansion (ASE) Grant, both of which are federal apprenticeship grants aimed at increasing high-quality apprenticeship opportunities for Georgia's workforce.

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.

***(LL) 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).

(MM) 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.

(NN) Training Providers eligible before the WIOA transition period

(OO) 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.

(PP) 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 LWDBs have additional, more stringent eligibility requirements. If a potential ETP is within that LWDB, the potential ETP must meet the LWDB's more stringent eligibility requirements. Potential ETPs should check with their LWDB to ascertain application requirements for information specific to that LWDB.

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.

STUDENTS PAST PERFORMANCE INFORMATION – past 12 months period _	Minimum Standard	Definition
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 access 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. LWDAs 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).

STUDENTS PAST PERFORMANCE INFORMATION – past 12 months period	Minimum Standard	Definition
Must pass two of five measures		
Employment Rate 2 nd Quarter after Exit	70 %	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	60 %	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	\$11.50	The median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the 2 nd quarter after exit
Credential Attainment Rate	60 %	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	20 %	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

(QQ) 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)

(RR) 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.

ALL WIOA STUDENTS PAST PERFORMANCE INFORMATION – Preceding program year	Minimum Standard	Definition
Must pass two of five measures		
Employment Rate 2 nd Quarter after Exit	70 %	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	60 %	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	\$11.50	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	60 %	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	20 %	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
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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 WOIA. 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.”

(SS) 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.

(TT) ETPL Appeal Procedure

(UU) 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 utilizes a Priority of Service policy for individualized services and training services to implement priority 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 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.

In the case 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, OWD will review the LWDA's policies and procedures to ensure the LWDA has the correct information needed to administer priority of service through the corrective action period. If any LWDA has a question about priority of service, they can submit their technical assistance question to WIOA Programs email WIOAPrograms@tcsge.edu.

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

"Priority of service is not an eligibility criterion, but rather is a means to ensure emphasis on providing services to higher-need populations. However, inclusion in a priority group does not bypass WIOA eligibility requirements.

WIOA Priority Populations

WIOA specifies that priority for Adult services must be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient. Unlike its predecessor, WIOA requires that priority applies regardless of funding levels, making the priority of service automatic for all WIOA Adult funding.

Veterans Priority of Service Veterans under WIOA § 3 (63)(A) receive priority of service for all USDOL-funded programs as described in the Jobs for Veterans Act (38 U.S.C. 4215 (2)), meaning priority must be given to veterans and eligible spouses for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs. According to TEGL 10-09, veterans and eligible spouses, including widows and widowers as defined in the statute and regulations, are eligible for priority of service. The Final Rule requires that the broad definition of "veteran" found in 38 U.S.C. 101(2) be used. Additionally, "eligible spouse" is defined in section 2(a) of the Jobs for Veterans Act.

While veterans receive priority for WIOA services, LWDA's and applicable service 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.

Implementing Priority of Service in WIOA Adult Programs

Implementing priority means that these individuals receive services earlier in time or instead of non-priority individuals. Veterans and eligible spouses of veterans who otherwise meet the eligibility requirements for Adult programs must receive the highest

priority for services. For Adult programs, WIOA priority and Veteran priority categories should be merged and provided in the following order:

1. First, to veterans and eligible spouses who are also recipients of public assistance, low income individuals, or basic skills deficient. Military earnings are not to be included as income for veterans and transitioning service members.
2. Second, to individuals who are not veterans or eligible spouses who meet WIOA priority criteria.
3. Third, to veterans and eligible spouses who are not included in WIOA's priority groups.
4. Last, to individuals outside the groups given priority under WIOA, but who still meet the eligibility criteria.

NOTE: Individuals with a disability are not automatically included in a priority category solely on the basis of the disability. However, individuals with disabilities are considered a family of one for income determination purposes, which usually (but not always) indicates their status as low-income. Additionally, receipt of SSI would qualify an individual as a recipient of public assistance and meets the definition of low-income detailed below, thus placing that individual in a priority category.”

(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 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 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 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://tcsq.edu/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's 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), LWDA 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://tcsq.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/OSY-Waiver-Request.pdf>). ETA initially approved the requested waiver for Program Years 2018 and 2019 on June 18, 2019. A second waiver request for Program Year 2020 was approved on September 28, 2020. The current waiver is approved until June 2022. The LWDAs are currently designing and implementing programming reflective of the waiver 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 and the HiSET as 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 launched a "Career Plus HSE" option at five Adult Education providers that are 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 without requiring a standardized test. For example, an individual is able to complete his pending high school credits online while completing two technical college certificates (TCCs). This dual-enrollment option fast track individuals to better employment with sustainable wages. By expanding high school equivalency options, LWDA's 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. LWDA's 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 LWDA's to improve youth service delivery, which includes encouraging the establishment of, as well as engagement with the LWDB's youth committee. In order to consider differences in LWDA's 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 robust technical assistance structure 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 LWDA's. Georgia is committed to providing, through LWDA's, 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. LWDA's 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

OWD through State Policy has further define the term “requires additional assistance” to provide more guidance to LWDA's. The term requires additional assistance is defined as experiencing one or more of the following:

- i. Educational Barriers
 - a. In School (secondary or postsecondary) with a Grade Point Average of less than 2.0
 - b. Has quit secondary or postsecondary program without attaining a recognized credential

- c. Has repeated at least one secondary grade level
 - d. One or more years behind modal grade for one's age group, with particular emphasis on those two or more years behind modal grade
 - e. Below average academic test scores relative to students in his/her class with particular emphasis on those in the bottom 25% of the test score distribution
 - f. Placed on probation, suspended from school, or expelled from school one or more times during the past two years
 - g. Documented behavioral problems at school
 - h. Deemed at risk of dropping out of school by a school official
 - i. Has received court agency referrals mandating school attendance
 - j. For each year of secondary education, the individual is at least two semester credits behind the rate required to graduate from high school
- ii. Employment Barriers
- a. Has never held a job
 - b. Has been fired from a job within the 12 months prior to program application
 - c. Has never held a full-time job for more than 13 consecutive weeks
 - d. Has a family history of chronic unemployment, including long-term public assistance
 - e. Has been unemployed six months out of the last two years
 - f. Has little or no successful work experience, a long and unsuccessful work search, or little to no exposure to successfully employed adults
 - g. Is a high school graduate who has not held a full-time regular job for more than three consecutive months
- iii. Living Arrangements
- a. Resides in a non-traditional household setting (i.e., single parent, lives with unofficial guardian, latchkey, grandparents, domestic partners, etc.)
 - b. Lives with only one or neither of his/her natural parents
 - c. Lives in public housing
 - d. Lives in a federally-designated high poverty area (see section III(B) for definition of high-poverty area)
- iv. Medical/School/Family Barriers
- a. Lacks parental support

- b. Has emotional, medical, physical, cognitive, or psychological impairment which creates a significant impediment to employment
- c. Has been referred to, or being treated by, an agency for substance abuse related problem(s)
- d. Has experienced recent traumatic events, is a victim or abuse, or resides in an abusive environment as documented by a school official or professional
- e. Faces significant personal challenges, including dysfunctional domestic situation, lack of supportive services, documented behavioral problems, and substance abuse by the youth or family members

v. Characteristics

- a. Children of incarcerated parents
- b. Emancipated youth
- c. Immigrant or refugee
- d. Migrant youth

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://tcsge.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/OSY-Waiver-Request.pdf>). ETA initially 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. A second waiver request was approved on September 28, 2020 for PY 20. The LWDA’s have planned, designed and launched programming for PY 20 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 most of 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 had to cease ISY programming altogether. In our high-poverty counties, disregarding ISY programming is a very costly sacrifice. OWD seeks the continuation of this waiver 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.

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 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.

PY 20 Waiver Performance

To accurately assess the efficacy of the 75% OSY waiver in the state, OWD polled LWDA’s on their utilization of the waiver and the impact of the waiver related to the total number of youth served through the waiver. These were the results:

Number of LWDA’s that Utilized the Waiver on PY 20	Total Number of ISY served with the Waiver on PY 20
6	285

Five LWDA's successfully developed and launched an expanded ISY youth program that resulted in an increased number of ISY served in the State of Georgia. Due to the waiver 240 ISY with barriers to employment received services that otherwise would have not been available. This is particularly important due to the limitations brought to ISY by the COVID 19 restrictions. We asked LWDA's to share success stories that reflected the effectiveness of the waiver in Georgia.

Youth Programming Success Story (1) "ISY with Barriers served through the Waiver"

The WIOA Title I program at Rome High School is vital to a number of at risk students each school year. Many of our students come to us without any work experience and low self-esteem. A recent student that comes to mind is "B". We started working with B during spring of his junior year. He was living in an unstable home with his mother and one brother, but he never disclosed his challenges. B suffered from anxiety, had no work experience and by the time he completed high school, he relocated at least five times. B was placed at the local public library through work experience. After he started receiving WIOA Title I services and supports he would ask why we wanted to help him. B soon trusted the staff assisting him and enjoyed his work. Toward the end of his senior year, B had enough desire and confidence to interview for a full scholarship. He was awarded the Gate Scholarship. B is currently majoring in Physics with a minor in Business. He is also planning to obtain a master's degree in the near future. B is definitely a success story of how a little extra assistance through WIOA Title I services and encouragement can change the trajectory of a young person's life.

Next, OWD polled the local areas on how the PY 20 waiver extension impacted their performance outcomes specifically, Q2 Youth Education and Employment, Q4 Youth Education and Employment, Q2 Median Earnings Credentials and Measurable Skills Gain. All five LWDA's reported better performance results due to their increased flexibility to serve ISY. It is important to highlight that even though the LWDA's are utilizing the waiver and obtaining positive performance outcomes, the local areas are not having issues with engaging the OSY caseload in active services. The areas utilizing the waiver understand 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. OWD monitoring will also reflect the OSY programmatic priority and will continue to provide assistance to the local areas with tools and strategies to better serve OSY.

Youth Programming Success Story (2) "Youth performance improvement through the Waiver"

LWDA 13 is very proud to share that there has been an amazing increase in the education/credential percentage achieved for PY 20 of 101.3% and skills gain which are strongly attributed to serving more In-School Youth due to the waiver. The waiver

afforded the opportunity to help high school students to stay on track with pursuing a high school diploma and furthering their education and occupational skills training.

Finally, OWD polled the local areas on specific programmatic changes they planned to implement to take advantage of the 75% OSY waiver if the waiver is extended again for PY 21. The poll questions addressed the utilization of the waiver, projected number of ISY to be served if the waiver is extended, projected ISY percentage increase with waiver and expected performance (e.g., Education and Employment, Earnings, Credentials and Measurable Skills Gain). See results below:

LWDAs Planning on Utilizing the Waiver on PY21	Projected ISY to be served with the Waiver on PY21	Projected ISY percentage increase with the Waiver on PY21	Expected Performance for PY21 <small>(e.g., Education and Employment, Earnings, Credentials and Measurable Skills Gain)</small>
8	682	From 5% to 300%	To continue the increases in youth performance rate across the board

As evidenced by the number above, eight (8) out of the nineteen (19) LWDAs are already planning to utilize the waiver for PY21. This means that close to half of all of the LWDAs in Georgia will utilize the waiver given the opportunity. As stated at the beginning of this request, if LWDAs are giving the opportunity to utilize this OSY Expenditure Waiver for a longer time, an increased number of LWDAs will expand their programmatic service for ISY. This will result in a more equitable and balanced over all WIOA Title I youth program in Georgia.

Additionally, the extension of the waiver is projected to more than double the number of ISY to be served in PY21. On PY 20 our LWDAs reported to served 240 but are planning to serve 622 ISY on PY21. The projected ISY percentage increase with the waiver goes from 5% to 300%, making clear the commitment of our LWDAs in utilizing the waiver and stressing the importance of the waiver.

Finally, when OWD polled the local areas they all reported positive increases in their performance due to the waiver utilization and the impact of WIOA Title I services for ISY. So the waiver allows our local areas to better support our ISY which is reflected in the education, employment, and credential these young men and women obtained with the support and opportunities provided by LWDAs.

Youth Programming Success Story (3) “Youth credential attainment through the Waiver”

LWDA 14 was able to have a summer youth employment program for the first time in several years. Fourteen WIOA eligible in-school youth earned two stacking credentials through Columbus technical college as well as gaining 120 hours of work experience during the summer.

The flexibility afforded by the waiver allows LWDA's to expand ISY programming to all counties within their regions, creating valuable partnerships with school districts, technical colleges, and other community partners throughout their area. These local areas expressed a desire to continue to expand their community partnerships through innovated services for youth in general including ISY and OSY. For example, a local area expressed their success in serving OSY through work-experience opportunities in their community without the utilization of the waiver. However, they are planning to expand their ISY programming on PY 21 by increasing the number of ISY served to 75 which is a projected ISY increase of 33%. See their success story below:

Although Cobb did not utilize the ISY waiver, we were able to use youth formula funding to create meaningful work experiences with local businesses. One work experience that we would like to highlight is with Cobb County Fire Department. Cobb has been able to collaborate with the Cobb County Fire Department to provide paid work experiences to youth interested in becoming fire fighters. This work experience allows youth to complete advanced EMT Training/Fire Fighter Training at no cost to the youth and to earn wages. We had one graduate who received employment with Puckett EMS. He will transition into the role as a Cobb County firefighter by spring 2022. We have several youths in the pipeline for the upcoming EMT/Fire trainings, which are offered twice a year. Youth formula funds have assisted us in providing education and employment opportunities to our youth and assist our local government meet their employment needs.

Based on valuable local feedback, OWD feels confident that LWDA's will continue to expand ISY programming and to serve an increased number of ISY by utilizing the waiver while simultaneously keeping the emphasis of our youth programs on OSY and maintaining the quality of those programs. LWDA's have indicated a desire to utilize the flexibility provided by the 75% OSY waiver in order to expand ISY offerings. Therefore, OWD formally requests an extension on the waiver based on the results of the utilization of the waiver on PY20 and the projected increased on the waiver utilization and expected results for PY21.

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;
 5. 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);
 6. 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;
 7. 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;
 8. 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
 9. 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;
 10. 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;
 1. 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
- 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

To ensure program partners are highly engaged in local and State workforce partnerships, GDOL continues to offer training, technical assistance and support to partner staff who serve local job seekers and employers. This facilitates a constant exchange of information on core programs, UI legislation, new workforce training providers, and available programs.

The Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Regional Operation (RO) Divisions of GDOL provide subject matter expertise and technical assistance on UI policies, rules, procedures, and systems to all staff. Staff are educated on how to detect, address, and resolve issues that affect UI eligibility within these virtual and in-person training modules. 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 Divisions 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 as regulatorily allowed. 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

In addition to self-service on-line capabilities, 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

As Georgia's economy continues to recover and evolve, 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, ex-offenders, migrant and seasonal farmworkers, etc.) receive customized services to further their career goals.

All UI recipients must register for employment services unless a waiver is granted, per State law. 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.

Georgia continues to apply the above-described 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. Services may include (but are not limited to): 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.

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 Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Wagner Peyser (WP) labor exchange systems are each administered by GDOL, and GDOL 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.

All UI recipients receive reemployment services as required ES registrants, with a few waiver exceptions. Historically, approximately 60% of ES registered customers are UI claimants.

Each GDOL career center physically has a resource area which 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; 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.

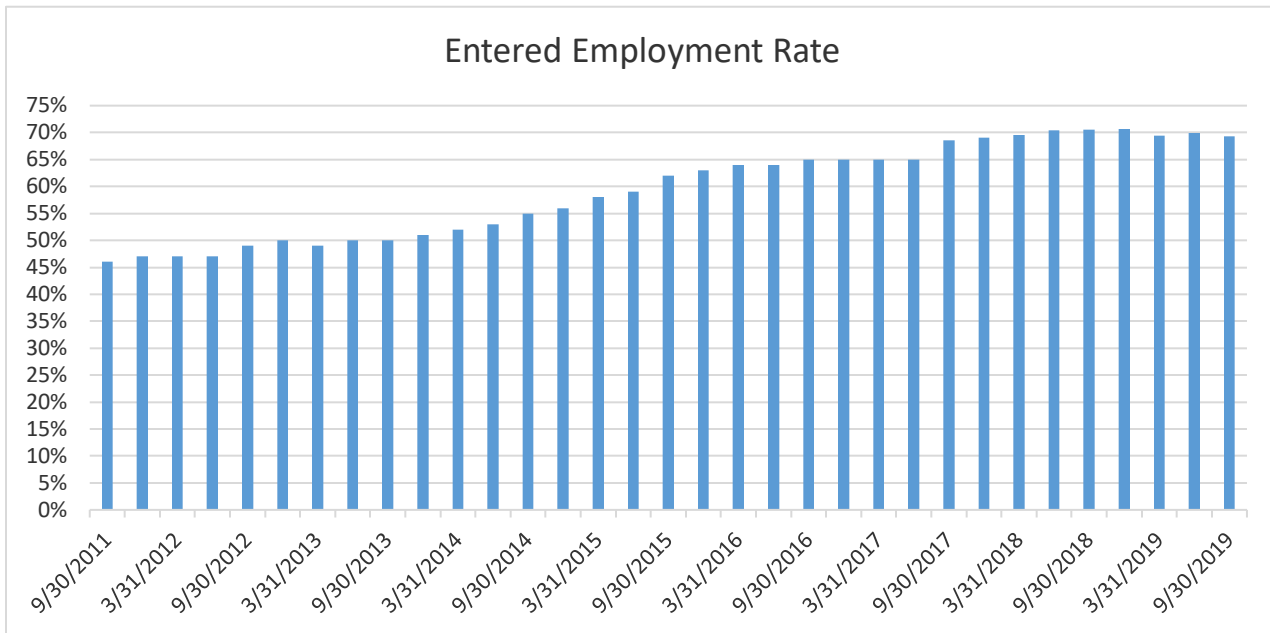
Services routinely provided to ES job seeker customers, including UI claimants, throughout the State include (but are not limited to):

- 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
- 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 420,000 job seekers received employment related services in PY20, at GDOL career centers and via its upgraded online systems. Of these in PY20, GDOL staff provided workforce services to over 50,216 Georgia military service members or their spouses, and referred 12,783 UI claimants to the RESEA program.

To meet the employment needs of these job seekers, Georgia businesses listed approximately 200,000 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 '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 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 required to report to the Department for a Benefit Eligibility Review (BER).

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 Advanced Services Specialist or Claims Examiner and a determination to allow or deny benefits is made.

Employers and anonymous individuals can report suspected UI fraud on the GDOL web site. This can include, but is not limited to, 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 (AOP) lists activities planned for providing services and outreach to both domestic Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW), H2-A MSFW’s and agricultural businesses for PY 2019 to PY 2023. The AOP is prepared in accordance with the Workforce Innovations Opportunity Act (WIOA), proposed Section 167 and Unified Planning Guidance and is a four-year plan. The plan is administered by The Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL).

Georgia agricultural activity has continued to develop and flourish across the state, contributing to the increase in Agritourism in the south east. This unparalleled experience combines traditional agriculture with tourism, and includes visits to working farms, orchards, ranches, wineries and other agricultural operations. This model supports and sustains Georgia’s farmlands, while providing tourists with educational outdoor experiences.

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

(VV) (A) Assessment of Agricultural Activity

Agriculture, a driving force for local economies across Georgia, has long shaped the state's history. The 2021 Ag Snapshots Brief on Georgia's agricultural economy is based on the 2019 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 billion to the Georgia economy.

(B) Assessment of the agricultural activity in the State

Georgia crops requiring a significant number of migrant and seasonal workers are blueberries, cantaloupe, pecans, peaches, peppers and cucumbers. Many employers continue to utilize mechanical equipment for other major crops such as peanuts, cotton and field corn just to name a few. The top five major crops and peak seasons for which labor is typically needed:

- Peppers (Plant/Harvest) March - November
- Blueberries (Harvest & Pack) April - August
- Onions (Harvest) April - July
- Watermelons (Harvest) June - July
- Corn June – July & October - November

Table 1: Significant levels of agricultural activity requiring seasonal labor, and the peak seasons for which labor is typically needed:

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:

Ag Centers and Counties Served	Crop(s)	Estimated MSFW's
<p>Bainbridge CC: Decatur, Early, Miller, Seminole</p>	Cotton	90
	Sweet Corn	635
	Tomatoes	600
	Squash/ Organic Vegetables	35
<p>Americus CC: Marion, Schley, Sumter, Taylor, Webster, Crisp, Dooly, Macon</p>	Cucumbers	80
	Cotton	70
	Green Beans	40
	Cucumbers	80
	Pinetree Seedlings	25
	Watermelons	70
	Squash	130
	Cabbage	105
	Peanut	35
	Green Beans	40
<p>Douglas CC: Appling, Atkinson, Bacon, Coffee</p>	Squash	80
	Blueberries	3,838
	Blackberries	50
	Strawberries	40
	Cotton	85
	Peanuts	200
	Tomatoes	80
	Cucumbers	80
	Peppers	80
	Pecans	20
	Tobacco	234
	Pine straw Baling	170

<p style="text-align: center;">Dublin CC: Emanuel, Johnson, Laurens, Trentlen, Wheeler Dodge, Bleckley, Telfair, Wilcox</p>	Blueberries	230
	Tobacco	164
	Peanuts	200
	Olives	18
	Vidalia Onion (Planting)	907
	Vidalia Onion (Harvesting)	866
	Cabbage	390
	Broccoli	487
	Sweet Potatoes	892
	Potatoes	66
	Watermelons	2,224
	Cantaloupe	160
	Strawberries	482
	Blackberries	270
	Muscadine	270
	Peas	212
	Butter Beans	212
	Cauliflower	25
	Turnips	250
	Kale	25
Swiss Chards	25	
Spinach	25	
Celery	25	
Carrots	65	
Beets	25	
Tomatoes	250	

	Peaches	282
	Sweet Corn	740
	Apples	270
	Cucumbers	130
	Peppers	300
	Squash	400
	Cilantro	300
	Eggplant	300
	Edamame	300
	Green Beans	300
	Greens	872
	Cabbage	1,927
	Squash	1,882
	Cotton	175
	Peanuts	135
	Cucumbers	906
	Eggplant	952
	Peppers	1,056
	Okra	800
	Sweet Corn	134
	Cantaloupe	101
	Broccoli	152
	Tomatoes	104
	Strawberries	5
	Pecans	25
Moultrie CC: Baker, Colquitt, Mitchell		

Tifton CC: Ben Hill, Berrien, Irwin, Tift, Turner	Greens	1,754
	Cabbage	1,844
	Squash	2,299
	Cotton	320
	Peanuts	135
	Cucumbers	2,789
	Eggplant	584
	Peppers	2,279
	Sweet Corn	380
	Watermelons	2845
	Cantaloupe	620
	Broccoli	584
	Cauliflower	370
	Tomatoes	333
	Blueberries	545
	Blackberries	700
	Strawberries	50
	Perennial Grass	370
	Pinetree Seedlings	370
	Leeks	740
Tobacco	420	
Beans	480	
Peas	480	
Muscadines	470	
Transplanting	20	
Valdosta CC:	Greens	355

Lowndes, Lanier, Echols, Cook, Brooks	Cabbage	655
	Squash	835
	Cotton	100
	Cucumbers	1,335
	Eggplant	340
	Peppers	1,235
	Watermelon	180
	Tomatoes	140
	Blueberries	1,500
	Blackberries	1,500
	Pecans	40
	Tobacco	180
	Beans	815
	Sweet Potatoes	750
	Carrots	750
Onions	750	
Peaches	75	
Vidalia CC: Candler, Evans, Jeff Davis, Montgomery, Tattnall, Toombs	Greens	1,050
	Cabbage	890
	Squash	1630
	Cucumbers	880
	Eggplant	500
	Peppers	1,000
	Sweet Corn	1,550
	Watermelons	2,470
	Broccoli	1,190

	Cauliflower	80
	Tomatoes	500
	Blueberries	140
	Pecans	200
	Tobacco	280
	Green Beans	1,000
	Sweet Potatoes	2,310
	Carrots	660
	Vidalia Onions (Harvest)	4,574
	Vidalia Onions (Plant)	4,574
	Turnips	270
	Collards	190
	Mustards	190
	Swiss Chards	80
	Kale	80
	Spinach	80
	Celery	80
	Beets	80
	Cilantro	500
	Edamame	500
	Bees (Apiaries)	60
	Cabbage	200
	Squash	280
	Cotton	112
	Peanut	112
	Cucumbers	200

Waycross CC:
 Brantley, Charlton, Clinch, Pierce, Ware

	Eggplant	80
	Peppers	280
	Watermelon	75
	Tomatoes	280
	Blueberries	3,910
	Blackberries	750
	Pomegranate	450
	Pecans	72
	Tobacco	187
	Onion	75
	Pine straw Baling	60

(WW)

(XX) (B) Assessment of Unique Needs of Farmworkers

The Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development reports that Georgia has 42,439 farms totaling 9,953,730 acres. The average size of a farm in Georgia is 235 acres with 3,628,707 acres of harvested cropland. Through the activities of the Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL) career centers, Telamon Corporation, local workforce partners and education agencies, the workforce system has made every effort in partnership with USDOL to assist growers’ and workers’ increasing needs. Many Georgia employers continue to explore new and alternative methods of harvesting, to include automated equipment, to meet work demands.

Due to the expanding variety of crops across the state, farmers have expressed a need for increased labor support, year-round. The state’s agricultural activity has increased on average 2% or more each year in recent years, as agricultural expansion has led to employer’s request for labor steadily increase.

Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker (MSFW) characteristics:

- Workers speak various languages, to include Spanish, Haitian Creole speaking and/or English Language Learners (ELL)
- Countries of origin include Mexico, Puerto Rico, Central America, El Salvador and other regions

- U.S. born domestic workers include workers from Georgia, Texas, Florida, and Puerto Rico
- Farmworkers, MSFWs and year-round workers have similar needs including:
 - Assistance with transportation, language barriers and finding work
 - Accessibility to traditional services during non-traditional business hours
- H2A Farmworkers are seasonal workers that are authorized to work at specific farms seasonally
- Experienced domestic workers may seek other temporary jobs during non-peak agricultural season or wait to be called back by their previous agricultural employer.

(2) Outreach Activities

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, Tattnall, Toombs, Montgomery, Long
Waycross	Brantley, Charlton, Clinch, Pierce, Ware, Wayne

(YY) (A) Strategies for Contacting Farmworkers Not Reached by Normal Activities

GDOL has a strong commitment to serving the agricultural community, to ensure they are able to provide high quality services to both growers, farmworkers and farm workers who are not being reached by normal outreach activities. The employment related needs of Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs) are a specific focus for career centers. There are nine (9) career centers that focus on agricultural activities, including:

MSFW Outreach and Agricultural Services Specialists are strategically positioned in the offices mentioned above to provide direct support and employment assistance to this

population of customers. Each of these offices has knowledgeable full-time designated staff to assist growers and MSFWs who are not being reached by normal in-take activities conducted by the employment service 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.

Agriculture specialist and Outreach staff work together to identify available resources and develop partnerships with local organizations in efforts to better serving MSFWs. Resources include, but are not limited to: Georgia Department of Human Services, Georgia Farmworker Health Program, the Georgia Association for Primary Health Care, Inc., Georgia Free Clinic Network, Telamon Corporation, Georgia Migrant Education, various community food banks, Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and entities that provide Adult Literacy, ESL and GED® services to MSFWs. GADOL career centers collaborate with LWDBs to ensure MSFWs are referred for training opportunities which will better position them to compete for in demand jobs within their communities.

Staff are required to 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.

Due to the varying types of crops being grown in Georgia, MSFW workers often have more career opportunities for agricultural employment throughout the year. Staff conducting outreach refer MSFWs to both seasonal agricultural employment and nonagricultural employment.

(ZZ) (B) Strategies for Providing Technical Assistance to Outreach Workers

The department continues to develop internal protocols to provide technical assistance and training on employment services for Outreach and Agriculture staff. Career Center Managers, with support from state Agricultural Services unit, ensure agricultural staff and outreach 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 GDOL staff as appropriate.

Common training provided to staff throughout the program year include, agricultural program training, complaint processing, how to conduct outreach and farm visits, identifying community resources, pre-occupancy inspection process and job referral processing.

(AAA) (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 often sponsored by USDOL or other Ag supporting entities or partners, to increase their awareness of agricultural related activities across the state. Outreach staff are housed in One Stop/Career Centers together with Wagner Peyser/Employment Services, Unemployment Insurance, Trade, Veteran Services, WIOA and other workforce partner staff who they collaborate with to provide customers access to critical resources.

Ongoing staff training is provided to Agricultural/Outreach staff to improve awareness across core programs.

(BBB) (D) Strategies for Providing Professional Development Activities to Outreach Workers

The Georgia Department of Labor's professional development activities include training staff how to plan and coordinate services for workers and agricultural employers at the local level. This approach ensures staff are aware of the workforce needs of the MSFW and agricultural communities within the geographical areas they will serve. This localized professional development also provides an opportunity for staff to become familiar with other resident partners who are available to assist outreach staff as needs arise.

Staff also participate in monthly conference call to discuss ongoing changes to the program that are initiated at the state and national level through the GDOL and/or USDOL. In addition, staff participate in critical webinars or convenings where technical instruction is provided on delivering customized services to the agricultural community at large. Staff are required to shadow experienced staff who afford new employees the opportunity to learn new skills and learn more about delivering agricultural services first hand in the field. Staff also are required to participate in agency wide staff training modules on topics such as Customer Service, Cyber Security, Protecting Customer PII, etc. Professional development is an ongoing effort for outreach workers, as the needs of the workforce and agricultural program is always fluctuating and growing.

(CCC) (E) Strategies for Coordinating Outreach Efforts

Through the growing seasons, agricultural staff communicate with growers prior to planting and harvesting seasons to plan for upcoming labor needs. This advance

engagement provides insight to when peak seasons will start for harvesting and planting. Staff routinely coordinates with growers and with other career center staff to match the workforce needs of the employers to ensure qualified workers are identified to fill these jobs. In line with GDOL'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.

Outreach staff encourages MSFW workers to visit the nearest GDOL Career Center for the full range of workforce services. However, if MSFW workers cannot or do not wish to visit a career center, outreach staff will meet the customers where they are and assist them with completing a registration for Employment Services. In addition, outreach staff 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 make follow-up contacts with MSFW customers to connect them with important resources.

Georgia's identified NFJP, Telamon is a valued partner and provides core, intensive and training services and related assistance for MSFWs. The cooperative agreement between GDOL and Telamon was developed to coordinate and enhance service delivery to MSFWs. Through this partnership, the sharing of labor market information, training, supportive services and job-related resources are more readily available to MSFWs across the state. GDOL and Telamon also share reports on the staff hours spent performing MSFW outreach activity as required by the USDOL. In several parts of the state, Telamon staff is co-located in the area's comprehensive One-Stop Center with GDOL outreach staff. Telamon staff are also located in the areas near local career centers in highly populated agricultural communities and service areas such as:

- Douglas
- Moultrie
- Vidalia/Lyon
- Valdosta
- Waycross
- Tifton

Outreach staff often collaborate with the Georgia Department of Agriculture to ensure that resources for growers and agricultural workers align. GDOL also works with the University of Georgia County Extension Service field staff to improve services to Ag employers and Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker's.

GDOL staff primarily make contacts with MSFW workers during peak agricultural season, 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 training
- Referral to agricultural and non-agricultural employment
- 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)

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 GDOL 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
(DDD) (A) Strategies for Providing Full Range of
Employment and Training Service

(i) How career and training services required under WIOA Title I will be provided to MSFWs through the one-stop centers:

Currently Job search for employment opportunities in Georgia can be performed electronically through Georgia's labor exchange system, located at: www.employgeorgia.com. The Department of Labor's website contains a broad array of employment resources for job seekers and businesses such as videos on how to register and use the Georgia labor exchange system and employment services, as well as information about other community resources, providing the full range of employment and training services to the agricultural community.

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)

(ii) How the State serves agricultural employers and how it intends to improve such services.

Outreach staff frequently explore ways to better support the workforce needs of agricultural employers. Participation in local events affords staff an opportunity to advise MSFW's of job opportunities available at nearby farms. 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 each office, regardless of the counties each office typically serve.

GDOL continues to share agricultural recruitment information with Telamon Corporation, Georgia Migrant Education, community food banks, the Salvation Army, and religious organizations who also provide assistance to the migrant populations. Referrals are made to Georgia's technical colleges and regional educational organizations who provide Adult Literacy, English as a Second Language and GED services to MSFWs. Outreach staff also collaborate with Local Workforce Development Areas to ensure that MSFWs have training opportunities for in-demand occupations. GDOL continues collaborative efforts to assist MSFWs to access needed resources.

**(EEE) (B) Strategies for Marketing Employment Service
Complaint System**

GDOL staff and partner staff who serve this population of customers are provided ES Complaint system training and refresher training as needed. Staff participate and attend partner agency meetings when available to educate and train on the ES Complaint system, as well as providing partner agencies GDOL-3501 complaint poster.

During staff outreach with MSFW workers, staff discuss the ES Complaint system with them when they reach out to GDOL staff to discuss possible violations of labor law. Workers seeking to file formal complaints are assisted with completing the complaint form and as GDOL does not have enforcement authority, staff forward the form to the appropriate USDOL enforcement office to assist and resolve. Where workers do not want to file formal complaints, the GDOL staff work with businesses to discuss potential local resolutions.

**(FFF) (C) Strategies for Marketing
Agricultural Recruitment System**

In an ongoing effort to share the benefits of the Agricultural Recruitment System (ARS), staff communicate with potential employers how the system is an additional option to help identify qualified labor for their business. Employers are informed that they can list interstate clearance orders with the GDOL to obtain domestic referrals which extends information about available 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.

Staff also encourage Agricultural employers 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.

(4) Other Requirements

(GGG) (A) Collaboration

To better assist with providing services to MSFW workers there is currently a Memorandum of understanding (MOU) established between the Georgia DOL and Telamon Corporation. This continues to ensure MSFW workers 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.

The partnership between GDOL and Telamon Corporation which operates the National Farmworker Job program (NFJP) in Georgia continues to grow stronger. 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 GDOL and Telamon was developed to coordinate and enhance service delivery to MSFW workers. Along with the sharing of personalized labor market information, training, supportive services and job-related resources available to MSFW workers, GDOL and Telamon share informational reports on the staff hours spent performing MSFW outreach activities.

Telamon staff are located in the areas near our local career centers. Service locations:

- Douglas
- Moultrie
- Vidalia/Lyons
- Tifton
- Valdosta
- Waycross

(HHH) (B) Review and Public Comment

The following groups and organizations are invited directly to share their input and comments during the public comment period of the State WIOA Plan:

- 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)

(III) (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 PY2021:

Services Provided Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Minimum Service Level Indicators

Data Items	Compliance Level					
	Compliance Level	Actual Level	Actual Den.	Actual Num.	Yes	No
1. Reviews of significant offices	100%	100%	9	9	X	
2. Field checks conducted when 10 or more job orders have been placed through the Agriculture Recruitment System	25%	-	-	-	X	
3. Field checks conducted when 9 or fewer job orders placed (but at least one) have been placed through the Agriculture Recruitment System	100%	0%	0	0	X	
4. Outreach contacts per week	100%	100+% (3925)	40	1570	X	
5. Timely process of complaints	100%	100%	4	4	X	

**Data Item 2 - At the time of this data retrieval, no placements were received through the Agricultural Recruitment System. Field Checks - N/A.*

All Minimum Service Level Indicators have been met or exceeded = **5

(JJJ) (D) Assessment of Progress

- Efforts to increased interaction and effective communication with partners and community organizations who also support the state's agricultural community continues to bring value to the programs purpose. DOL staff meet quarterly with various partner organizations such as, Telamon Corp, Georgia Department of Education, Georgia Migrant Health Programs, Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College and the Georgia Department of Agriculture to improve the seamless sharing of needed resources. Improving access for MSFW's to access job opportunities, continuing education and training, and transportation resources are all beneficial outcomes of these partnership discussions. GDOL will continue to build these needed partnerships to avail additional support for all agricultural customers.
- Agriculture staff continue to assist Ag employers and MSFW's with various work-related challenges that may arise. In efforts to mediate misunderstandings associated with H2-A worksite activities, and in accordance with USDOL guidance, Ag staff meet with employers and workers onsite to assist in identifying localized resolutions. Often, by facilitating communication between parties, quick resolution is reached and both parties can focus on returning to agricultural activities. Apparent Violations (informal complaints) are filed at the career center upon local inquiries being resolved. The State Monitor Advocate (SMA) offers one on one compliance/technical assistance training to staff as needed throughout the year. If needed, a formal complaint is submitted to the appropriate oversight agency.
- As in previous years the Agricultural staff consistently contact growers prior to planting and harvesting seasons to plan for upcoming labor needs. Continuing to coordinate with the growers and with other career center staff to match the labor needs of the employers assist staff in being able to better refer qualified workers to employers. Staying in line with the Georgia Department of Labor's strong focus and commitment to providing services to business, state staff provide outreach staff with comprehensive listings of area growers to aid in scheduling visits throughout the agricultural community. GDOL 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 continues to build relationships and work with other partners such as the University of Georgia County Extension Service/Department of Agriculture field staff to collaborate and improve services to agricultural employers and MSFW workers 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 labor exchange system, EmployGeorgia.
- Laptops are also 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.

(KKK) (E) State Monitor Advocate

The GDOL State Monitor Advocate has been given an opportunity to review and discuss the AOP plan with the State Agriculture staff to address any concerns or feedback regarding plan activities. 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.

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. Thirty 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.

Most Recent Grant Competition

Application Process, Structure & Allowable Activities

OAE ran its most recent competitive Request for Applications (RFA) from February 2020 to November 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Under this RFA, applicants could apply for a General Adult Education Grant and/or an Integrated English Language & Civics Education (IELCE) Grant. OAE relaunched its IELCE grant competition from March 2021 to April 2021 to ensure services are available across the entire state.

OAE awarded grants to 30 providers for a four-year period, from July 2021 to June 2025, contingent upon an annual renewal process. Of these 30 providers, 27 offer adult basic education and secondary education, 24 offer English language acquisition activities, and 12 offer Integrated English Language and Civics education. All providers offer at least two activities concurrently and workplace preparation activities, including IET.

In accordance with WIOA 231(c), OAE ensured all eligible providers had 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 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	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	Integrated English Language & Civics Education in combination with Integrated Education & Training

The application also contained questions targeted at ensuring each applicant explained 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 were 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 evaluated and scored each application using a rubric that aligns with the 13 considerations listed in WIOA Section 231(e). OAE used these scores, along with the feedback it received from the local workforce development board (LWDB) review as required by 107(d)(11)(B), to make its final funding decisions.

Corrections Education and other Education of Institutionalized Individuals

Under the most recent grant competition launched in February 2020, applicants could apply for funding, provided under WIOA Section 225, to establish and operate programs for corrections education and the education of other institutionalized individuals. OAE awarded grants to 17 adult education providers to establish and operate programs under Section 225 of WIOA for corrections education and the education of other institutionalized individuals. Programs will receive funding for a four-year period, from July 2021 to June 2025, contingent upon an annual renewal process.

In accordance with WIOA 231(c), OAE ensured all eligible providers had 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 discussed:

- 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 reviewed and scored each supplement using the General Adult Education Rubric along with the Corrections Supplement Rubric. The rubric took 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 used these scores to make its final funding decisions.

(c) Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Program

Under the most recent grant competition launched in February 2020, OAE provided an opportunity for eligible providers to apply for and receive funds to establish and operate IELCE programs by submitting an IELCE Grant Application. OAE relaunched its IELCE grant competition from March 2021 to April 2021 to ensure services are available across the entire state. OAE awarded grants to twelve providers – including six school districts or community-based organizations and six technical colleges – to establish and operate Integrated English Language & Civics (IELCE) education programs. Programs will receive funding for a four-year period, from July 2021 to June 2025, contingent upon an annual renewal process.

In accordance with WIOA Section 231(c), OAE ensured all eligible providers had 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 specifically addressed 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 described 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 reviewed and scored each supplement using the IELCE Rubric. The rubric took 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 used these scores,

along with the feedback it received from the LWDB review as required by 107(d)(11)(B), to make its final funding decisions.

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 OWD 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 Integrated Education and Training (IET) during each quarter of the fiscal year for students. As part of the most recent grant competition, all applicants were 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.

OAE's Instructional Services Team will continue to support IET implementation by offering training and technical assistance – including webinars 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. The IET 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 negotiate performance targets with OAE each year. Programs that do not meet their performance targets may be placed on a Strategic Improvement Plan (SIP). The SIP 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 SIP 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.

(d) 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.
- **Target Negotiation and Strategic Improvement Plans:** OAE negotiates enrollment and performance targets with all providers annually. The purpose of the target negotiation process is to allow providers to negotiate reasonable, but ambitious, targets while still ensuring OAE fulfills its roles and responsibilities as a pass-through entity of WIOA funds. Programs that are not on track to meet their targets during the year will receive additional technical assistance, reporting requirements, or monitoring visits. Programs that do not meet their targets at the end of one year may be placed on a Strategic Improvement Plan. Programs that do not meet all targets for two consecutive years will experience a financial sanction involving a reduction in federal 231 funds per 2 CFR 200.339.
- The Strategic Improvement Plan 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 SIP 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

(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; GVRA staff presentations at quarterly SRC meetings; and SRC and GVRA collaboration to address opportunities for the improvement of service delivery. Service delivery improvements are identified through regular open public comment sessions during each quarterly SRC meeting, as well as robust public comment processes for any policy or other change anticipated to have impact on the VR client experience. GVRA provides funds to support the council in performing its mandated activities. This support includes the funding of a comprehensive statewide needs assessment, led by the SRC, to be obtained in 2022.

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:

The Georgia SRC supports GVRA's goal of maximizing client employment outcomes and has been 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.

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 impacts of the agency's transition has been a high rate of staff turnover and vacancies. These vacancies have negatively impacted GVRA's customer service to clients seeking and/or receiving services and community partners. The SRC recommends ending the order of selection to ensure agency staff to promptly respond to client needs.

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 appreciates the support it receives from the Georgia State Rehabilitation Council. Beginning in 2019, GVRA quickly recognized numerous barriers in the provision of quality rehabilitation services. Since then, multiple strategies have been implemented 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 and encouraged the SRC to centralize its meeting locations and to expand its use of technology. The SRC has leveraged technology to best utilize state resources.

At this time, GVRA leadership continues to review organizational structure as well as processes and procedures, with the goal of improved services and increased staff retention. This ongoing review by current leadership will identify opportunities and solutions that lead to a more client-focused future.

After careful review of available resources, and analysis of projected fiscal limitations, GVRA determined a need to prioritize those participants in greatest need of services in order to obtain competitive integrated employment. GVRA closed Priority Categories 2 and 3 effective January 2021 to allow the agency to focus its available resources in supporting individuals with the most significant disabilities and potentially eligible students. GVRA plans to reopen these categories by the end of 2022.

(3) Designated State Explanations for Rejection of any Council Input

GVRA does not reject SRC input regarding the GVRA section of the State Unified Plan. GVRA ~~AVR~~ 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 and, therefore, does not request a waiver.

(c) Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities under the Statewide Workforce Development System

(1) Federal, State, and Local Agencies and Programs

GVRA 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 GVRA works with include the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD), the Georgia Department of Education (Ga DOE) and Local Education Agencies (LEA).

(2) State Programs under Section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998

GVRA currently has an agreement with Tools for Life, Georgia's program under section 4 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998. The main purpose of this agreement is to expand assistive technology access to students with disabilities across the state of Georgia as they transition from secondary education to post-secondary education or the world of work. Tools for Life also loans equipment to clients for demonstrative purposes. GVRA 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 professionals, including the Assistive Work Technology team.

(3) Programs by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the Department of Agriculture

GVRA 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. GVRA provides time-limited services such as assistive technology, work site modifications and accommodations, self-employment start-up costs, counseling and guidance and home modifications. AgrAbility and GVRA 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 will launch efforts to develop a more formalized agreement.

(4) Non-Educational Agencies Serving Out-of-School Youth

Currently, GVRA does not have cooperative agreements with non-educational agencies serving out-of-school youth. However, the agency is committed to improving service delivery to out-of-school youth with disabilities and has opened communications with the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice and the Georgia Department of Community Supervision to discuss ways in which we can work together to provide transition services for out-of-school youth.

(5) State Use Contracting Programs

The Georgia State Use Council and the Department of Administrative Services (DOAS) administer the State Use law. 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, participates in this program.

(d) Coordination with Education Officials

(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, to 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 has a long history of collaboration with the Georgia Department of Education (Ga DOE)/State Education Agency (SEA) and Local Education Agencies (LEAs) across the state in the provision of transition services for students (over the age of 14 and under the age of 22) and youth with disabilities (over the age of 14 and under the age of 24). GVRA and the SEA renewed their memorandum of Understanding on July 1, 2021. This MOU outlines the collaboration between the agencies, including the planning, coordination and provision of transition services and pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS). Since the inception of WIOA, GVRA has been committed to following the expectations of WIOA and the development of Pre-ETS that support student success after high school. GVRA is also committed to quality Pre-ETS that support those potentially eligible students' exposure to employment options should they decide to become participants.

Planning for Pre-ETS occurs between local GVRA leadership and LEA leadership. GVRA supervisors attend monthly regional Georgia Learning Resource System (GLRS) meetings with the Ga DOE Special Education Directors to ensure seamless services for students with disabilities. An annual needs assessment to determine Pre-ETS at the individual and group services delivery level is also conducted locally. 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 GVRA and the continuum of services.

Pre-ETS may be provided by GVRA professionals (in-house delivery of services), in collaboration with education professionals within LEAs, and/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 services and also to those students who are eligible for GVRA services.

GVRA 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 developed policy and procedures for rehabilitation professionals that define WIOA Pre-ETS requirements, ensure effective coordination of services with Ga DOE and comply with expectations for documentation and reporting. Policy and procedures will continue to be incorporated into staff training to ensure effectiveness and efficiencies of program operations. Staff training, from GVRA client facing professionals to the GVRA 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 will provide the five (5) required Pre-ETS;
- B. GVRA will work collaboratively with LEAs statewide to develop an annual plan for the provision of Pre-ETS;
- C. GVRA will maintain compliance with Pre-ETS reporting elements according to internal and Federal guidelines;
- D. GVRA will follow procedures to accurately track Pre-ETS expenditures;
- E. GVRA will establish and maintain effective internal controls related to Pre-ETS provision, coordination and documentation;
- F. GVRA will maximize the case management system (AWARE) to evaluate 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 GVRA services. Transition services purchased by GVRA may include, but are not limited to vocational assessments, vocational training, post-secondary education, job development and job placement services.

GVRA staff will participate in Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings as requested to assess needs and goals for each student's transition. Pre-ETS will be provided in a logical and sequential manner to support student exposure to careers and increase Career Pathways participation. For a more seamless transition, GVRA participants are expected to have an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) in place prior to exiting high school. Staff will develop IPEs as early as possible during the transition planning

process. GVRA services will be provided to eligible participants in compliance with the *Client Services Policy Manual*.

**(2) Information on Formal Interagency Agreement with State Educational Agency
(LLL)(A) Consultation and TA to Assist Educational Agencies**

GVRA and Ga DOE 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 GVRA services are available statewide for those students with disabilities who need them.

GVRA and Ga DOE will collaborate and promote transition to adult services through participation in existing councils, committees and other workgroups within each respective agency.

Ga DOE, in consultation with GVRA, 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 and Ga DOE will continue to collaborate and promote staff training across both agencies to support effective transition planning for students with disabilities.

(MMM) (B) Transition Planning for Individualized Education Programs

GVRA and Ga DOE 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 and Ga DOE 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.

(NNN) (C) Roles and Responsibilities of Each Agency

GVRA 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 services. GVRA 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 services, been determined eligible and assigned to an open priority category.

GVRA and Ga DOE 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 and Ga DOE 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 and Ga DOE will use due diligence to provide support to local rehabilitation 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 GVRA 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 rehabilitation 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?

(OOO) (D) Procedures for Outreach and Student Identification

GVRA and Ga DOE 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

GVRA program, application procedures, eligibility requirements, priority for services and scope of services that may be provided to eligible individuals. GVRA transition teams will work with LEAs statewide to ensure outreach and identification of students who could benefit from Pre-ETS. The parties agree to conduct an annual 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. Transition teams exist to ensure implementation of the WIOA transition regulations and provide guidance and training. 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, Supported Employment Providers, two and four year Technical Colleges, Colleges, Universities, Employer Committees
State	Georgia Workforce Development, Georgia Department of Education, Georgia State University, Parent to Parent of Georgia, Georgia Advocacy Office, University of Georgia 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, DBHDD, Parent Mentor Partnership of Georgia
National	National Technical Assistance Center on Transition: The Collaborative

GVRA professionals 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. Rehabilitation 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.

To further outreach efforts, GVRA initiated a monthly virtual Parent Forum for parents, guardians, stakeholders and/or students in October 2021. This forum provides information on services – how to access Pre-ETS, apply for GVRA services, types of GVRA services - and allows for interactive questions.

(e) Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations

GVRA has an established network of private non-profit providers that have a wide variety of employment and work preparation services available to GVRA clients. These services include but are not limited to: vocational evaluation, vocational training, work-based learning, 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 is currently examining the agreement process to standardize and streamline the service agreement progression. GVRA has traditionally utilized Cooperative Agreements with private non-profit organizations, especially with respect to the provision of services and supports. As GVRA improves service definitions, provider standards, and develops new and innovative services, a Provider Task Force that included private non-profit entities and rehabilitation professionals developed an improved Outsourcing Manual. This manual is the new standard for all entities in their application to become and maintain approved provider status with GVRA.

GVRA is developing an annual assessment tool to evaluate the effectiveness of all services delivered. The assessment results will help determine whether the provider will continue delivering services. Client needs throughout the state will be the primary focus for determining when new providers are recruited, the types of services needed and service areas. GVRA has developed structured onboarding for providers to ensure they are mentored and understand our operations and processes. GVRA also holds a quarterly provider forum to share information, provide updates and allow for open communication.

Additionally, GVRA 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 GA 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 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 does not support, contract for or provide subminimum wage Extended Employment services.

Formal Agreements are established with other state agencies. Additionally, GVRA enters into agreements with providers for the provision of traditional Supported Employment, Individual Placement Support (IPS) supported employment and Customized Supported Employment (CSE) services. GVRA currently has 157 total agreements in place: 59 agreements include traditional SE services, 22 agreements include IPS SE services, and 46 agreements include CSE services.

GVRA collaborates at the state level through various interagency committees and teams involved with supported employment. Through interagency collaboration, GVRA 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 also collaborates with the Ga DOE, 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

(1) VR Services; and

The purpose of GVRA 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 clients with businesses in the communities where they live. Employment specialists 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 specialists 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 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.

- 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 GVRA rehabilitation staff regarding the unique needs of partner employers in order to facilitate better matching of individuals with disabilities in jobs and careers;
- 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; and
- Provide consultation, technical assistance and support to employers on workplace accommodation and assistive technology.

As successful employment outcomes declined, GVRA boldly restructured client services staff, including the employment specialists so that they would, once again, become an integral part of the rehabilitation team – directing their focus back to the client from the employer. Additionally, GVRA leadership is reviewing the employer module in the current client information system to improve its efficiency in tracking new and existing business opportunities. This integration and utilization will facilitate better record keeping of current and new opportunities for clients.

(2) Transition Services, Including Pre-Employment Transition Services for Students and Youth with Disabilities.

GVRA serves individuals of all ages and all disabilities. GVRA recognizes the importance of early identification of youth and students with disabilities for improved post-secondary outcomes. Employment specialists 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 continues to examine its effectiveness, efforts will be made to expand partnerships with WIOA programs to develop employer relationships, work-based learning opportunities and work sites to facilitate more successful outcomes.

(h) Interagency Cooperation

(1) State Medicaid Plan under Title XIX of the Social Security Act

GVRA does not currently have a formal agreement with DCH, the state agency responsible for administering Medicaid. However, GVRA does collaborate with DCH through various state level boards

and committees. Additionally, GVRA has two MOUs with DBHDD, the state agency that administers services under the NOW/COMP Medicaid waiver program.

(2) State Agency Providing Services for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities

In May 2021, GVRA executed its most current MOU with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD), the State agency responsible for providing services to individuals with developmental disabilities. This MOU regarding supported employment for individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities describes how the parties will collaborate and facilitate information sharing and referrals to streamline the delivery of services, as required by WIOA, and how both parties will work in a coordinated effort to maximize resources and to improve and expand opportunities for competitive integrated employment.

(3) State Agency Providing Mental Health Services

In May 2021, GVRA executed its most current MOU with DBHDD, the State agency responsible for providing services to individuals with mental illness. This MOU regarding adult mental health supported employment describes how the parties will collaborate and facilitate information sharing and strengthen the collaborative framework between the parties aimed at improving and expanding opportunities for competitive integrated employment for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness and to streamline these services, as required by WIOA. The agreement also describes how both parties will work in a coordinated manner to maximize resources and to improve and expand opportunities for competitive integrated employment.

(i) Comprehensive System of Personnel Development; Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development

GVRA 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:

- Develop a counseling series that encourages and relies on training, performance monitoring and accountability.
- Emphasize the importance of the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) by providing a pay differential for this preferred qualification.
- Monitor and provide support for those counseling series positions to transition into the CRC position, if desired, 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.

- Continue to rebuild the GVRA training program to provide foundational courses for direct service delivery positions to ensure qualified personnel provide services to people with significant disabilities.
- Provide a comprehensive training program for all new GVRA staff.
- Continue to provide in-service training opportunities for all staff to ensure that quality services are provided by qualified personnel and to link that training to staff members' competencies and business outcomes.

**(1) Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development
(PPP) (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, certifications and education. In addition, GVRA collects data on staff developmental performance, career plans, goals and upcoming retirement. 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

The following table depicts the (i) the number of qualified personnel for the provision of GVRA 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) 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 Filled Positions	(ii) Current Vacancies	(iii) Projected Vacancies Over the Next 5yrs
1	District Manager	8	0	0
2	Supervisor	20	9	2
3	Counselors	103	65	10

4	Pre-Employment Specialist	21	19	3
5	Counselor Assistant	43	16	0
6	Employment Services Coordinator	1	0	0
7	Employment Specialist	10	8	0
8	AWT Coordinator	1	0	0
9	AWT Engineer	1	2	0
10	AWT Occupational Therapist	2	1	0
11	AWT Technologist	9	3	0
12	AWT Technician	3	0	0
13				
	Total	228	120	

(QQQ) (B) Personnel Development

(i) Institutions of Higher Education in State Preparing GA Professionals

GVRA continues to maintain established relationships with institutions of higher education that can assist with meeting CSPD requirements. GVRA currently collaborates with the following universities that provide graduate level rehabilitation counseling coursework to meet the preferred CRCC: Georgia State University, Thomas University, Auburn University, San Diego State University, Troy University, Mercer University and Fort Valley State University.

GVRA continues to support staff development for those interested in furthering their education and /or obtaining certification. 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 institutions with their long-term training grants.

(ii) Students Enrolled at Each Institution

The following table lists the institutions of higher education that are offering a master’s degree in Rehabilitation Counseling or Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling, the number of students currently enrolled in the rehabilitation counseling program at each institution, and the number of recent graduates from each program for the last two years.

	(i) Institutions	(ii) Students Currently Enrolled	(iii) Graduates from 2020-2021	(iv) Graduates from 2019- 2020
1	Fort Valley State University	56	11	19
2	Georgia State University	25	12	16
3	Thomas University	180	31	25
4	Mercer University	33	10	9

(iii) Prior Year Graduates from Each Institution

The table above includes this information.

(2) Plan for Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Qualified Personnel

GVRA is working 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 personnel process. GVRA 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's visibility for recruitment of persons with diverse backgrounds. GVRA maintains affiliations with disability organizations and advertises career opportunities in disability related publications.

GVRA is in the process of redesigning an internship program that will be educational for the interns and provide an opportunity for recruitment.

GVRA continues to be challenged with a high turnover rate of counselors. GVRA is examining the counselor series to identify an improved hiring and retention strategy. The on-boarding process for new staff members provides a historical, in-depth, position-specific orientation and training conducted primarily through local mentoring by subject matter experts and individual instruction. GVRA has revamped this program to meet current needs and new staff are participating as they are hired. GVRA

continues to examine and improve this program in order to provide the most effective experience possible. Staff training for all positions was also lacking and GVRA has redesigned its training program in order to ensure all staff have the knowledge, skills and abilities to perform their jobs.

Changes in management and administrative leaders have been a frequent occurrence over the past few years within GVRA and succession planning is a forefront issue. GVRA is developing a succession plan, including standard operating procedures, to address turnover, changes, and retirements.

(3) Personnel Standard

GVRA's goal is to hire and retain staff with the competencies necessary to improve individual performance and agency outcomes. Although Georgia state law does not require certification or licensure for rehabilitation professionals or paraprofessionals, GVRA established the CRC credential awarded by the CRCC as the highest preferred standard for the Counselor.

GVRA is developing a Counselor series that will allow for those without the CRC credential to develop their skills and abilities as well as further their knowledge while working with individuals with disabilities.

GVRA continually recruits to fill Counselor positions with candidates who possess a CRC and has developed a career path within the counselor series to allow for hiring of candidates who do not possess a CRC. The minimum qualifications for the Counselor series: a Bachelor's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling or a related field (Counselor Education, School Counseling, Mental Health Counseling, Counseling Psychology, etc.) AND two years of experience working with individuals with disabilities; OR a Master's Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling or a related field (Counselor Education, School Counseling, Mental Health Counseling, Counseling Psychology, etc.); OR a CRCC in good standing; 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.

(4) Staff Development

GVRA prioritizes continuing to develop a robust training program to provide opportunities for all professionals to enhance their skills for the provision of high quality services. The comprehensive training program includes specific training on the rehabilitation process, skills required, effective utilization of the case management system, regular needs assessments, vocational counseling, job development, fiscal management and assistive technology. Over the past two years, GVRA has invited WINTAC to provide staff training on performance measurements, measureable skill gains and credential attainment. GVRA continues to take full advantage of the RSA technical assistance centers training offerings.

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 meet

performance outcomes set forth by GVRA and funding entities; (2) A review of the programs and their 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.

Counselor On-Boarding: Counselor On-Boarding provides 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 Measurements, Case Studies, and the Case Management System.

Annual On-going Staff Development Training Sessions: GVRA continues to develop 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.

Leadership Development: GVRA continues to develop and refine a leadership program to educate, develop and empower current and future leaders of the agency. One example is Supervisor training which has been redeveloped and rolled out within the last year. The training includes:

- 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 regularly 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 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 has 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 currently employs staff members who use sign language to best meet the needs of our clients who use sign language. GVRA 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 Client Handbook are available. GVRA 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 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 recognizes the crucial role shared with the Ga DOE 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 and the Ga DOE 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 GVRA professionals participating in LEA meetings of Special Education Directors and/or special education staff; and
- Participation in pre and post planning meetings with LEA special education staff around the delivery of Pre-ETS.

(j) Statewide Assessment

(1) Needs of Individuals with Disabilities in State

(RRR) (A) Needs of Those with the Most Significant Disabilities

GVRA received the most recent comprehensive statewide needs assessment (CSNA) in May of 2020. This assessment reported that individuals with the most significant disabilities state their greatest needs to be: access to dependable transportation, misconceptions about disabilities by professionals, and employers concerns about providing accommodations. Access to dependable transportation was also the top need reported by parents and family members, provider professionals, and stakeholders of individuals with the most significant disabilities. Employers reported transportation as their top concern as well followed by a lack of job preparation and skills.

(SSS) (B) Needs of Minorities

Based on the most recent CSNA, the needs of those individuals with disabilities who are minorities include: lack of skills for job goal, lack of long term services, difficulty accessing jobs and lack of awareness/access to job supports. Stakeholder professionals and providers reported access to dependable transportation as their biggest concern followed by the individual's fear of losing benefits.

(TTT)(C) Needs of Those Unserved or Underserved by the GA Program

The most recent CSNA identified individuals with the most significant or complex disabilities as the most unserved or underserved by input from parents, family member, professionals and providers. This is followed by individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities. Also identified were individuals with mental illness, criminal histories and those living in rural areas of the state.

(UUU) (D) Needs of Those Served Through Other Components of the State Workforce System

Based on the 2020 Annual Report data, only 11% of participants were enrolled in more than one core program. This data supports the need for cross training between partners to encourage co-enrollment and ensure individuals with disabilities receive all service needed and available.

(VVV) (E) Needs of Youth and Students with Disabilities

Prior to the completion of the CSNA, GVRA implemented a system to complete an annual analysis of Pre-ETS needs. This analysis, completed by GVRA and LEA leadership at the district level, addresses specific high school plans for the upcoming school year. This needs assessment also identifies individual and group needs. GVRA 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 recognizes the crucial role shared with the Ga DOE 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 as important for students to achieve success include training, education, employment skills and independent living skills. These goals were confirmed by the CSNA in May 2020 which states the greatest needs of youth and students with disabilities are skills or education needed for the job goal, limited work experience and the lack of long term services. Stakeholder professionals and providers identified transportation as the greatest need followed by lack of family support and lack of awareness of GVRA services.

(2) Need to Establish, Develop, or Improve Community Rehabilitation Programs

Prior to the completion of the CSNA, GVRA 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. The following were 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, 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 processes 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. The CSNA provided more information regarding CRP needs and most of the needs have been addressed: better communication and clear expectations, increased accountability of providers, payment process improvements, and sharing of best practices and outcomes.

GVRA 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 in reaching their independent living and employment 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 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 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 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'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 and expanding capacity 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 program evolve. These changes will be reflected in the most recent campus master planning document. Additional capital projects will be necessary to meet the needs identified in the campus master plan. GVRA 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 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

Prior to the completion of the CSNA, GVRA 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 cannot supplant the LEAs responsibilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), but may add to existing services. This expectation is included in the MOU between GVRA and the Ga DOE.

The CSNA identified skills and education as the most important need. Other reported needs/barriers include transportation, work based learning experiences, and lack of GVRA awareness. All five of the required Pre-ETS represent significant needs with work readiness training and work based learning being the most mentioned.

A GVRA transition team provides technical assistance to professionals and local leadership to support statewide accountability for outreach to statewide LEAs, for providing and coordinating effective transition services and Pre-ETS activities, and for timely processing of referrals for eligibility

determinations and IPE development. The transition team leads transition initiatives within GVRA and LEAs to maximize the impact of Pre-ETS for students with disabilities and best practice approaches to transition services. The team also provides transition related training, audits transition related data, and provides targeted support to mediate and support local level collaborative relationship building.

(k) Annual Estimates

(1) Number of Individuals in State Eligible for Services

The US Census Bureau estimates Georgia's population in July 2021 at 10, 799, 566 million. Those under the age of 65 with a disability (reporting having 1 or more disabilities) are estimated at 8.7% of the total population resulting in an estimate of 939,562 individuals in Georgia with a disability. In November 2021, it was estimated that the national civilian participation rate for individuals with a disability was 23.3%. If this was applied to Georgia, up to an estimated 218,918 individuals could potentially be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services. It is also estimated that Georgia has 64,132 students with disabilities receiving services under an IEP and an additional 24,990 students receiving services under a 504 plan. From FFY 2014-2021, GVRA has received annually between 3,372 and 13,519 applications for services.

(2) Number of Eligible Individuals who will Receive Services

(WWW) (A) Individuals in VR Program

GVRA performance has been inconsistent over the past eight years given tumultuous changes, which makes performance predictions challenging. GVRA leadership, with the input of staff at all levels, has developed Key Performance Indicators to capture productivity goals (number of applicants, eligibility determinations, and individual plans for employment completed annually), timeliness of effort (eligibility determination, work plans developed and securing employment after service completion), quantity and quality of employment outcomes, the percentage of potentially eligible students that become GVRA clients or otherwise transition successfully, examining re-service and attrition rates. The following table provides a historical look at those served over the past fiscal years as well as the projected numbers through FY2023.

	FFY Served	VR	PES	Applications	IPEs	Successful	Non-successful
2017	33,981	33,932	49	12,938	9,053	4,301	9,226
2018	35,995	31,893	4,102	11,426	6,649	1,983	7,080
2019	40,723	32,157	8,566	9,594	7,490	2,004	11,063
2020	33,902	25,105	8,797	5,572	4,836	2,034	6,963
2021	29,167	19,477	9,690	3,334	1,666	1,325	5,495
2022	36,000	24,000	12,000	9,600	4,267	2,000	4,900
2023	43,200	28,800	14,400	11,520	5,120	2,400	3,920

Note: The data indicates a large reduction in employment outcomes after the agency implemented a new strategy of focusing on employer relations instead of one the skills, abilities and interests of individual GVRA participants. The agency also created separate management and counselor functions which devastated the previously cohesive rehabilitation team. Both of these efforts negatively impacted the successful implementation of the rehabilitation process. These efforts are being corrected to refocus on outreach, participants and successful outcomes.

(XXX) (B) Individuals in Supported Employment Program

Over the past six years, GVRA has grown its supported employment program in partnership with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD). GVRA provided supported employment services to individuals over the past six years with an annual range of 1,115 to 5,244 individuals, with an annual average of 4,146 individuals. Based on this history, as well as a reduction in funds available from DBHDD, GVRA projects to provide SE services to 2,000 individuals annually through FFY 2023. GVRA is leading the effort to enhance service provision, including customized employment training for providers and staff.

(YYY) (C) Individuals in Priority Categories

GVRA operates under an Order of Selection with 3 priority categories. In January 2021 Priority Categories 2 and 3 were closed. Over the past six years, GVRA has determined annually 6,077 to 11,593 individuals eligible for service, with an annual average of 8,178. The table below shows the number of individuals assigned to each category over the past 4 years along with projections for 2022 and 2023.

Clients Served and Projected to be Served Under OOS

SFY	Priority Category (1) Individual with a Most Significant Disability	Priority Category (2) Individual with a Significant Disability	Priority Category (3) Individual with a Disability
2017	18,624	8,325	4,652
2018	15,933	9,973	3,822
2019	16,130	11,626	2,815
2020	13,354	9,513	1,393
2021	10,508	6,962	951
2022	14,000	8,500	1,500
2023	16,300	10,000	2,500

(3) Number of Individuals Eligible for VR Services, but not Receiving due to an Order of Selection

Due to insufficient resources, GVRA closed Priority Categories 2 and 3 in January 2021 to allow the agency to focus its available resources in supporting individuals with the most significant disabilities and potentially eligible students. GVRA intends to reopen Priority Category 2 by July 2021 and Priority Category 3 by January 2023. At this time, GVRA has successfully removed all individuals off of the Priority Category 2 waitlist and has 105 individuals on the Priority Category 3 waitlist, however, these numbers fluctuate daily.

(4) Cost of Services for Individuals Estimated to be Eligible for Services

The table below captures the total number of individuals served and cost of services in each priority category in FFYs 2017 through 2021 along with projections for 2022 and 2023.

FFY	PC 1	Cost	PC 2	Cost	PC 3	Cost
2017	18,624	\$25,548,944	8,325	\$8,330,300	4,652	\$3,571,801
2018	15,933	\$26,947,748	9,973	\$9,945,161	3,822	\$3,598,082
2019	16,130	\$22,645,698	11,626	\$10,064,916	2,815	\$1,631,799
2020	13,354	\$12,740,775	9,513	\$5,174,890	1,393	\$617,091
2021	10,508	\$8,526,951	6,962	\$2,854,661	951	\$238,592

2022	14,000	\$15,050,000	8,500	\$6,485,500	1,500	\$895,500
2023	16,300	\$18,745,000	10,000	\$8,160,000	2,500	\$1,597,500

Note: As GVRA establishes internal controls to ensure services authorized are reasonable, appropriate, allocable and necessary, projections note a reduction of costs for external service while also increasing utilization of internal delivery of services. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic greatly impacted the provision of services in 2020 and 2021, as fewer clients wanted to participate in face-to-face training. Remote service delivery options are increasing in availability.

(I) State Goals and Priorities

GVRA and the SRC have a collaborative relationship which has allowed for productive discussions and planning between the two entities.

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.

GVRA continues to examine its processes, procedures and policies to ensure quality services are available and provided to applicants, potentially eligible students, and participants. GVRA leadership examined current performance concerns and identified several areas that will be priorities over the next few years, including:

1. Productivity goals (number of applicants, eligibility determinations, and individual plans for employment completed annually),
2. Timeliness of effort (eligibility determination, work plans developed, and securing employment after service completion),
3. Quantity and quality of employment outcomes,
4. Percentage of potentially eligible students that become applicants or otherwise transition successfully,
5. Re-service and attrition rates,
6. Accuracy of case documentation.

GVRA is continuing to track WIOA common performance measures of Employment rate at 2nd quarter, Employment rate at 4th quarter, Median Earnings at 2nd quarter, and Credential Attainment to ensure data is captured accurately while preparing for establishing performance goals. GVRA continues to examine its client information system to identify barriers in accurately. GVRA is working with the SRC to identify

strategies and priorities to address these areas of performance concerns while striving to make improvements.

GVRA updated the Strategic Plan effective September 2021 to reflect organizational and operational changes. GVRA's plan aligns with Governor Brian P. Kemp's strategic goals and his mission to make Georgia "the best place to live, work and raise a family". GVRA shares a particular commitment to the Governor's strategic goals to "make Georgia number one for small business" in order to create employment opportunities for those we serve, to "strengthen rural Georgia" by providing quality service in all offices across the state, and "put Georgians first" by promoting a competitive, integrated and inclusive workforce.

GOAL 1: IMPROVE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND CONTINUITY

Goal 1: GVRA will develop, engage and retain a capable, well-trained and effective workforce.

State Strategic Goal Area: Reform state government by maximizing taxpayer value.

Measurable Objective 1: By June 30, 2023, GVRA will develop and implement core positional productivity measures and targeted training plans across the agency.

Strategy 1: GVRA will focus on training as a critical need and will ensure that all employees can access resources digitally or virtually.

Strategy detail 1: Establish standard procedures and expectations with key performance indicators for the agency and each position.

Strategy detail 2: Maximize current Learning Management System (LMS) capabilities and accessible training platforms by June 30, 2022.

Strategy detail 2: Implement processes and procedures to support reliable and accurate performance tracking.

Measurable Objective 2: GVRA will develop data analytics to track employee performance and ensure accountability for all positions by June 30, 2023.

Strategy 2: Establish standard procedures and expectations to monitor performance.

Strategy detail: GVRA will implement processes and procedures to support reliable and accurate performance tracking, to include but not limited to regular supervisor-employee touchpoints, updated performance measures, and systems for documentation.

GOAL 2: INCREASE SERVICE DELIVERY AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Goal 2: GVRA will increase service delivery and customer satisfaction through a developed framework of coordinated, efficient and effective resource utilization.

State Strategic Goal Area: Reform state government by improving agency call centers and similar constituent services to be courteous and helpful, maximizing taxpayer value with conservative budgeting; leverage technology to best utilize limited state resources; and strengthen rural Georgia by improving remote access to client intake information.

Measurable Objective 1: GVRA will expand its call center to serve all enterprise functions by June 30, 2023.

Strategy 1: GVRA will upgrade its IT infrastructure to support the rollover of all main line calls to agency Customer Services by June 30, 2023.

Strategy detail: GVRA will implement consistent software across all enterprises, reducing the number of applications.

Strategy 2: GVRA will train all Constituent Services staff and selected field staff in processes for call documentation and follow-up.

Strategy Detail: GVRA will implement training consistent with Governor's Office protocol for Constituent Services staff and Administrative Assistants, with modules and resources permanently housed on the agency LMS.

Measurable Objective 2: GVRA will increase client satisfaction from a previous measure of 46% to 90% by June 30, 2023.

Strategy 1: Assess client satisfaction via an existing digital survey on an annual basis.

Strategy detail: GVRA will use a survey tool to obtain statistically significant data annually, utilizing input for process improvement.

Strategy 2: GVRA will implement client quality assurance checks no less than every 90 days.

Strategy detail: GVRA will utilize the support of various staff, to include Constituent Services representatives, to ensure regular client touchpoints.

Strategy 3: GVRA will incorporate expectations for 48-hour response time in all components of training and performance management.

Strategy detail: GVRA will integrate 48-hour response time expectations in performance evaluations by June 30, 2022.

Measurable Objective 4: GVRA will reduce application and intake time by 25% by June 30, 2023.

Strategy 1: GVRA will incorporate expectations for application and intake time in all components of training and performance management.

Strategy detail: GVRA will integrate response time expectations in performance evaluations by June 30, 2023.

Strategy 2: GVRA will implement standard client intake orientation to improve consistency in client communications by December 31, 2021.

Strategy detail: GVRA will create a weekly virtual prospective client orientation and promote standard online orientation to answer questions on applications and services.

Measurable Objective 5: GVRA will increase services to rural areas by 50% by June 30, 2023.

Strategy 1: GVRA will implement a model to serve clients where they are while reducing physical locations.

Strategy detail: GVRA will expand its vehicle fleet to allow employees the ability to meet clients in the field in areas where technology infrastructure impacts service delivery.

Strategy 2: GVRA will expand the number of providers and increase presence in rural communities and school system to broaden services for clients outside the metro areas.

Strategy detail: GVRA continues to assess client needs and will create a process to recruit more rural providers.

Strategy 3: Increase employment placement by 20% by June 30, 2023.

Strategy detail: Evaluate industry growth and focus on smaller employers in identified fields. Identify client strengths and match employers with clients based on short and long-term goals.

Strategy detail: Diversify product lines and develop cross functional services that support state and agency needs.

Measurable Objective 6: GVRA will reach 50,000 transition clients aged 14 to 24 annually by June 30, 2023.

Strategy 1: GVRA will align school system staffing with population statistics.

Strategy detail: GVRA will assess need in all school districts and allocate staff as appropriate to maximize service delivery.

Strategy 2: GVRA will establish contacts in all school districts.

Strategy detail: GVRA will establish internal expectations that appropriate staff will maintain quarterly touchpoints at the school system level.

Measurable Objective 7: GVRA will reduce the number of independent departments and functions by 10% by June 30, 2023.

Strategy 1: GVRA will align functional areas across budgeted departments and consolidate duplicative services.

Strategy detail: GVRA will assess program needs and statutory functions and combine duties and resources that serve the same internal and external stakeholders.

GOAL 3: IMPROVE TECHNOLOGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Goal 3: GVRA will leverage technology solutions and maximize facility infrastructure while reducing operational expenses, and increasing service delivery.

State Strategic Goal Area: Leverage technology to best utilize limited state resources and implement conservative budgeting while strengthening rural Georgia.

Measurable Objective 1: GVRA will increase service delivery through virtual applications by June 30, 2023.

Strategy 1: GVRA will expand bandwidth in all locations.

Strategy detail: GVRA will increase bandwidth to every location statewide to better support modern technologies and align with business needs.

Strategy 2: GVRA will establish an online application process by June 30, 2022.

Strategy detail: GVRA will create a standard application process via a web-based portal to assist clients and leverage current applications that promote customer interactions online.

Measurable Objective 2: GVRA will maximize current applications and reduce telecommunication expenses by 25% by June 30, 2023.

Strategy 1: GVRA will roll out Voice Over Internet Phone (VOIP) platforms as an agency-wide standard.

Strategy detail: GVRA will utilize VOIP to reduce telecommunications costs related to landlines in concert with updated network infrastructure improvement.

Strategy 2: GVRA will reduce spending on data circuit expenses by 25% throughout the agency by June 30, 2022 while still increasing performance.

Strategy detail: GVRA will re-architect network environment to leverage lower cost, higher bandwidth circuits.

Strategy 3: GVRA will reduce the number of mobile devices by 50% by June 30, 2022.

Strategy detail: GVRA will develop standard operating procedures and policy for mobile devices issuances and usage, assigning mobile devices to only those positions with operational equipment needs.

Measurable Objective 3: GVRA will increase the security, reliability, and accuracy of the Agency's systems by 25% by June 30, 2023.

Strategy 1: GVRA will increase the number of agency sponsored cybersecurity trainings.

Strategy detail: GVRA will develop standard operating procedures to ensure staff receive and complete needed cybersecurity training outside the standard enterprise trainings.

Strategy 2: GVRA will enhance agency wide device management.

Strategy detail: GVRA will transition to single cloud-based device management platform to ensure system receive needed patches and policy updates independent of location. This will reduce the time of exposure to vulnerabilities and improve system reliability.

Measurable Objective 4: GVRA will reduce facilities costs by 20% by June 30, 2023.

Strategy 1: GVRA will evaluate office utility and client data to model projected need.

Strategy detail: GVRA will implement standard procedures and criteria using client data and needs as well as the State Properties Commission's (SPC) space standards to identify locations to be consolidated, reducing statewide footprint.

Measurable Objective 5: GVRA will increase facility utilization to 95% by June 30, 2023.

Strategy 1: GVRA will evaluate office utility and client data to model projected need.

Strategy detail: GVRA will implement standard procedures and criteria using client data and needs as well as the State Properties Commission's (SPC) space standards to utilize analysis to identify locations to be consolidated, reducing statewide footprint.

Strategy detail: GVRA will bring on line various state-owned facilities through infrastructure investment and product diversification.

GOAL 4: DATA-DRIVEN CULTURE

Goal 4: Develop a culture of data driven accountability and decision-making.

State Strategic Goal Area: Leverage technology to best utilize limited state resources and implement conservative budgeting; reform state government by maximizing taxpayer value.

Measurable Objective 1: GVRA will develop agency and program specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) with baseline measures by June 30, 2022.

Strategy 1: GVRA will use core metrics to assist in accountability and performance evaluation.

Strategy detail: GVRA will develop and establish core metrics that align with Governor's Office and agency goals.

Measurable Objective 2: GVRA will establish position specific productivity and accountability measures based on agency goals and customer service needs by June 30, 2023.

Strategy 1: GVRA will ensure that all performance plans reflect Key Performance Indicators (KPI).

Strategy detail: GVRA will publish all and educate managers and supervisors on expectations and tracking of KPIs.

SUMMARY OF GOALS

GOAL 1: GVRA will develop, engage and retain a capable, well-trained and effective workforce.

GOAL 2: GVRA will increase service delivery and customer satisfaction through a developed framework of coordinated, efficient and effective resource utilization.

GOAL 3: GVRA will leverage technology solutions and maximize facility infrastructure while reducing operational expenses, and increasing service delivery.

GOAL 4: GVRA will develop a culture of data driven accountability and decision-making.

3.

A. The goals and priorities are supported by the most recent CSNA along with the RSA Monitoring Report, and the private program evaluation received in 2020.

B. The goals and priorities are supported by performance accountability measures. An analysis of performance data tracking WIOA common performance measures of Employment rate at 2nd quarter, Employment rate at 4th quarter, Median Earnings at 2nd quarter, and Credential Attainment was used to ensure data is captured accurately while preparing for establishing performance goals. GVRA continues to examine its client information system to identify barriers specifically in capturing Measureable Skill Gains (MSG) accurately. GVRA formed a taskforce to analyze the client information system as well as the data input from counselors. To ensure correct data is entered and reported, GVRA developed training for counselors on entering MSG and credentials into the client information system (AWARE). These data trainings continue in order to improve accuracy in documented areas. GVRA has also created a Data Unit to monitor, track, and compare data for fiscal forecasting and projections.

C. RSA monitoring conducted under section 107 occurred in 2020 and placed the agency under corrective action. RSA's findings include:

Internal Controls must be implemented ensuring proper and efficient administration, accurate and verifiable data collection, and performance monitoring and evaluation in compliance with 34 C.F.R. §361.12 and 2 C.F.R. §200.303.

State Educational Agency Agreement with the Georgia Department of Education must be executed including all requirements in Section 101(a)(11)(D) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 C.F.R. §361.22(b).

Improve compliance with Federal statues, regulations, and terms and conditions of the award in the areas of capital expenditures at CRP facilities, prior approval period of applicability, service authorization expiration, match planning and tracing and federal financial reporting.

GVRA submits a quarterly report of progress and has resolved one finding.

(m) Order of Selection

1. A

When applying the Order of Selection (OOS) and assigning the individual to a priority category, the counselor must determine the individual eligible for services. GVRA utilizes the following OOS: Priority Category Description

Priority Category 1 (Individual with a Most Significant Disability): An eligible individual shall be classified in this category if he/she has been determined to be an individual who:

- has limitations in 3 or more functional capacities in terms of a competitive integrated employment outcome; and
- requires multiple services over an extended period of time

Priority Category 2 (Individual with a Significant Disability): An eligible individual shall be classified in this category if he/she has been determined to be an individual who:

- has limitations in 1 or more functional capacities in terms of a competitive integrated employment outcome; and
- requires multiple services over an extended period of time;

Priority Category 3 (Individual with a Disability): All other eligible individuals.

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	3 or more	Multiple	Over an Extended Period of Time
(2) Individual with a Significant Disability	1 or more	Multiple	Over an Extended Period of Time
(3) Individual with a Disability		1 or more	Not Over an Extended Period of Time

It is the intent of GVRA 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, GVRA chose to establish an OOS to protect service delivery for those with the most significant disabilities. When an individual is determined eligible for 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 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 being served first. Information and referral services shall be provided to applicants, potential applicants and eligible clients who do not qualify for services due to GVRA's OOS and to clients who have been determined ineligible for 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.

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 GA services over an extended period of time and are placed in priority category 1.

B. Justification for the Order

In the event services cannot be provided to all eligible individuals who apply, GVRA chose to establish a way to protect service delivery for those with the most significant disabilities and has utilized an Order of Selection for many years, records indicate implementation November 1, 1979.

After careful review of available resources, and analysis of projected fiscal limitations, GVRA determined a need to prioritize those individuals in greatest need of services in order to obtain competitive integrated employment. Therefore, GVRA closed Priority categories 2 and 3 effective January 2021 to allow the agency to focus its available resources in supporting individuals with the most significant disabilities and potentially eligible students. GVRA hopes to reopen priority categories 2 and 3 by January 2023.

C. The service and outcome goals

The Table below indicates the number of individuals served by priority category and successfully employed for FFY 2017-2020, and projected/estimated numbers for FFY2021 -2023.

FFY	PC 1 Served	PC 1 Employed	PC 2 Served	PC 2 Employed	PC 3 Served	PC 3 Employed
2017	18,624	2,573	8,325	965	4,652	759
2018	15,933	1,042	9,973	494	3,822	447
2019	16,130	1,180	11,626	600	2,815	223
2020	13,354	1,236	9,513	654	1,393	132
2021	10,508	848	6,961	404	951	63

2022	14,000	1300	8,500	600	1,500	100
2023	16,300	1500	10,000	750	2,500	150

D. The time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order; and

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 services over an extended period of time and are placed in priority category one. The Table below indicates the number of individuals served by priority category and the average number of days required to be successfully employed for FFY 2017-2020, and the projected/estimated number of days for FFY 2021-2023.

FFY	PC 1 Served	PC 1 Average Days to Employed	PC 2 Served	PC 2 Average Days to Employed	PC 3 Served	PC 3 Average Days to Employed
2017	18,624	969	8,325	1,282	4,652	900
2018	15,933	1,037	9,973	1,163	3,822	830
2019	16,130	1,071	11,626	1,112	2,815	817
2020	13,354	1,234	9,513	1,367	1,393	1,426
2021	10,508	1,272	6,961	1,540	951	1,453
2022	14,000	300	8,500	200	1,500	120
2023	16,300	150	10,000	100	2,500	90

NOTE: The agency, under previous leadership, implemented a strategy of focusing on employer relations instead of specific employment for the participant, while also creating additional layers of management and counselor functions. These actions devastated the previously cohesive rehabilitation team causing a decrease in successful employment outcomes and an increase in the length of time to obtain employment. This practice has been terminated and the focus returns to the participant and their employment goal.

E. How individuals with the most significant disabilities are selected for services before all other individuals with disabilities

To ensure individuals with the most significant disabilities are served first, Priority Category 1 is for those individuals defined as having limitations in three or more functional capacities and who require multiple

services over an extended period of time and are therefore, the highest priority. Taking into account resources, GVRA closed Priority Categories 2 and 3 effective January 2021 to allow the agency to focus its available resources in supporting individuals with the most significant disabilities and potentially eligible students.

2. If the designated state unit has elected to serve eligible individuals, regardless of any established order of selection, who require specific services or equipment to maintain employment

Although WIOA regulations allow eligible individuals to be served in order to maintain employment regardless of OOS, GVRA declined this practice and chose to enforce OOS for all individuals in order 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 has a robust supported employment (SE) program, both for youth and adults, averaging 4,146 participants over the last six years. GVRA 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. GVRA continues to collaborate with the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) around existing SE services for individuals with severe and persistent mental illness (SPMI) and individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (I/DD). Additionally, GVRA collaborates with Local Education Agency, 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. Currently, GVRA has 25 Project Search sites across the state and will continue to expand and refine partnerships to maximize funds and increase access to services.

Over the next few years, GVRA plans to continue to train specialty staff in the unique needs and strengths of individuals receiving SE services; expand the partnership with DBHDD to provide evidence based services to individuals with SPMI and individuals with I/DD; monitor and track supported employment services and the provision of extended services to ensure quality and adherence to performance expectations by the community rehabilitation programs; and increase the number of qualified SE providers in the state. Focusing on these goals and priorities will increase successful outcomes for individuals who qualify for and need SE services to reach their competitive integrated employment goals while optimally utilizing funds and resources.

(2) Activities to be Conducted for Youth with Most Significant Disabilities

A. provision of extended services for a period not to exceed 4 years; and

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 utilizes collaborative agreements with community rehabilitation providers to deliver SE services across the state, which includes extended services. Individuals, including youth with the most significant disabilities, continue to receive extended services for the life of the job pursuant to the terms of the collaboration agreement with each provider.

B. leverage other public and private funds to increase resources...

GVRA 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 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.
- Assess current network of providers rendering services for youth with significant disabilities

(o) State's Strategies

(1) Methods to Expand and Improve Services

GVRA leadership continues to examine organizational structure, processes and procedures in order to improve and expand services to individuals with significant disabilities. Therefore, strategies are consistently being developed and refined. Current and future strategies include:

- Comprehensive training program
- Clear performance expectations
- Data analysis of patterns and trends of services provided and associated outcomes
- Data driven forecasting and projections for future planning
- On-line referral
- Standard operating procedures

- 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’s rehabilitation team consists of Assistive Work Technology (AWT) staff that includes 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 also partners with Tools for Life (Georgia Assistive Technology Act Program) who loans equipment to individuals with disabilities for exploratory usage before purchase.

(3) Outreach Procedures

GVRA 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.

GVRA has implemented on-line sessions for the public to learn more about services and the rehabilitation process. An on-line referral is expected to be unveiled in January 2022 to allow more access for individuals interested in applying for services.

In past years, agency strategic communications plans have included traditional print, broadcast and digital advertising and targeted social media campaigns; however, outreach staff have currently redirected efforts to internal and external communications and provision of basic informational resources for use in local offices. As GVRA leadership implements process improvements leading to better service delivery, outreach positions will collaboratively evaluate appropriate activities to support program and client needs.

(4) Methods to Expand and Improve Services to Students

GVRA has developed numerous methods to ensure transition services are provided for students with disabilities.

- GVRA will have a transition point of contact in every district to ensure consistent communication and services
- GVRA and the LEA will develop outreach tools for awareness and identification of students with disabilities

- GVRA will also conduct outreach to non-traditional LEAs such as Georgia Cyber Academy, private schools, charter schools and home schooled students
- GVRA will provide all five required pre-employment transition services
- GVRA and the LEAs will assess pre-employment transition services yearly in order to improve these services and address specific needs
- GVRA staff will participate in all IEP meetings to assess transition needs and goals
- GVRA 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
- GVRA will continue to develop relationships with institutions of higher education to better serve post-secondary students

(5) Plans for Community Rehabilitation Programs within the State

GVRA continues to collaborate with CRPs statewide in order to work more effectively together and better serve Georgians with disabilities. A provider forum is held regularly to maintain open communication between GVRA and providers. This dialogue helps 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 will work with all core partners to develop and monitor performance indicators. Internally, GVRA will communicate standard operating procedures and processes to staff to encourage optimal performance and incorporate the measurements into staff training. GVRA will also continue to monitor data for accuracy and validity and ensure staff receive clear performance expectations along with consistent feedback. GVRA is continuing to establish internal controls; implement pre-ETS within the regulations including flexibilities; increase the quality of services available and delivered to potentially eligible students, applicants and participants; focus on participants achieving competitive integrated outcomes.

(7) Strategies for Assisting Statewide Workforce System

GVRA will continue to work collaboratively with all core programs, as well as other state agencies, to both integrate and embed vocational rehabilitation services as efficiently and effectively as possible. Strategies include services at the one-stops, cross-training, shared services, and where possible, braided or blended funding to maximize the resources available.

(8) How Strategies will be Utilized

(ZZZ)(A) How Strategies will Achieve Goals and Priorities for State

GVRA strategies align with improvements suggested in the most recent comprehensive needs assessment.

(AAAA) (B) How Strategies will Support Innovation and Expansion Activities

As GVRA strategies stabilize and improvements continue, innovation and expansion opportunities will continue to also be reviewed in order to consistently offer new and exciting ways to serve individuals with disabilities. These strategies provide chances to work more closely with other entities and increase awareness and access to services. GVRA strives to constantly review and improve services, especially with innovative activities.

(BBBB) (C) How Strategies will Overcome Identified Equitable Access Barriers

GVRA strategies will improve access to services and participation in services for all statewide. Competent and well trained staff providing services to individuals in communities across the state will provide equitable access for all.

(p) Evaluation and Reports of Progress

(1) Strategies for Program Goals

(A) GVRA identified four goals in the previous state plan: maximize funds, expand transition, enhance services, and help employers. Since 2019, GVRA has replaced its entire administrative team. New leadership spent the past twelve months examining the organization and found that previous goals and strategies resulted in spending exceeding the budget, elimination of internal controls, incorrect implementation of pre-employment transition services, decline in quality of services available and delivered to potentially eligible students and participants, as well as an emphasis on expanding employer relationships without a focus on assisting clients achieve their competitive integrated employment goals.

(B) In the previous approved State Plan, GVRA set the following goals: maximize available federal funds to assist more individuals with disabilities achieve their employment goals; expand transition services to assist more students with disabilities to go from high school to work or post-secondary education/training;

enhance services to unserved and underserved populations to increase their employment outcomes; help employers meet their human resources needs through hiring qualified individuals with disabilities. Although some of the above stated goals were met, most were either not met, implemented incorrectly or had a reverse outcome causing more damage.

As stated in other sections, GVRA has reviewed the most recent comprehensive needs assessment, reviewed the private analysis and sought guidance from RSA in order to develop new goals and strategies.

(2) Success of Supported Employment Program Goals

(A) 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 for field level support

(B) Collaboration among agencies and 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 delivered 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

Based on past performance data, GVRA was not confident in the data captured. Therefore, GVRA formed a taskforce to analyze the client information system as well as the data input from the rehabilitation professionals. To ensure correct data is entered and reported, GVRA developed and delivered staff training on performance indicators, and specific focused training on MSGs and credentials. Training will continue on all performance indicators – focusing on each indicator to ensure staff have a complete understanding of expectations and knowledge of the accurate way to enter data.

The chart below shows performance measures from RSA's GA WIOA Performance Measures since implementation. Data for 2021 is not yet available; 2022 and 2023 rates will be negotiated in 2022.

FFY	MSG	MSG Negotiated Rate	Q2 Employment Rate	Median Earnings	Q4 Employment Rate	Credential Attainment
2017	38.6%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2018	24.0%	n/a	48.6%	\$3,231	n/a	n/a
2019	34.1%	n/a	46.0%	\$3,284	44.3%	0.0%
2020	30.3%	25.8%	45.4%	\$3,489	40.7%	25.9%

(4) How Funds Reserved for Innovation and Expansion Activities were Utilized

GVRA evaluates innovation and expansion opportunities from a service delivery and fiscal accountability perspective. As GVRA strategies stabilize and improvements continue, innovation and expansion opportunities will continue to be reviewed in order to consistently offer innovative ways to provide and expand services to individuals with disabilities. Currently, GVRA utilizes funds reserved for innovation and expansion activities to support the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) and the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) in accordance with SILC and SRC resource plans.

(q) Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services

GVRA 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 Traditional Supported Employment, Individual Placement and Support (IPS) and 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 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 and DBHDD/DD. As part of continuing efforts to improve capacity and the quality of this service, GVRA contracted with an entity who delivered ACRE accredited CE 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 WIOA¹⁹, and its supplement under title VI of the Rehabilitation Act²⁰;
2. As a condition for the receipt of Federal funds under title I of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of VR services, GVRA²¹ agrees to operate and administer the State VR Services Program in accordance with the VR services portion of the Unified or Combined State Plan²², the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations²³, 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;

¹⁹ Public Law 113-128.

²⁰ Unless otherwise stated, "Rehabilitation Act" means the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended by WIOA, signed into law on July 22, 2014.

²¹ All references in this plan to "designated State agency" or to "the State agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

²² 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.

²³ 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.

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 Plan²⁴, 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 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

²⁴ 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.

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 inception and launch of the Georgia Department of Labor's (GDOL), Business Services Unit, represented a new emphasis and direction on a service delivery focused on employers, driven to provide access to market driven staff, and dedicated to fulfilling the needs of Georgia employers. This realignment of the agency's vision and purpose, allowed GDOL to refocus and commit to the business community and provide resources and paths to more proactive and employer friendly partnerships.

Regional Coordinator Program (RC)

- The RC program partners with local, regional, and statewide economic developers by executing prompt turnaround data and customized solutions to workforce issues. Those that serve in this position, assist economic developers to identify data critical for the successful location and expansion of industry

Business Services Recruiters (BSR)

- The BSR program aids in the development and maintenance of relationships with employers, the identification of talent pools for target industries, as well as the identification of employer talent requirements and matching talent with employer hiring needs.

Special Workforce Assistance Team (SWAT)

- The SWAT program derived from a great need across the state to fill the gaps and barriers to employment faced by many job seekers. The team works closely with local Chambers of Commerce, Industrial Authorities, and Economic Developers in this endeavor. Events coordinated by this program typically feature a plethora of services to job seekers aiding in the removal of barriers to employment. Event services may include a combination of workshops to include interviewing, networking, social media use, and more. The SWAT team are trained and/or certified résumé experts able to assist job seekers in the development of marketing tools necessary to impress hiring managers.

Regional Career Expos

- These events are tailored based on local requests to targeted industries, job seekers, skill requirements, as well as general community events. Based on the local needs and requests, staff target businesses and job seekers as appropriate to solicit their attendance in the effort to secure matches between employers and job seekers. Additionally, the team collaborates and coordinates with the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) on the FastTrack program

which focuses on the creation of short-term training programs providing certification in Manufacturing, Basic Construction Fundamentals, Welding and Industrial Maintenance.

Georgia Department of Labor's Customized Recruitment (CR)

- The Customized Recruitment program, targeted solely to new businesses opening or relocating to Georgia, is a service aimed towards the streamlining of the company's candidate search and recruitment process. This is achieved through the efforts of a team of highly successful GDOL recruiters, working on the employer's behalf. The team partners with project managers, economic developers, and businesses to ease the recruitment process by providing screening assistance, thus alleviating direct applicant contact with the employer for the initial qualifications screening of candidates. Candidates encounter several checks and balances put in place by the team to ensure their qualifications, and that applications or resumes are consistent in matching with the needs of the employer prior to the provision of next steps of the recruitment process.

Georgia Department of Labor's Customized Recruitment X (CRX)

- Evolving from the CR program, CRX was implemented as a specialized resource to meet the needs of existing Georgia companies experiencing growth and needing to expand their workforce. Modeled after the extremely successful and highly sought CR program, CRX provides the same level of expert services to Georgia's businesses for a multitude of reasons is experiencing expansion. Candidates undergo a process similar to the established CR checks and balances, ensuring qualifications, applications and resumes are screened prior to referral. This process also establishes the next screening steps or sends candidates directly to the employer for assessment or recruitment.

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

Titled "Employers in the Know" are annually held summits, designed to help business owners, hiring professionals, management professionals and others in gaining a better understanding of compliance challenges in the workplace and a means to eliminate or mitigate those challenges. Summit attendees meet and hear from the Commissioner of GDOL as he shares information on current GDOL initiatives and programs deemed to be of great value. Summits also provide Labor Law updates from experts in the field with regard to federal policies and legislation that help in the implementation of policies, procedures, and

practices that promote compliance and fiscal growth in the upcoming years. Attendees are provided information about other Georgia state agencies and their respective initiatives aimed at promoting job growth and economic development.

**Appendix B: Performance Goals for the Core Programs
WIOA Title I Programs PY22 & PY23**

	Negotiated Goal PY 22	Negotiated Goal PY23
Adult Program		
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	80.0%	81.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	78.0%	79.0%
Median Earnings	\$7,121	\$7,121
Credential Attainment Rate	73.0%	75.6%
Measurable Skill Gains	50%	50%
Dislocated Worker Program		
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	81.0%	82.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	79.0%	80.0%
Median Earnings	\$9,558	\$9,558
Credential Attainment Rate	75.0%	76.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	50%	50%
Youth Program		
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	72.0%	73.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	75.0%	75.0%
Median Earnings	\$3,000	\$3,100
Credential Attainment Rate	67.8%	67.8%
Measurable Skill Gains	50%	50%

	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%	41.0%	43.0%	41.1%
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	41.0%	40.7%	42.0%	40.8%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	\$3830	\$3,764	\$3900	\$3,765
Credential Attainment Rate	43.0%	43.4%	44.0%	43.5%
Measurable Skills Gains	54.0%	53.7%	55.0%	53.8%

	Title II – Adult Education Program			
	Program Year 2022		Program Year 2023	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	41.5%		41.6%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	42.5%		42.6%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	\$4,200.00		\$4,242.00	
Credential Attainment Rate	55.0%		55.1%	
Measurable Skills Gains	50.0%		50.1%	

	Title III- Wagner-Peyser Program			
	Program Year 2022		Program Year 2023	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	65.3%	TBD%	68.0%	TBD%
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	65.5%	TBD%	68.2%	TBD%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	\$5,300	\$TBD	\$5,350	\$TBD

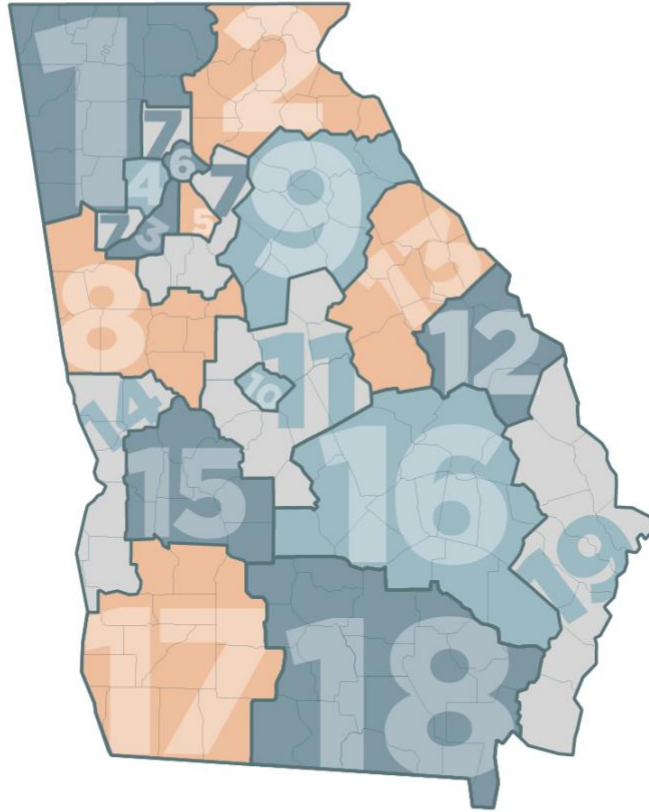
	Vocational Rehabilitation Program²⁵			
	Program Year 2022		Program Year 2023	
	Expected Level	Negotiated Level	Expected Level	Negotiated Level
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	45%		47%	
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	42%		45%	
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	\$3387		\$3500	
Credential Attainment Rate	25%		30%	
Measurable Skills Gains	32%		35%	

²⁵ 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%	

Appendix C: Local Workforce Development Area Map

WorkSource Georgia Local 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	

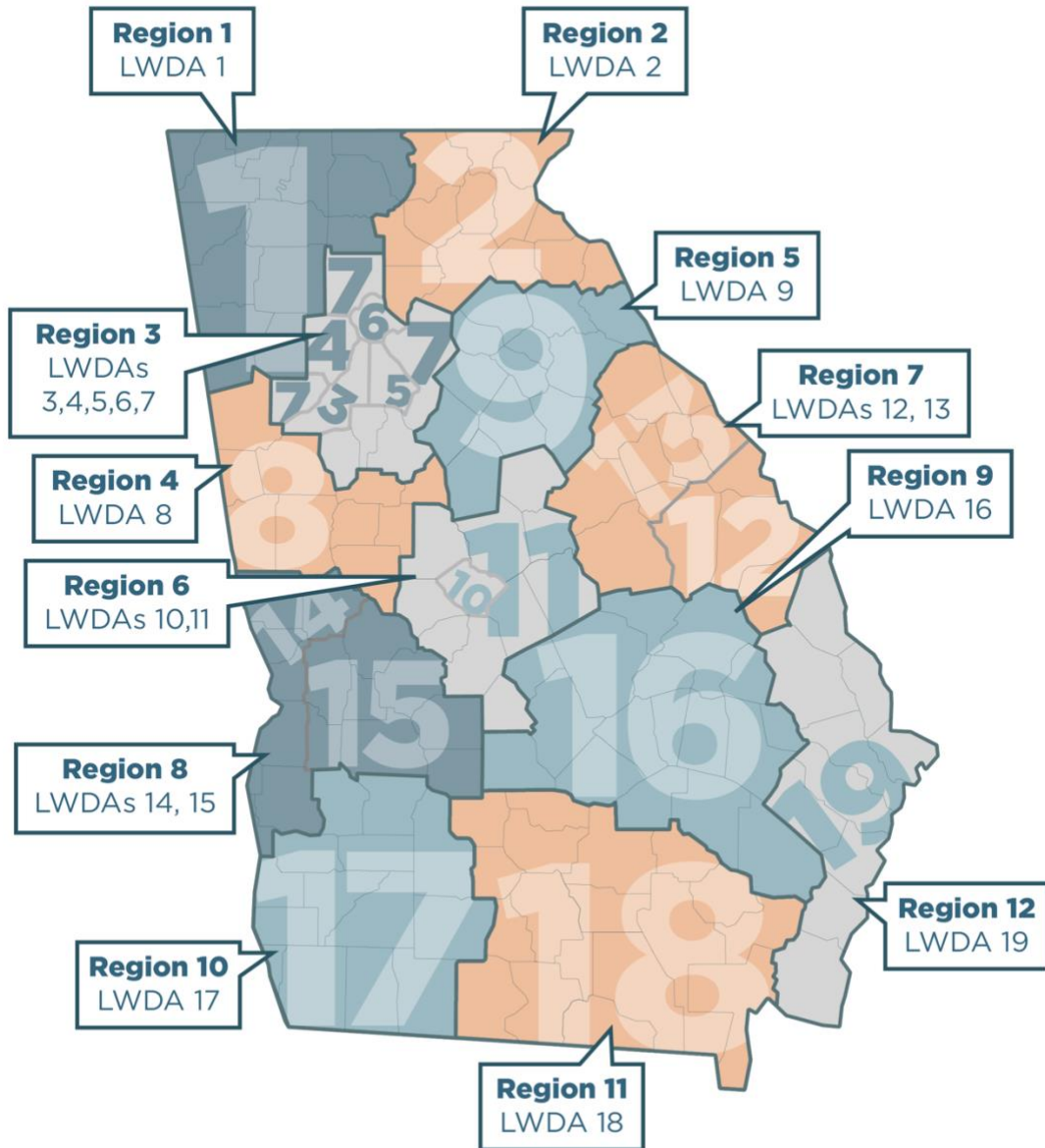
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Appendix D: Workforce Development Region Map

WorkSource Georgia Region Map



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