

Georgia Mountains

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## **WORKSOURCE GEORGIA MOUNTAINS PLAN 2020-2024**

Prepared by the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission



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## Acronym Guide

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
CAPS	Childcare and Parents Services
CEDS	Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
CLEO	Chief Local Elected Official
CNC	Computer Numerical Control
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
DECAL	Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning
DHS	Georgia Department of Human Services
DVOP	Disabled Veteran Outreach Program
EDA	US Economic Development Administration
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
EMC	Electric Membership Corporation
ESL	English as a Second Language
ETPL	Eligible Training Provider List
GDEcD	Georgia Department of Economic Development
GDOL	Georgia Department of Labor
GED	General Educational Development test
GMRC	Georgia Mountains Regional Commission
GMWDB	Georgia Mountains Workforce Development Board
GOSA	Georgia Governor's Office of Student Achievement
GVRA	Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency
IET	Integrated Training and Education
ITA	Individual Training Account
IWT	Incumbent Worker Training
LEO	Local Elected Official
LTC	Lanier Technical College
LVER	Local Veteran Employment Representative
LWDA	Local Workforce Development Area

MDC	Manufacturing Development Center
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGTC	North Georgia Technical College
OJT	On-the-Job Training
RFP	Request for Proposal
RING	Rehabilitation Industries of Northeast Georgia
SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis
TAA	Trade Adjustment Assistance
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
TCSG-OAE	Technical College System of Georgia's Office of Adult Education
TCSG-OWD	Technical College System of Georgia's Office of Workforce Development
TOPPSTEP	The Offender Parolee Probationer State Training Employment Program
TVA	Tennessee Valley Authority
UI	Unemployment Insurance
USG	University System of Georgia
WARN	Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification
WIOA	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
WSGM	WorkSource Georgia Mountains
WSP	TANF's Work Support Payments program

## 1.0: Strategic Elements, Governance and Structure

### 1.1: Identification of the Fiscal Agent

*Provide an identification of the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in WIOA § 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III) as determined by the chief local elected official.*

The Local Elected Officials (LEO) Board of the 13-county WorkSource Georgia Mountains (WSGM,) Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Area 2 designated the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission as the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds.

The Georgia Mountains Regional Commission (GMRC) is a sub-state district created by local governments in 1962 under provisions of Georgia Enabling Law. The purpose of the GMRC is to locally promote and guide the proper development of human, natural, physical, social, and economic resources within Georgia Mountain's twelve counties. The GMRC is guided by a forty-one (41) member Council and is composed of individuals appointed by the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the House of Representatives, as well as one county elected official, one city elected official, and one private sector individual from each of the twelve member counties. City, Council, and private sector representatives are chosen by the cities and counties they represent. The GMRC Council is responsible for all policy decisions.

### 1.2: Description of Strategic Planning Elements

*Provide a description of the strategic planning elements listed below. A complete answer will rely on a variety of data sources and employer input. Also describe how the information was gathered and what partners and employers were consulted.*

The analysis in this section was completed in March and April of 2020, using data available through March of 2020. New and available data was updated in June of 2022. As circumstances are changing rapidly due to COVID-19 and continuing economic uncertainty causing potentially severe impacts on certain industries and employment rates, there is potential for significant impacts to the estimates and projections utilized and to workforce needs over the next two years. The Georgia Mountains Workforce Development Board (GMWDB) and WorkSource Georgia Mountains are prepared to respond to these changes in the economic environment and will continue to provide quality workforce and business services to all eligible jobseekers.

1.2.a: Provide an analysis of the regional economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and the employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations. Include the listing of occupations in demand within the region and describe how the list was developed citing source data.

An analysis of Georgia Mountains Area 2 offers a picture of diversity in geography, workforce composition, employers, and industry sectors. Georgia Mountains Area 2 covers approximately 3,500 square miles (about the area of Connecticut) and has a current population of just over 719,000 people. Some of Georgia Mountains Area 2's counties are among the fastest growing in the United States, and all have experienced recent positive growth.

Over the last generation, Georgia Mountains Area 2 has transformed itself and the local economy from an area heavily reliant on agriculture and traditional manufacturing to a more diverse economy with industry growth in healthcare, tourism, logistics and distribution, advanced manufacturing, retail, and a variety of other industrial and high-tech companies. Georgia Mountains Area 2 continues to experience strong economic conditions with sustained success and expansion in a number of local demand industry sectors.

**Table 1.1: Area Profile for Georgia Mountains Local Workforce Development Area, GA**

**Area Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment Data Table**  
April 2022

Area	Civilian Labor Force	Number Employed	Number Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
WorkSource Georgia Mountains	367,244	360,547	6,697	1.8%
Georgia	5,254,815	5,125,559	129,256	2.5%
United States	163,449,000	157,991,000	5,458,000	3.3%

Source: GA Dept. of Labor, Workforce Statistics & Economic Research, Local Area Unemployment Statistics Unit

Table 1.1 above demonstrates the strong labor market within Georgia Mountains Area 2. As of April 2022, Georgia Mountains Area 2’s unemployment rate is lower than the state and national rates for the same period.

Table 1.2 demonstrates the current in-demand occupations as identified by Burning Glass Labor Insight, demonstrating a variety of demand occupations in industries ranging from transportation and trucking to healthcare to retail.

Table 1.2: Total In-Demand Occupations April 2019 - March 2020

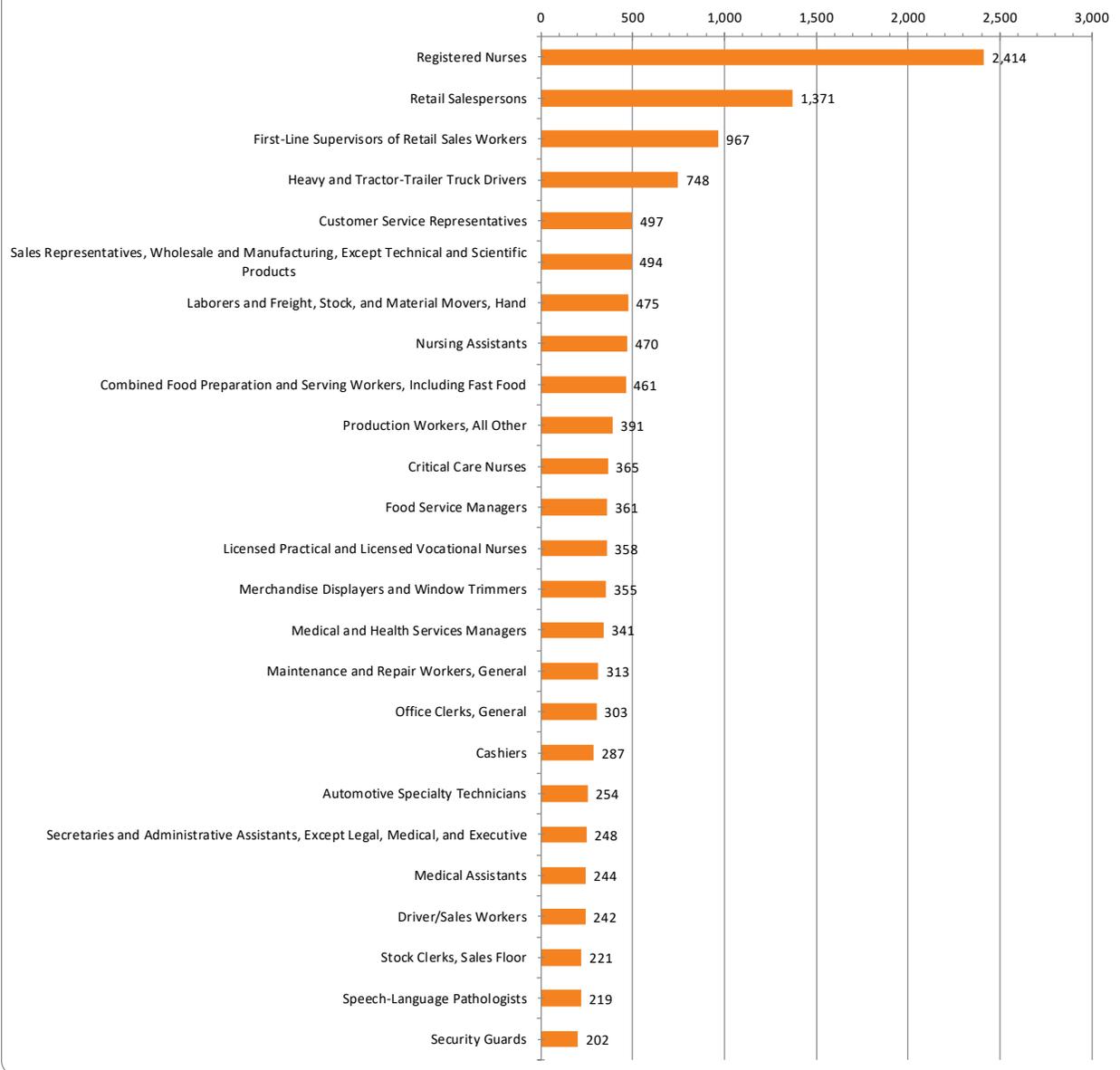


Table 1.3 below demonstrates projected regional growth by occupations between 2016 and 2026. The table focuses on the top 25 growth occupations and shows similarities with Table 1.2. The five occupations that are projected to see the most significant absolute growth are:

- Cashiers (2,067 annual openings)
- Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food (1,798 annual openings)
- Retail Salesperson (1,480 annual openings)
- Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand (1,436 annual openings)
- Office Clerks, General (767 annual openings)

Unfortunately, many of the top 25 occupations by annual openings are in the retail and food services industries, which remain a substantial portion of Georgia Mountains Area 2's economy. These industries typically provide jobs with wages below the standard living wage and offer fewer advancement opportunities. Therefore, GMWDB's workforce system strategy will not prioritize these industries.

**Table 1.3 Area Profile for Georgia Mountains Local Workforce Development Area,  
Occupations by Projected Growth Table**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>2016-2026 Annual Avg. Percent Change</b>	<b>Annual Openings</b>
1	Cashiers	1.12%	2,067
2	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	1.92%	1,798
3	Retail Salespersons	1.98%	1,480
4	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	1.92%	1,436
5	Office Clerks, General	0.74%	767
6	Waiters and Waitresses	1.06%	753
7	General and Operations Managers	1.83%	659
8	Team Assemblers	0.93%	601
9	Customer Service Representatives	1.13%	587
10	Meat, Poultry, and Fish Cutters and Trimmers	1.99%	539
11	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	1.60%	524
12	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	0.19%	503
13	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	2.06%	459
14	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	2.13%	439
15	Construction Laborers	1.82%	401
16	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	1.76%	400
17	Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, Nursery, and Greenhouse	0.96%	394
18	Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	1.87%	386
19	Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	2.21%	384
20	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	1.89%	361
21	Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	1.99%	347
22	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	1.63%	341
23	Nursing Assistants	2.36%	338
24	Medical Assistants	3.27%	331
25	First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	1.24%	321

Source: Georgia Dept. of Labor, Workforce Statistics & Economic Research, Projection Unit

Turning towards regional industry growth, Table 1.4 shows the top ten industries with projected growth between 2016 and 2026. While the top two sectors may have low absolute employment change numbers, several industries (transportation equipment manufacturing, ambulatory health care services, nursing, residential care facilities, and administrative and support services) show large projected growth in annual percentage improvement and improvement employment change.

**Table 1.4 Area Profile for Georgia Mountains Local Workforce Development**  
**Industries by Projected Growth Table**

Rank	Industry	Total Annual Percent Change	Total 2016-2026 Employment Change
1	Animal Production and Aquaculture	4.12%	105
2	Waste Management and Remediation Services	4.01%	407
3	Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	3.08%	1,316
4	Ambulatory Health Care Services	3.06%	3,793
5	Amusement, Gambling, and Recreation Industries	2.76%	708
6	Support Activities for Transportation	2.64%	292
7	Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	2.58%	1,023
8	Administrative and Support Services	2.49%	3,521
9	Social Assistance	2.49%	952
10	Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores	2.34%	700

Source: Georgia Dept. of Labor, Workforce Statistics & Economic Research, Projections Unit

GMWDB also considered current employment distribution across industries to understand where employment and demand may intersect for additional jobseeker opportunities. Employers across many industries cited concern about an aging workforce and available jobseekers to replace retiring workers. While some of these industries may not show up as growth industries, there will still be a steady demand for a competent and ready workforce to replace workers who will be retiring over the next four years. Table 1.5 below shows Georgia Mountains Area 2 industry employment distribution through the fourth quarter of 2021.

**Table 1.5 Area Profile for Georgia Mountains Local Workforce Development**

**Industry Employment Distribution Table**

Rank	Industry Sector	Number of Establishments	Number of Employees
1	Manufacturing	914	40,325
2	Health Care and Social Assistance	1,797	34,927
3	Retail Trade	2,358	33,563
4	Accommodation and Food Services	1,424	25,013
5	Educational Services	392	24,565
6	Construction	2,040	14,907
7	Administrative and Support and Waste Management	1,195	14,316
8	Wholesale Trade	1,079	11,995
9	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	2,210	10,950
10	Public Administration	215	10,511

Source: Georgia Dept. of Labor, Workforce Statistics & Economic Research, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages Program

Utilizing the data made available through the Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL), data provided by area employers, and data made available through the state’s Burning Glass Labor Insight analysis, the GMWDB has developed a comprehensive growth and demand occupation list. This list includes a variety of industries and employment types to account for all the different jobseekers within the region. GMWDB’s growth and demand occupation list is included as Attachment 1.

1.2.b: Provide an analysis of the knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

In Georgia Mountains Area 2, for the majority of the occupations projected to have the greatest number of annual openings between 2016 and 2026, advanced degrees and specialized training are not required, as noted in Table 1.6. While many of the listed occupations are projected to have large numbers of annual openings, many of them do not offer living wages.

**Table 1.6: LONG-TERM OCCUPATIONAL PROJECTIONS: Most Annual Openings  
2016 to 2026  
LWDA#002 Georgia Mountains**

July 2019

Occupations	Typical Education	2016 Base Employment	2026 Projected Employment	Total Change in Employment	Annual Occupational Openings
Cashiers	8-No formal educational credential	9,920	11,090	1,170	2,070
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, In	8-No formal educational credential	8,130	9,830	1,700	1,800
Retail Salespersons	8-No formal educational credential	8,230	10,010	1,780	1,480
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, H	8-No formal educational credential	8,440	10,210	1,770	1,440
Office Clerks, General	7-High school diploma or equivalent	5,990	6,450	460	780
Waiters and Waitresses	8-No formal educational credential	3,600	4,000	400	750
General and Operations Managers	3-Bachelor's degree	6,080	7,280	1,200	660
Team Assemblers	7-High school diploma or equivalent	4,600	5,050	450	610
Customer Service Representatives	7-High school diploma or equivalent	4,030	4,510	480	590
Meat, Poultry, and Fish Cutters and Trimmers	8-No formal educational credential	3,450	4,210	760	540
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	7-High school diploma or equivalent	4,020	4,710	690	520
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except L	7-High school diploma or equivalent	4,600	4,690	90	500
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	5-Postsecondary non-degree award	3,280	4,020	740	460
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeep	8-No formal educational credential	2,630	3,250	620	440
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Educa	3-Bachelor's degree	4,180	4,980	800	400

Source: GA Dept. of Labor, Workforce Statistics & Economic Research

For occupations with the fastest job growth, several of the occupations require higher levels of education as found in Table 1.7. However, the total number of openings in these occupations is projected to be relatively low.

**Table 1.7: LONG-TERM OCCUPATIONAL PROJECTIONS: Fastest Job Growth  
2016 to 2026  
LWDA#002 Georgia Mountains**

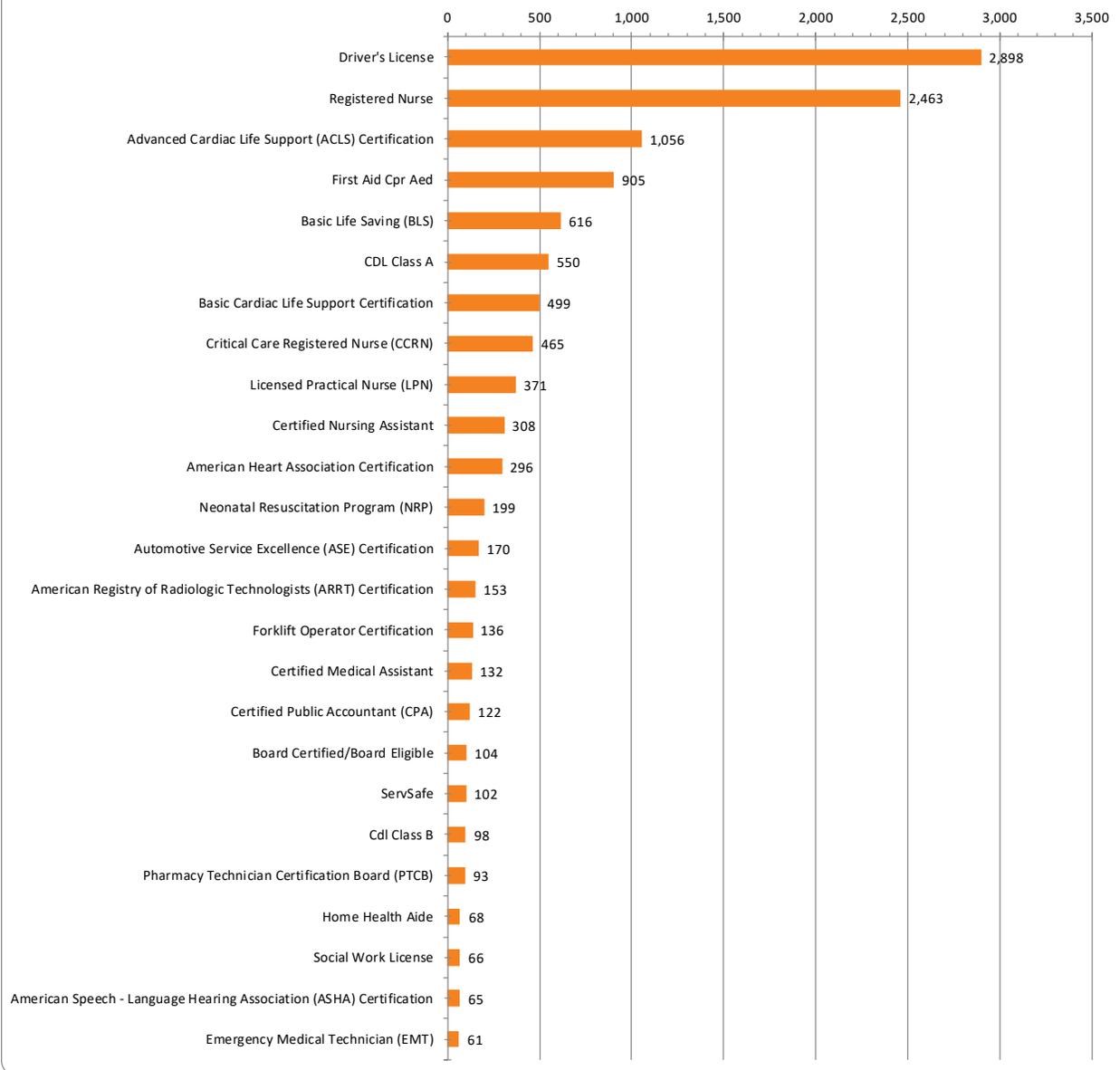
July 2019

Occupations	Typical Education	2016 Base Employment	2026 Projected Employment	Total Change in Employment	Annual Occupational Openings
Physician Assistants	2-Master's degree	110	170	60	20
Producers and Directors	3-Bachelor's degree	50	70	20	0
Nurse Practitioners	2-Master's degree	270	400	130	30
Personal Care Aides	7-High school diploma or equivalent	1,200	1,730	530	260
Computer Numerically Controlled Machine Tool Programmers, Metal and Plastic	5-Postsecondary non-degree award	50	70	20	0
Respiratory Therapists	4-Associate's degree	240	340	100	30
Health Specialties Teachers, Postsecondary	1-Doctoral or professional degree	110	160	50	20
Occupational Therapists	2-Master's degree	170	240	70	20
Physical Therapist Assistants	4-Associate's degree	100	150	50	20
Physical Therapists	1-Doctoral or professional degree	270	380	110	30
Audio and Video Equipment Technicians	5-Postsecondary non-degree award	90	120	30	10
Medical Assistants	5-Postsecondary non-degree award	2,030	2,800	770	340
Nursing Instructors and Teachers, Postsecondary	1-Doctoral or professional degree	140	200	60	30
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	4-Associate's degree	80	110	30	0
Helpers--Pipefitters, Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	7-High school diploma or equivalent	70	100	30	10

Source: GA Dept. of Labor, Workforce Statistics & Economic Research

The education requirements information found in Tables 1.6 and 1.7 above align with information about the current certifications in greatest demand, found in Table 1.8 below. Data from Burning Glass Labor Insight on certifications currently in greatest demand illustrates that over half of the most in demand certifications are in the healthcare field. Many of the certifications require more education than a high school diploma but less education than a bachelor's degree.

**Table 1.8 Certifications in Greatest Demand**



GDOL publishes “Georgia’s Hot Careers to 2026” infographic highlighting state-wide growing and demanding occupations. To be included, occupations must demonstrate fast job growth, above average wages, and have at least 400 average annual openings statewide. The list available in April of 2020 includes 60 occupations. Of these 60 occupations, 83.33% require more than a high school diploma. 76.67% of the professions require a bachelor’s degree or higher level of education.

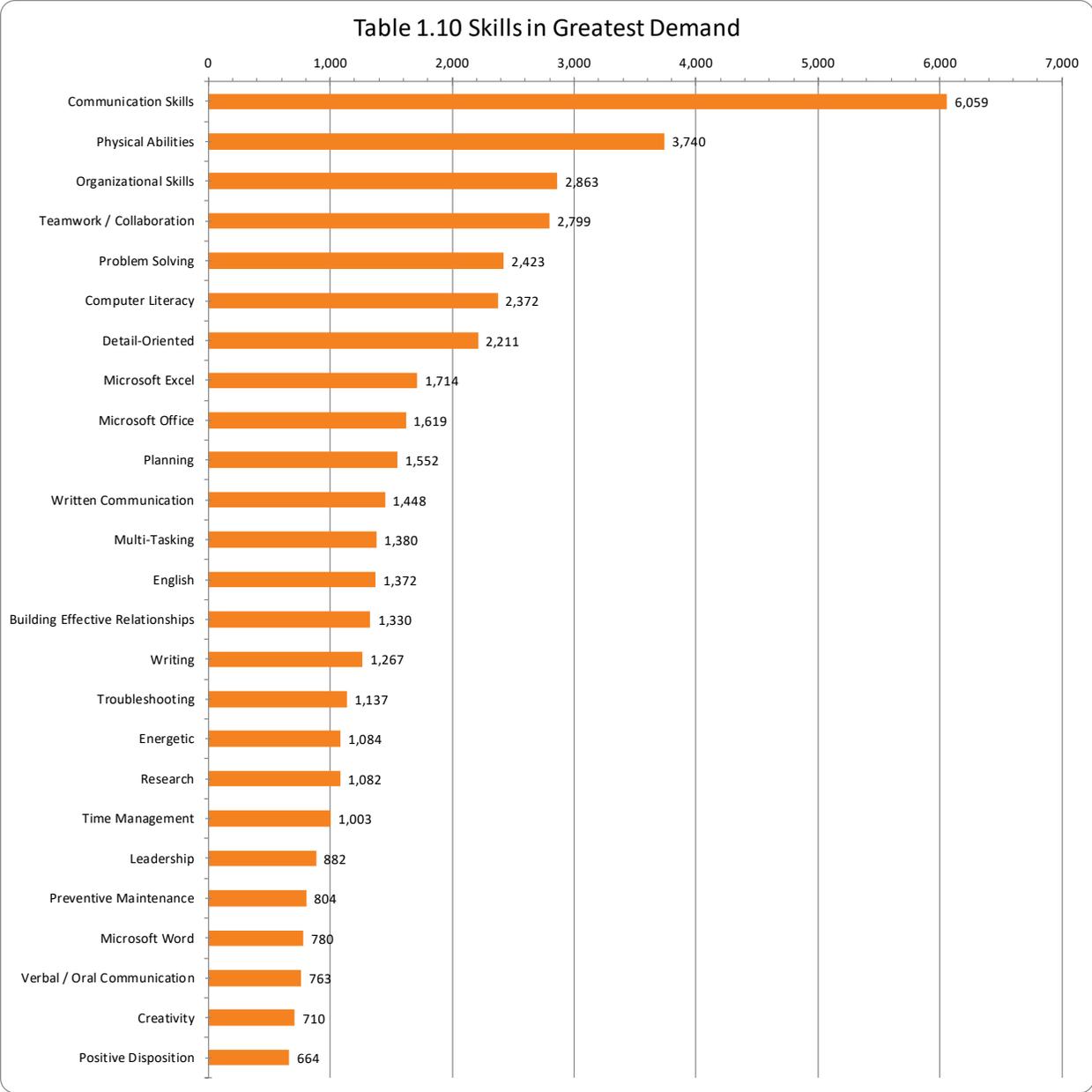
The average age of the Georgia Mountains Area 2 workforce continues to rise, creating concerns about replacing retiring workers and meeting the demand for new positions in growing industries and occupations. As noted in Table 1.9 below, from 2009-2017, every county in Georgia Mountains Area 2 saw the working age percentage of the population decline. During this same period, the portion of the area’s population that is 65+ continued to grow.

**Table 1.9: Georgia Mountains Age Distribution 2009-2017**

	< 18			18-65			65+		
	2009	2017	Change 2009-2017	2009	2017	Change 2009-2017	2009	2017	Change 2009-2017
<b>Banks</b>	25.2%	22.3%	-2.9%	62.7%	60.6%	-2.1%	12.1%	17.1%	5.0%
<b>Dawson</b>	23.4%	20.8%	-2.6%	63.7%	59.5%	-4.2%	12.9%	19.7%	6.8%
<b>Forsyth</b>	29.9%	27.9%	-2.0%	61.8%	60.4%	-1.4%	8.3%	11.7%	3.4%
<b>Franklin</b>	23.7%	22.0%	-1.7%	59.5%	59.2%	-0.3%	16.8%	18.8%	2.0%
<b>Habersham</b>	24.5%	22.6%	-1.9%	60.3%	59.4%	-0.9%	15.2%	18.0%	2.8%
<b>Hall</b>	28.6%	25.6%	-3.0%	61.2%	59.7%	-1.5%	10.2%	14.7%	4.5%
<b>Hart</b>	22.6%	21.3%	-1.3%	60.0%	57.3%	-2.7%	17.4%	21.4%	4.0%
<b>Lumpkin</b>	22.4%	17.8%	-4.6%	65.4%	65.3%	-1.0%	12.2%	16.9%	4.7%
<b>Rabun</b>	21.5%	17.2%	-4.3%	57.3%	55.9%	-1.4%	21.2%	26.9%	5.7%
<b>Stephens</b>	23.1%	22.7%	-0.4%	59.0%	58.1%	-0.9%	17.9%	19.2%	1.3%
<b>Towns</b>	16.4%	13.2%	-3.2%	54.7%	52.3%	-2.4%	28.9%	34.5%	5.6%
<b>Union</b>	18.4%	16.2%	-2.2%	55.9%	51.2%	-4.7%	25.7%	32.6%	6.9%
<b>White</b>	22.9%	20.1%	-2.8%	60.5%	57.7%	-2.8%	16.6%	22.2%	5.6%

Source: US Census Bureau

In addition to a need for skilled workers, current labor market data suggests a strong need for soft skills. As noted in Table 1.10 below, soft skills are in greatest demand in many current job listings.



1.2.c: Provide an analysis of the workforce in the region, including current labor force employment, unemployment data, information on labor market trends and the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment. List all data sources used to gather this information.

As noted in Table 1.1 Georgia Mountains Area 2 continues to have a strong labor market with robust participation. Unemployment is at historic lows. However, these numbers do not include the disengaged unemployed who may have given up on actively seeking employment, so efforts will be made to identify and reengage these long-term unemployed with the workforce.

Just as Table 1.9 above demonstrates the increasing age of the Georgia Mountains Area 2 population, it also suggests an aging workforce. Local industry surveys confirm that many employers are concerned with the aging of employees in critical skill positions, especially in positions requiring manufacturing and mechanical skills. In addition to the loss of institutional knowledge, there is concern about the loss of soft skills and how the combined loss of these skills may impact the continuity of operations and maintenance of production levels.

Georgia Mountains Area 2 continues to have strong high school graduation rates, as noted in Table 1.11 below.

**Table 1.11 Georgia Mountains Area 2  
2021 Public High School Graduation Rates**

COUNTY	RATE
BANKS	90.5%
DAWSON	96.3%
FORSYTH	97%
FRANKLIN	92%
HABERSHAM	95.8%
HALL	90.5%
HART	95%
LUMPKIN	96.8%
RABUN	92.9%
STEPHENS	95.5%
TOWNS	95%
UNION	95.6%
WHITE	97.6%

Source: Georgia Governor’s Office of Student Achievement

As noted in section 1.2.b, many of the jobs in growth and demand occupations require technical skills and additional certifications. As jobs become more specialized and there is an increased expectation for advanced skills, there is also a concern about the workforce's education level. As noted in Table 1.12 below, 19.3% of the current workforce does not have high school diplomas or General Educational Development test (GED) diplomas. This lack of credentials leaves this portion of the workforce vulnerable in times of economic downturn, layoffs, and company closures.

**Table 1.12 Georgia Mountains Area 2  
2021 Education of the Labor Force**

	Percent Distribution by Age				
	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-64	65+
Elementary	4.9%	9.2%	6.4%	5.3%	13.6%
Some High School	19.5%	11.9%	9.2%	9.4%	14.8%
High School Grad/GED	34.9%	29.7%	27.3%	31.7%	31.2%
Some College	33.7%	20.4%	18.4%	20.2%	16.6%
Assoc Degree	3%	6.3%	7.2%	7.1%	3.6%
Bach Degree	3.7%	16%	22.3%	17%	12.2%
Post-Graduate Studies	.4%	6.5%	9.2%	9.3%	8%

Source: Georgia Department of Labor, Area Labor Profile

Georgia Mountains Area 2 also continues to struggle with low incomes and poverty. Table 1.13 below illustrates the average per capita income for the region and for each county. There is a significant disparity between some of the Georgia Mountains Area 2 counties, meaning workforce strategies should be tailored to the needs of each county.

**Table 1.13: Per Capita Income**

GMRC	\$ 17,236	\$ 20,975	\$ 22,437	\$ 31,177	12.3%
Georgia	\$ 20,715	\$ 25,433	\$ 25,134	\$ 28,015	14.9%
United States	\$ 22,871	\$ 26,988	\$ 27,334	\$ 29,432	11.4%

	1990	2000	2010	2017	% of persons in poverty (2017)
<b>Banks</b>	\$ 15,977	\$ 16,558	\$ 19,497	\$ 19,451	13.5%
<b>Dawson</b>	\$ 17,410	\$ 22,167	\$ 25,557	\$ 31,954	9.4%
<b>Forsyth</b>	\$ 21,858	\$ 31,484	\$ 35,385	\$ 39,986	5.3%
<b>Franklin</b>	\$ 17,616	\$ 19,071	\$ 19,276	\$ 19,663	18.7%
<b>Habersham</b>	\$ 17,560	\$ 20,375	\$ 19,286	\$ 20,656	13.3%
<b>Hall</b>	\$ 19,504	\$ 22,134	\$ 23,675	\$ 26,283	13.3%
<b>Hart</b>	\$ 16,722	\$ 19,989	\$ 19,124	\$ 21,668	18.9%
<b>Lumpkin</b>	\$ 16,285	\$ 19,993	\$ 20,088	\$ 23,364	13.9%
<b>Rabun</b>	\$ 15,650	\$ 19,421	\$ 22,471	\$ 26,942	17.8%
<b>Stephens</b>	\$ 16,660	\$ 20,704	\$ 18,285	\$ 21,657	18.7%
<b>Towns</b>	\$ 15,598	\$ 20,779	\$ 21,527	\$ 22,301	13.8%
<b>Union</b>	\$ 14,913	\$ 19,796	\$ 24,182	\$ 26,755	15.4%
<b>White</b>	\$ 18,310	\$ 20,193	\$ 23,680	\$ 23,630	13.3%

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.; US Census Bureau (2010 and 2017)

Compounding the fact that several Georgia Mountains Area 2 counties have low per capita income and increased percentages of individuals living in poverty, there are other barriers to employment.

According to the 2017 census, 61% of the Georgia Mountains Area 2 workforce commutes more than ten miles from home to work. 30% of the workforce travels more than 25 miles. While this data only represents currently employed workers, it also suggests that lack of transportation, distance to employment, and transportation costs may also be barriers for unemployed jobseekers.

Georgia Mountains Area 2’s workforce also struggles with accessible and affordable childcare. According to Bright from the Start and the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL), there are less than 250 registered childcare providers within Georgia Mountains Area 2, including YMCAs, elementary school after-school programs, summer-only providers, and home-based childcare. Less than 5% of Georgia Mountains Area 2 providers offer extended hours after 6:30 pm, and only three providers in the region have listed weekend hours. For jobseekers who may work second or third shifts or non-traditional jobs, lack of childcare may be a barrier to employment. According to Child Care Aware of America, the average price of infant childcare in Georgia is \$8,729 in a childcare center and \$7,309 in a home-based childcare environment. For low-income families or those with multiple children, childcare costs remain a barrier to employment.

A criminal record may also be a barrier to employment and limit access to certain workforce sectors. As noted in Table 1.14 below, approximately 1,300 individuals who reported a Georgia Mountains Area 2 county as their home county were released over the past two years. Statewide, the Georgia Department of Corrections reports that 48.8% of all inmates released in 2021 had less than a high school diploma or GED, creating additional employment barriers.

**Table 1.14: GA Department of Corrections Releases by Home County**

County	2020	2021
Banks	37	23
Dawson	31	18
Forsyth	79	66
Franklin	55	39
Habersham	62	56
Hall	211	163
Hart	51	37
Lumpkin	36	30
Rabun	36	19
Stephens	54	48
Towns	11	9
Union	38	22
White	44	25
<b>Totals</b>	<b>745</b>	<b>555</b>

Source: Georgia Department of Corrections

According to the American Community Survey's 2014 – 2018 5-year survey, 12.3% of the Georgia Mountains Area 2 population identified as having a disability. These individuals may need additional resources and assistance to access the workforce. GMWDB will continue working with the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (GVRA) to address this population's education and training needs.

1.2.d: Provide an analysis of the workforce development activities (including education and training) in the region, including an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses and capacity of such services to address the identified education and skill needs of the workforce, and the employment needs of employers in the region.

The WorkSource Georgia Mountains one-stop system provides an array of services designed to provide jobseekers with the resources and support necessary for success. Under WIOA, partnership and program integration advancements have strengthened the workforce system and enhanced WSGM's ability to assist all jobseekers, including those with the barriers identified in Section 1.2.c. WSGM remains committed to connecting jobseekers with the most appropriate services and resources available through one-stop and other regional community partners.

Through the Georgia Department of Labor, jobseekers can access unemployment insurance services, Wagner-Peyser job search, and other career services. GDOL also houses the DVOPs (Disabled Veteran Outreach Programs) and LVERs (Local Veteran Employment Representatives), providing vital support to Georgia's veterans and transitioning service members.

GDOL often serves as the entryway into the workforce system and provides referrals to many partner programs. GDOL's Business Services Unit and Workforce Solutions Division partner with WSGM business services staff to provide business outreach and other resources, including Rapid Response services. WSGM partners with GDOL on Rapid Response service provision and provides services to many of the jobseekers referred by GDOL.

GVRA provides a variety of individual services to jobseekers with disabilities. These services, including education, employment, and training, prepare jobseekers for employment in a competitive labor market. GVRA also performs business outreach to assist employers with understanding the value of hiring and retaining valuable employees with disabilities.

For individuals needing assistance to obtain their GED, the local technical colleges, serving as adult education providers through funding awarded by the Technical College System of Georgia's Office of Adult Education (TCSG-OAE), provide valuable educational resources and support. TCSG-OAE adult education providers also offer literacy programs and programs to support English language learners.

Georgia Mountains Area 2 benefits from having three technical colleges and several universities within the region. The technical colleges are actively engaged in providing programs of study in locally relevant career pathways. The technical colleges also have strong economic development programs that regularly partner with businesses and industry to create customized local solutions to their workforce hiring and training needs.

WSGM also works with local secondary education systems and the technical colleges in the investment of Carl Perkins Act funds. WSGM staff regularly participate in the annual local planning process for all participating institutions and share labor market analysis, industry needs, and other information that helps strengthen the

alignment between Perkins-funded education and local employer needs. WSGM also regularly collaborates with local secondary schools on work-based learning opportunities and students' transition into post-secondary education and occupational training. Many Georgia Mountains Area 2 secondary schools, including local Colleges and Career Academies, already have strong relationships with local industry partners and have developed robust work-based learning opportunities for students. A recent WSGM survey found that in responding school systems, 33% of work-based learning students were placed in work-based learning for a skill-based career pathway. Of those students, 10% were in manufacturing or agricultural mechanics, both in high demand throughout Georgia Mountains Area 2.

High school students who complete a minimum of three courses in a CTAE career pathway may also take an End of Pathway Assessment. End of Pathway Assessments are national industry-developed certifications, national occupational assessments, state licensures, or state-issued certifications. These assessments determine the student's knowledge, skill, and understanding of the career pathway. As shown in Table 1.15 below, over the last three school years, Georgia Mountains Area 2 had over 10,000 students successfully pass the End of Pathway Assessment and receive their credentials.

**TABLE 1.15 GDOE EOPA Testers and Passers 2017-2019**

System	County	2019 Testers	2019 Meet/Exceed	Percentage Meet/Exceed	2018 Testers	2018 Meet/Exceed	Percentage Meet/Exceed	2017 Testers	2017 Meet/Exceed	Percentage Meet/Exceed
Banks	Banks	161	109	68%	149	89	60%	156	100	64%
Dawson	Dawson	119	87	73%	135	91	67%	177	117	66%
Forsyth	Forsyth	1882	1473	78%	1807	1478	82%	1477	1184	80%
Franklin	Franklin	227	174	77%	170	158	93%	192	192	100%
Habersham	Habersham	183	121	66%	185	133	72%	215	144	67%
Gainesville City	Hall	210	131	62%	184	120	65%	225	161	72%
Hall	Hall	1278	794	62%	1336	862	65%	1196	769	64%
Hart	Hart	*	*		15	15	100%	49	26	53%
Lumpkin	Lumpkin	154	99	64%	252	149	59%	196	125	64%
Rabun	Rabun	69	46	67%	38	38	100%	34	26	76%
Stephens	Stephens	243	129	53%	259	125	48%	156	61	39%
Towns	Towns	62	61	98%	80	77	96%	90	89	99%
Union	Union	172	146	85%	161	147	91%	111	102	92%
White	White	156	111	71%	150	122	81%	164	136	83%
Mountain Education		*	*		*	*		*	*	
<b>Totals:</b>		<b>4916</b>	<b>3481</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>4921</b>	<b>3604</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>4438</b>	<b>3232</b>	<b>73%</b>

\*GDOE doesn't report on fewer than 10 students

WSGM regularly provides training funds, supportive services, work-based learning funds, and business services to eligible jobseekers and employers throughout the region. More information about WSGM services are found throughout this plan.

Strengths:

GMWDB continues to work with secondary education systems, postsecondary education institutions, and other training providers to bridge the gap between talent development and talent deployment. Georgia Mountains Area 2 is working to ensure that educators and training providers know the skills employers need. In addition, WSGM Business Services and local TCSG Economic Development staff have made connections to link jobseekers and those in training with the industries and employers that are ready to hire them.

WorkSource Georgia Mountains has also seen an increased demand for the work-based learning and business services offered through WIOA. As a result, WSGM Business Services staff and contractors have developed relationships with employers of all sizes and are representative of most of the growth and demand industries in

the region. These relationships have led to increased internship, incumbent worker training (IWT), on-the-job training (OJT), and work experience opportunities throughout the region.

Through the sector strategies partnership growth over the last four years, Georgia Mountains Area 2 has developed stronger partnerships between workforce partners, secondary education systems, postsecondary education institutions, and local employers. This has led to an increase in interest in local demand careers, increased K-8 student awareness of local demand industries, increased work-based learning and apprenticeship opportunities for local jobseekers, and the development of the Apprenticeship 101 program at Lanier Tech. Apprenticeship 101 supports local businesses by serving as the apprenticeship sponsor for needed apprenticeship programs, reducing the administrative burden on the employer and increasing the pipeline of qualified jobseekers to advanced manufacturing and related industries.

GMWDB has an active and engaged group of local one-stop partners. There is a strong spirit of collaboration. The one-stop partners regularly contribute during GMWDB meetings and provide thoughtful insight into their services and the resources their customers require. They also regularly participate in the bi-monthly one-stop partner meetings and invite and encourage other local community resource partners to attend.

#### Weaknesses:

GMWDB has made considerable progress in enhancing the visibility and awareness of the WorkSource Georgia workforce system within Georgia Mountains Area 2. However, barriers to comprehensive jobseeker and employer awareness of the information and resources available through the one-stop system. Much progress has been made in reaching advanced manufacturing employers through sector partnership grants and collaborations. GMWDB will utilize leading practices learned through the sector partnership process to grow and develop its business services strategy for reaching employers in other demand industry sectors.

As WSGM works to expand regional awareness of business services and work-based learning, WSGM staff have learned that GMWDB members, community partners, and contractors need a better understanding of eligibility and suitability for WIOA services, both for jobseekers and employers. WorkSource staff are hosting an informational video series to empower partners and contractors to understand WSGM's strategic mission and priorities for workforce services. This will allow them to serve as WSGM's advocates and champions. Topics may include OJTs, incumbent worker training, internships versus youth work experience, occupational skills alignment with business services, participant and employer eligibility for work-based learning, and Registered Apprenticeship. WSGM continues to work with GMWDB to reinforce program understanding through regular meetings and the annual strategic retreat.

In the current economic climate, with reduced unemployment and increased economic growth, GMWDB is providing more services to adults and increasing the share of services provided through work-based learning such as OJT, work experience, and IWT opportunities. GMWDB already transfers a majority of dislocated worker funds to adult funding eligibility. Given the increased costs of work-based learning compared to traditional educational offerings, there is still a decrease in the number of participants that GMWDB can serve. There is still a gap between employer demand and WSGM's ability to provide services to all employers using the current WIOA grant allocation. Additionally, WIOA caps the number of funds that may be expended on IWT. GMWDB works to use IWT and backfill the vacancies created by IWT with

OJT or other WIOA services. WIOA limits on IWT make it challenging to provide this service to all interested employers. GMWDB will look to the state for additional assistance and guidance on the best way to leverage limited funding to meet the needs of jobseekers and employers.

COVID brought staffing issues to the forefront for many employers in the region. Employers indicated the need for an emphasis on finding entry-level employees with basic skills. WSGM quickly pivoted to begin a focus on short-term training and on developing alternative workforce pipelines.

Due to the rural nature of much of Georgia Mountains Area 2, transportation and accessibility of services can be barriers to service provision and continued outreach. Staff consistently work to develop strategies to help increase program access and awareness. However, progress must continue to ensure jobseekers and employers are aware of all available resources.

GMWDB has invested time and money into technology updates and partner integration efforts. GMWDB has made progress and continues to make progress, as noted throughout this plan, but data integration for jobseeker services and case management will need additional assistance from the state. Updating technology and introducing new systems are also expensive. Balancing the need for additional technology to support employer and participant services and the demand for these services continues to be a challenge.

1.2.e: Provide a description of the local board's strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment), including goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance in order to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency.

After the passage of WIOA, GMWDB and the WSGM staff held a strategic planning meeting to develop a vision and a path forward. The meeting resulted in the updated GMWDB mission and areas for focus and continued development.

Mission: To achieve sustainable economic growth and individual self-sufficiency by developing, sustaining, and promoting employment resources and opportunities for all jobseekers and employers through community partnerships.

GMWDB and WSGM staff identified four critical areas for strategic focus and effort – cooperation and collaboration, jobseeker skills, public awareness, and board development. Table 1.16 outlines the goals established for each focus area. GMWDB and WSGM staff will review progress in these focus areas and refine goals and plans.

**Table 1.16 GMWDB Strategic Focus Areas and Associated Goals**

<b>Cooperation and Collaboration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Improve communication among all agencies and resources to better collaborate and improve services to clients in our area</li> <li>· Identify service gaps and identify resources to fill the gap and eliminate possible weaknesses in the program, allowing for better service to the area</li> <li>· Enhance target strategies with a strong focus on: the unemployed and underemployed; youth, both in school and out; dislocated workers; and OJT strategies</li> <li>· Develop a comprehensive inventory of services available to jobseekers and employers</li> <li>· Increase agency administrators' awareness of employment and training (WIOA) services by increasing visibility and communication</li> </ul>
<b>Job Seeker Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Ensure job seekers receive education and training in demand, specialized fields that make them attractive to specific industry needs</li> </ul>
<b>Public Awareness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Develop positive name-recognition for GMDWB and WSGM to increase visibility and word-of-mouth promotion</li> <li>· Develop relationships with local news media to continue to promote WSGM programs and their benefits</li> <li>· Increase outreach to employers to make them aware of the benefits available through WSGM programming</li> </ul>
<b>Board Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Create and support a Workforce Development Board that is representative of the community, comprised of effective stakeholders, and enjoyable for all members. A diverse board will help engage all facets of local communities and provide services to all eligible individuals</li> </ul>

1.2.f: Taking into account the analyses described in sections “1.2. a-e” (above), provide a strategy to coordinate core programs to align resources available to the local area to achieve the strategic vision and goals.

GMWDB has developed the following strategies to ensure core programs and partner resources are aligned to maximize support for jobseeker success:

- Regularly review the One-Stop Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to ensure all partners are engaged and participating

- Host bi-monthly one-stop partner meetings
- Establish cross-training opportunities for core and community partners
- Honor and respect the value of all partners' contributions
- Ensure the one-stops are welcoming, pleasant and customer-centered spaces
- Utilize digital and electronic connections and coordination for core programs and aligned resources
- Seek additional partners and linkages to provide a broad array of services and resources
- Encourage regular communication among all partners
- Celebrate innovation

### 1.3: Description of Strategies and Services

*Provide a description of the strategies and services that will be used in the local area in order to accomplish the items listed below.*

#### 1.3.a: How will the area engage employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations?

WSGM Business Services staff and contractors regularly engage employers throughout Georgia Mountains Area 2. They frequently attend local chamber meetings and other networking events. Strengthened relationships with local economic developers have facilitated additional introductions and insight into new and growing local employers and industries. Business Services staff and contractors frequently meet with businesses to share information about available services and provide copies of the local WSGM service guide. Local technical college economic development staff also attend WSGM Business Services meetings to share insight and information about local business needs.

#### 1.3.b: How will the area support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area? Discuss the area's workforce services to businesses and how business and organized labor representatives on the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) contributed to the development of these strategies. Provide a listing of business services available through the area(s) such as employer workshops and assessment and screening of potential employees.

WSGM has developed a local workforce development system that regularly seeks input from business and labor employers throughout the region, including those who serve on the GMWDB. GMWDB members regularly provide input and insight about their industry successes and struggles. GMWDB's roster includes two organized labor representatives. Both representatives regularly attend and participate in WIOA planning and business service strategy development.

WSGM has also increased the size of its Business Services team, developed outreach material to promote the range of business services available to area employers, and increased presence at local chamber meetings, economic development meetings, and other community events that afford opportunities to network with local employers.

Business Services offered through the one-stop system include:

- Job applicant recruitment
- Job applicant screening
- Job postings/orders
- Job/employee matching
- Skills assessments
- Meeting space for employer interviews
- Labor market information
- Census data
- Unemployment insurance information
- Job Fairs
- On-the-Job training
- Incumbent worker training
- Layoff aversion
- Apprenticeship assistance
- Mobile Training Unit
- Rapid Response services
- Internship and work experience

1.3.c: How will the area better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development? Additionally, identify economic development partners and describe the involvement of the economic development community in developing strategies. How will the area strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs?

Georgia Mountains Area 2 has developed strong working partnerships with local economic developers. These partnerships have been strengthened through participating in regional and statewide sector strategy workshops and planning sessions.

Georgia Mountains Area 2 includes the service delivery area for three technical colleges. Two of the three technical colleges have representation on the GMWDB. North Georgia Tech and Lanier Tech economic development staff are invited to WSGM Business Services meetings.

WSGM has a strong relationship with Lanier Tech and North Georgia Tech for the development and sponsorship of Registered Apprenticeship programs. Both technical colleges are approved sponsors and can assist local employers of all sizes in beginning Registered Apprenticeship programs.

WSGM regularly meets with the University of North Georgia's economic development staff and collaborates with the Brenau University business incubator program.

WSGM also partners with local economic development authorities at the city and county level and participates in local economic development committees through local chambers, rotary clubs, and other community organizations supporting economic development and growth activity.

WSGM is actively involved in the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee. The CEDS Committee regularly updates the GMRC Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy and Regional Plan that establishes a roadmap to create jobs, foster more stable, resilient and diversified economies, improve living conditions, and provide a mechanism for guiding and coordinating the efforts of persons and organizations concerned with economic development. The CEDS Committee monitors several performance measures in real time. WSGM regularly contributes data and insight to the committee and integrates the Committee's goals and strategies into the larger workforce system goals and strategies.

For many jobseekers, GDOL's unemployment insurance programs are the gateway to the workforce system. GDOL regularly coordinates the efforts of the Unemployment Insurance (UI) program with the Business Services Unit, looking for opportunities to pair unemployed jobseekers with employers looking to grow or replace their workforce. Rapid Response services also seek to minimize the utilization of UI services through partnership with WSGM and other one-stop partners to put jobseekers back into the workforce quickly.

## 1.4: Regional Service Delivery (Not Applicable)

## 1.5: Sector Strategy Development

*Provide a description of the current regional sector strategy development for in-demand industry sectors.*

### 1.5.a: Describe the partners that are participating in the sector strategy development.

The Georgia Mountains Workforce Development Board has engaged numerous area partners to ensure diverse representation in the sector strategy development process. A steering committee was created to ensure representation from various partners, industry members, and others in Georgia Mountains Area 2 who will provide insight or resources for the sector strategies development process. Additional workgroups will be created based on participating partners' organization, subject matter expertise, available resources, and other factors. Additionally, industry representative employer working groups were established to obtain additional insight into new and challenging to fill positions, retention issues, and different workforce development needs. The steering committee and working groups assisted in completing a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threads (SWOT) analysis of the community resources necessary for industry growth, talent gap analysis, education pipeline for advanced manufacturing, including k-12, postsecondary education, and alternative education resources. The SWOT analysis results were utilized to establish group priorities and identify areas of greatest need within the education to industry pipeline. The steering committees continually refer to the SWOT analysis to gauge progress and determine the next steps in addressing service gaps and priorities for continued growth.

Participating partners include:

Banks County Chamber of Commerce	Banks County Economic Development
Banks County Schools	Blairsville Chamber of Commerce
City of Hiawassee	City of Young Harris
Dawson County Chamber	Dawson County Schools
Dawson Development Authority	Department of Family and Children’s Services
Development Authority of Lumpkin	Development Authority of Rabun
Forsyth County Schools	Forward Forsyth
Franklin County Chamber	Franklin County Industrial Building Authority
Franklin County Schools	Gainesville City Schools
Gainesville Housing Authority	Rabun County Chamber of Commerce
Georgia Department of Labor	Lanier Technical College (LTC)
Georgia Dept. of Economic Development	Lumpkin County Schools
Georgia Mountains Regional Commission	Mountain Education Schools
Georgia Poultry Federation	North Georgia Technical College (NGTC)
Goodwill of North Georgia	Partnership Habersham
Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce	Rabun County Chamber of Commerce
GVRA Vocational Rehab	Rabun County Schools
Habersham Chamber of Commerce	Stephens County Development Authority
Hall County Government	Stephens County Schools
Hall County Schools	Toccoa Chamber of Commerce
Hart County College and Career Academy Board	Union County Development Authority
Hart County Industrial Building Authority	Union County Schools
Georgia Department of Labor	University of North Georgia
Georgia Dept. of Economic Development	White County Schools
Georgia Mountains Regional Commission	White County Chamber of Commerce
Georgia Poultry Federation	White County Economic Development
Goodwill of North Georgia	WorkSource Georgia Mountains
Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce	Stephens County Development Authority
GVRA Vocational Rehab	Stephens County Schools
Habersham Chamber of Commerce	Toccoa Chamber of Commerce
Hall County Government	Union County Development Authority
Hall County Schools	Lanier Technical College (LTC)
Hart County College and Career Academy Board	Lumpkin County Schools
Hart County Industrial Building Authority	Mountain Education Schools
Hopkins Associates	North Georgia Technical College (NGTC)
Lanier Career Academy	Partnership Habersham

1.5 b: Describe the meetings that have taken place and the strategy by which partners will continue to be engaged.

WorkSource Georgia Mountains kicked off the formal sector strategies process in September of 2014. During the state-sponsored sector strategy in the fall of 2016, the advanced manufacturing sector was selected as the first sector for strategy development. Since then, numerous meetings have been held including steering

committee meetings, industry workgroup meetings (with partner participation), and other partner and community meetings. The steering committee meets at least twice a year, with the industry workgroup meeting quarterly. Additional workgroups meet based on priorities indicated by employers and are active throughout the year.

WorkSource Georgia Mountains will leverage the steering committee, industry workgroups, and other workgroups to continue to engage partners and employers in the region. A monthly newsletter detailing current efforts and highlighting participating employers is now sent to all involved in the sector strategy initiative.

#### 1.5.c: Describe the research and the data that was used to identify the sector that was chosen for the sectors strategies training.

For the initial selection of the advanced manufacturing industry, GMWDB utilized available data from GDOL and Burning Glass Labor Market Insight. In addition, GMWDB and WSGM staff reviewed labor force activity and occupational and industry growth projections. The analysis selected advanced manufacturing as the first sector for sector strategy development and support.

To ensure the appropriateness of continued focus in this sector, GMWDB worked with procured consultants to evaluate industry change since the initial review. These consultants bring valuable sector strategies insight, industry backgrounds, and expertise that ensure WSGM is considering local industry developments and updates as well as data. Leveraging their relationships and knowledge provides additional networks and support for sector strategy efforts. The industry data review included updated projections from the 2019-2029 period, an analysis of growing and declining sub-clusters within advanced manufacturing, and a review of top occupations as a percentage of industry growth. Much of this data was analyzed at the county level to ensure that there was diverse representation throughout Georgia Mountains Area 2 and that the selected sector represented an array of opportunities. The Sector Strategies Steering Committee also reviewed this data to ensure the data aligned with local understanding and intelligence on industry needs and growth. This additional analysis allowed GMWDB to focus efforts on sub-cluster categories that continue to project strong growth and need additional skilled employees over the coming ten-year period.

#### 1.5.d: Provide a completed outline of the sector strategy for the previously identified sector that includes the following details: participating employers; target occupations; training programs; and target populations.

Through the initial sector strategies work, Georgia Mountains Area 2 has developed a robust regional partnership committed to leveraging data and available workforce development resources to develop career pathways and opportunities for entry into and growth within the advanced manufacturing industry.

The sector strategies plan was established on a strong, data-driven foundation that can be replicated in other industries. Key components of the sector strategy outline include:

- Initial data, SWOT, inventory, and supply/demand gap analysis to identify growing industry with variety of occupational opportunities
- Initial one-on-one meetings with each county official in the region representing economic development, education and employer groups to ensure engagement.
- Convening industry working groups to validate initial data, clarify needs, and drive the decision-making process
- Identifying industry champions to elevate employer engagement and provide insight to ensure all solutions are responsive to industry needs
- Engaging education and workforce development partners to provide support and resources needed to meet industry needs
- Validating four Workgroups: Employability Skills, Career Pathways, Outreach, and Training and updating their focuses as needed based on employer feedback
- Defining measurable outputs and outcomes that lead to improved workforce pipeline

Please find details below on the advanced manufacturing sector strategies partnership.

#### Participating Employers

Advanced Digital Cable, Inc.

American Yazaki

ASI-Southeast

Automation Direct

BTD

Corrugated Replacements

EPS, Inc.

Freudenberg Sealing Technologies

Harris Products

IMS Gear

Kings Hawaiian

KMF Global

Kubota

Linde + Wiemann

Lumite

Morito Scovill

Murray Plastics

Nifco KTW

Overdrive Logistics

Patterson Pump

Premier Surplus

Ranger Manufacturing

Red Fern Dynamics

StruXure Outdoor

Sage Automotive Interiors  
Selit North America  
Sherwin Williams Distribution  
Siemens  
Specialty Appliances  
SteelCell  
Swagelok  
Tencate Geosynthetics  
Titan Steel  
Tsubaki Nakashima  
ZF Industries

#### Target Occupations

- CNC (Computer Numerical Control) Operators
- Front-Line Supervisors
- Forklift Drivers
- Industrial Maintenance Technicians
- Machining – Precision Metal Working
- Product and Process Engineering Technicians
- Quality Control Technician
- Welding and Fabrication
- Electricians
- Construction

#### Training Programs

- Technical college certificates
  - Machine Tool/CNC Machinist
  - Welding
  - Industrial Maintenance (Mechatronics)
- Registered Apprenticeship programs (approved)
  - Industrial Maintenance Technician
  - General Machinist
  - CNC Machinist
  - Welder / Fabricator
- Registered Apprenticeship programs (planned)
  - Quality Control Technician
  - Product Engineering Tech
  - Process Engineering Tech
- Workplace Excellence / Soft skills training
- Focused / Bootcamp training
  - Production Technician (60 – 120 hours)
  - Maintenance Bootcamp (5 weeks)

- Leadership for 1<sup>st</sup> line supervisors (planned)

#### Target Populations

- WIOA eligible adults and dislocated workers
- Ex-offenders
- Out-of-school youth
- Veterans
- Individuals with disabilities

#### 1.5.e: Describe the plans for future strategy development for future sectors. If applicable, discuss the next sectors to be targeted.

WorkSource Georgia Mountains continues to refine the sector strategies model within the advanced manufacturing sector. The model will be used to replicate the sector strategies process in other industries as data and need support.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> most significant industry in the WorkSource Georgia Mountains region, in terms of employment, is Healthcare. A wide variety of skill level needs and opportunities are present. Continued growth requires targeted solutions, especially for the development of entry and mid-level personnel with the requisite skills. COVID continues to impact this field as the need for healthcare workers has grown while many entry and mid-level employees have left the field due to having to navigate the challenges that COVID brought.

GMWDB has also identified the field of Information Technology growing within manufacturing, healthcare, and every business. It is also a place for entry and mid-level skill development that can be supported by the efforts of the Sector Strategy (Work-based learning, Dual enrollment, Technical Education, Focused Training, Apprenticeships, etc.)

GMWDB is also following the development of the inland port in Hall County. As this Georgia Ports Authority development is projected to see 150,000 containers annually, it may serve as an economic engine and encourage additional growth in transportation and logistics. GMWDB will continue to monitor industry change and economic development to leverage this important development in future sector strategy decisions, most likely in the area of logistics. WSGM plans to engage the regions logistics companies to define their requirements for programs to train a new workforce in transportation, distribution, customer relations and service, and project planning and management to move forward in this sector.

And considering the current economic conditions, WSGM is also reviewing industries that may see sustained growth or demand related to COVID-19. WSGM staff continue to solicit feedback and input from industry partners and other stakeholders to determine the need for sector strategy development for these industries.

The sector steering committee recently identified the need for supporting Advanced Manufacturing and Technology sectors to be added to the sector focus. This includes construction, electrical, logistics and other similar occupations as they are all crucial in supporting many of the roles of Advanced Manufacturing careers.

All decisions about additional sectors will be made in collaboration with the Georgia Mountains Workforce Development Board.

## 1.6: Description of the One-Stop Delivery System

*Provide a description of the one-stop delivery system in the local area that includes the items detailed below:*

### 1.6.a: Provide a description of how the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, workers and jobseekers.

The Georgia Mountains Workforce Development Board, through the WorkSource Georgia Mountains staff, offers guidance and training to eligible providers to assist with maximizing the effectiveness of the services they provide. WSGM staff regularly offer meetings, training seminars, online tutorials, newsletters, and Facebook updates to service providers. These communication strategies highlight leading practices in service delivery, answer frequently asked questions, provide updates about performance, and provide assistance in implementing guidance released by USDOL and the Technical College System of Georgia's Office of Workforce Development (TCSG-OWD). Service providers are also encouraged to share their success stories with the WSGM Staff and the One-Stop Operator so that these stories may be highlighted in the One Stop Centers and in GMWDB meetings.

### 1.6.b: Provide a description of how the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the one- stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and through other means.

The Georgia Mountains Workforce Development Board encourages WorkSource Georgia Mountains and other one-stop providers to embrace technology as a means of effective outreach and service delivery throughout the region. The comprehensive One-Stop Center is in Hall County, a large regional population center. Partners have one-stop affiliates and specialized sites in many of the counties. For areas that may not have regular access to a physical location, WSGM has two mobile units that travel throughout the region, providing workforce training services. The mobile units can also offer partners access to expand their service delivery models and provide comprehensive service response to Rapid Response events. COVID increased the need for virtual services, and in response, WSGM added and has maintained an updated website with access to online program overviews and the application. Additionally, the staff offers virtual orientation and participant meetings through Zoom, online assessments, and a virtual work experience platform.

WorkSource Georgia Mountains utilizes SARA, a cloud-based communications tool that streamlines communications with participants through texts, email, and other in-app communications. This system allows WSGM staff to send email and text updates to participants and jobseekers working on intake documentation. Individuals can upload their documents from their phones and receive updates about their registration status without physically accessing a one-stop center. This system has streamlined the intake process and improved communications with participants and other individuals seeking services. SARA is also utilized for case management and participant follow-up. The utilization of this system has improved participant responsiveness.

The Georgia Mountains Workforce Development Board continues to work with regional partners to identify additional opportunities for expanded service delivery.

1.6.c: Provide a description of how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA § 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology and materials for individuals with disabilities. This should include the provision of staff training and support and addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.

GMWDB ensures that all entities within the one-stop delivery system are compliant with WIOA §188, as applicable, and with all applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) All one-stop centers are reviewed as part of the biennial one-stop center certification process. This review includes ADA compliance as well as other accessibility requirements.

The one-stop also contains notice concerning requirements for compliance. These notices are posted in the entrance lobby and the training room.

Training for partners and staff is regularly provided through one-stop partner meetings, including guidance on using universal design in developing and delivering workforce services.

The One-Stop Operator ensures that interpreters and other assistance are available for all customers who may need additional assistance to access services.

1.6.d: Provide a comprehensive description of the roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners.

WorkSource Georgia Mountains has an active and engaged group of partners who actively collaborate to provide services to participants within the region. Below is a general overview of the services offered by each one-stop system partner as outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding.

- Georgia Mountains Regional Commission – fiscal, administrative, and program management services
- Georgia Mountains Workforce Development Board – through the WorkSource Georgia Mountains staff, the GMWDB provides Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth WIOA Title I Services
- Georgia Department of Labor – Wagner Peyser program services and career services
- Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency – career services
- Georgia Department of Human Services, Division of Family and Children’s Services – supportive services
  
- Technical College System of Georgia, represented locally by Lanier Tech, North Georgia Tech, and Athens Tech – career services, Adult Education and Literacy activities, and post-secondary education opportunities

The roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners are reviewed regularly. As appropriate, MOU updates are made to reflect any changes to roles or resource contributions.

1.6.e: Identify the current One-Stop Operator in the local area(s) and describe how the region/local area is preparing for the competitive process for operator selection. Describe how market research, requests for information and conducting a cost and price analysis are being conducted as part of that preparation.

As of the submission date of this plan, Hopkins Associates is the competitively procured One-Stop Operator. The current contract ends June 30, 2023.

To prepare for the next competitive One-Stop Operator procurement process, Georgia Mountains Regional Commission staff collaborated with the Georgia Mountains Workforce Development Board to create a Request for Proposal (RFP) to solicit several qualified candidates for review. GMRC, at the direction of the GMWDB, conducted market research about the availability of providers and services, sought input from partners about their needs, and reviewed the performance of the current operator to identify updates in desired scope or performance measures to include in the RFP. GMRC also reached out to other Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) in Georgia to conduct an analysis of the services being awarded and the average costs for those services. GMRC drafted an RFP document and created evaluation criteria in compliance with all state and federal requirements.

GMRC plans to award a new One-Stop Operator contract before July 1, 2023.

## 1.7: Awarding Sub-grants and Contracts

*Provide a description of the competitive process to be used to award the sub-grants and contracts in the local area for activities carried out under Title I.*

The Georgia Mountains Regional Commission, as fiscal agent for Georgia Mountains Area 2, is responsible for procuring all sub-grants and contracts on behalf of the Georgia Mountains Workforce Development Board.

Any services that are not provided by WSGM staff are competitively procured through the release of RFPs. All RFPs are publicized on the GMRC website, through area newspapers, on the Georgia Local Government Access marketplace, and in other locations as appropriate. For subject matter where bidders' lists have been established, RFP release announcements are also communicated to the bidder's list. RFPs specify the requirements for the award, including the criteria used to evaluate all responses. GMRC and WSGM staff are bound by conflict-of-interest policies to ensure that no staff with a potential or perceived conflict participates in any part of the RFP process.

RFP review processes ensure that all responsive submissions are reviewed consistently and allow GMRC to select the respondent who will be the most advantageous for the scope being procured. The review includes the experience and capability of the bidder to perform the work. The review also evaluates the bidder's demonstrated understanding of the program and activity objectives, the reasonableness and appropriateness of the outcomes proposed by the bidder, financial capacity of the bidder, innovative program design, cost advantage, and geographic area where the services will be provided. The final award determination is not based solely on price, although it may be a determining factor.

For youth proposals, after WSGM staff have conducted an initial review for responsiveness and technical consideration, all responsive submissions are reviewed by the members of the Youth Committee for final evaluation and scoring. This review determines which proposals are brought before the full GMWDB for discussion and approval.

Agency-wide and other contracts, such as the One-Stop Operator contract, are also brought before the GMRC Council for approval. Once the GMWDB and GMRC Council have approved, an award letter is issued to the selected bidder. GMRC then executed a contract with the awarded service provider.

GMRC also enters agreements with Individual Training Account (ITA) providers on the GMWDB Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Participants who desire to attend a provider on the State ETPL but not yet on the GMWDB ETPL speak with a WSGM staff member to initiate the process for including a State-approved provider on the GMWDB Eligible Training Provider List.

## 1.8: EEO and Grievance Procedures

*Provide a description of local procedures and staffing to address grievances and complaint resolution.*

GMWDB ensures jobseekers, participants, employers, providers, and sub-recipients can access Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and grievance information in various ways. WSGM's Rights Statement, including the Babel Notice, is available in orientation sessions, intake applications, the WSGM website, and the Georgia Mountains Area 2 One-Stop website. EEO and Rights Statement information are available in provider applications, sub-recipient contracts, and work-based learning agreements with employers.

For resolution, all complaints are documented and reviewed by the GMRC Equal Opportunity Officer. GMRC's procedures for resolving complaints and grievances are included in the Rights Statement as Attachment 2.

## 2.0: Local Boards and Plan Development

### 2.1: Local Boards

*Provide a description of the local board that includes the components listed below.*

2.1.a: Describe how local board members are identified and appointed. Include a description of how the nomination process occurs for adult education and labor representatives. (20 CFR § 679.320(g))

Georgia Mountains Area 2's Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO) is responsible for all GMWDB appointments. GMWDB bylaws require the GMWDB or WSGM staff to notify the CLEO within 10 days of the GMWDB's notification of the vacancy.

GMWDB members will be appointed or replaced in accordance with the GMWDB bylaws for board member vacancies. GMWDB members will be automatically removed from the board after missing three consecutive meetings without cause. GMWDB members may also choose to resign. GMWDB requires dated emails or letters from the GMWDB member indicating intent to resign from the board. Vacancies shall be filled within a reasonable timeframe not to exceed 90 days from the date of notice. If a vacancy is created by local policy or GMWDB bylaws,

the vacancy begins at the date of the final action dictated by local policy or GMWDB bylaws. GMWDB must receive TCSG-OWD preapproval through a waiver request on any board action taken outside of the ninety-day limit.

The CLEO selects private sector representatives to the board from individuals nominated by business organizations and business trade organizations after consulting with and receiving recommendations from, other business groups within Georgia Mountains Area 2.

Adult Education provider nominations are sought from the Adult Education providers within Georgia Mountains Area 2. North Georgia Technical College staff currently serves as the GMWDB Adult Education representative.

Recognized state and local labor federations offer recommendations for GMWDB members. The CLEO selects from among the recommendations and nominates recommended individuals to serve on the GMWDB.

Community-based organizations are selected from non-profit organizations within Georgia Mountains Area 2. An eligible non-profit must have a formal structure with officers, bylaws, and recognition within the community it represents.

Upon appointment, each GMWDB member is required to sign and date a copy of the GMWDB bylaws and the Conflict-of-Interest provisions. These are submitted to TCSG-OWD and GMWDB retains a copy for review.

GMWDB membership currently includes more than twenty (20) members representing the Georgia Mountains Area 2 counties. Membership must be comprised of a minimum of 51% private sector industry representation. All members serve on a two or three-year rotating basis.

GMWDB currently elects a Chair, a Vice-Chair, and a Secretary. The Chair and the Vice-Chair must be representatives from the private sector. The GMWDB must elect all three officers. Terms of office shall be no more than three years, subject to the reappointment of the member by the CLEO.

GMWDB membership as of the submission of this plan is included in Attachment 3.

#### 2.1.b: Describe the area's new member orientation process for board members.

All new GMWDB members undergo a multi-step orientation process. All newly appointed members have an initial meeting with the WSGM Director to review general board member responsibilities and the basic structure and purpose of the local workforce system.

New board members also attend an extended new member orientation as part of an annual full board retreat. The new member orientation is developed collaboratively between WSGM staff and current GMWDB members. The new member orientation session covers local workforce system structure, local workforce system funding, general workforce, and labor market data, the GMWDB role and responsibilities, and performance and accountability measures.

#### 2.1.c: Describe how the local board will coordinate local workforce development activities with regional economic development activities being carried out within the planning region.

GMWDB continues collaborating with local economic development partners on workforce and industry needs within Georgia Mountains Area 2. GMWDB and WSGM staff regularly partner with state and regional entities such as: universities and technical colleges; the Georgia Department of Economic Development; the US Economic Development Administration (EDA) Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee; GMRC's

Economic Development Department; Georgia Power, Electric Membership Corporation (EMC), and Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) economic development staff, the Georgia Department of Labor, and the U.S. Department of Commerce CEDS Committee.

WSGM staff regularly attend local and regional business meetings in each of the Georgia Mountains Area 2 counties and have developed strong relationships with county and city economic development staff. GMWDB also invites and encourages economic development staff to participate in sector strategies, partnership programs, and planning sessions.

GMWDB staff regularly review the region's economic development data and incorporate that data and insight from economic development partners into the Georgia Mountains Area 2 strategic planning process. As a result, GMWDB has developed a truly collaborative process that ensures that all stakeholders work together to create solutions that utilize the workforce system's capacity and resources to ensure the region's economic health.

#### 2.1.d: Describe how local board members are kept engaged and informed.

GMWDB meets at least four times a year. Each meeting includes updates on performance, one-stop center activities, business outreach and service delivery, sector partnership progress, and other relevant workforce activity updates. Member input and engagement is solicited at all board meetings.

GMWDB also holds an annual strategic planning retreat. This retreat encourages GMWDB member input on developing goals, strategies, and areas of service emphasis for the coming year.

GMWDB members are invited to participate in regional and state training activities and conferences. GMWDB members are also encouraged to attend local WIOA functions, such as sector partnership meetings, local youth and transitioning citizen graduation ceremonies, and other acknowledgments of participant success.

GMWDB also utilizes board committees to allow members deeper information and engagement in areas where they may have additional interest or subject matter expertise.

## 2.2: Local Board Committees

*Provide a description of board committees and their functions.*

GMWDB currently has two full-time permanent committees – the GMWDB Executive Committee and the GMWDB Youth Committee.

GMWDB's Executive Committee includes the GMWDB Chair, the GMWDB Vice-Chair, the GMWDB Secretary/Treasurer, and a non-board member appointed to serve. The Executive Committee may act on behalf of the full board when a quorum is not present at a called meeting or when the full GMWDB is unable to convene, and a decision is needed quickly.

GMWDB also has a standing Youth Committee. The GMWDB Youth Committee may include local board members, members of community-based organizations with demonstrated success in serving youth, employees of state or local government agencies who provide youth services, youth parents or youth participants, and other community representatives. The GMWDB Youth Committee oversees the youth program budget, makes youth program policy recommendations, reviews youth program RFPS and makes award recommendations to the GMWDB, identifies goals and objectives for the youth program, and works to create a broader alignment of youth resources throughout Georgia Mountains Area 2.

GMWDB Bylaws authorize the GMWDB Chair to establish other ad-hoc committees to perform short-term work and provide insight to the full board. One such ad-hoc committee is the Board Officer Nominating Committee, established for a short period to collect input and make recommendations on the nomination of new GMWDB Officers.

2.2.a: If committees have not been utilized, provide a description of why.

Not applicable

## 2.3: Plan Development

*Provide a description of the process by which the plan was developed to include the participation of core partners, providers, board members, and other community entities. Also describe the process by which the local board provided a 30-day public comment period prior to the submission of the plan to solicit input into the development of the plan, including comment by representatives of businesses, representatives of labor organizations, and representatives of education.*

The Georgia Mountains Workforce Development Board discussed the local plan updates with the WorkSource Georgia Mountains staff. The updated Plan was sent to the Board and scheduled to be on the agenda for the July 28, 2022 meeting. WorkSource Georgia Mountains staff, collaborated with GMRC Economic Development staff and business services consultants to complete an initial review of updated labor market information. Information was collected from GDOL, Burning Glass Labor Market Insights, the Georgia Department of Education, and the Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA). Insight was sought from industry partners, economic development partners, and one-stop partners to update GMWDB's understanding of economic conditions, industry needs, and partner resources within the local area. WSGM Staff also reviewed the State of Georgia's Unified State Plan draft for PY20-PY23 to understand the state's mission, priorities, and goals for the upcoming four-year planning period.

WorkSource Georgia Mountains gathered insight from industry partners, one-stop system partners, and economic development partners on workforce skills needs, industry growth within the region, strengths of the one-stop system, and other information relevant to the GMWDB strategic planning process.

WorkSource Georgia Mountains reached out to one-stop partners such as GDOL, GVRA, local technical colleges, and other local partners to learn more about their priorities and objectives for the next four years. As a result, WSGM staff and partners collaborated to update the sections on service integration and partnership to ensure these sections reflected the progress made over the last four years and recognized new benchmarks and objectives for the next four years.

Staff also held meetings and calls to finalize the WorkSource Georgia Mountains strategy for providing outreach and in-demand services to employers and participants based on the direction of the GMWDB.

The local plan was presented to the GMWDB for review on May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020. After the GMWDB approved the plan, it was posted on the GMRC website for a 30-day public comment period. WSGM staff also sent email notices about plan publication to business and industry partners, one-stop partners, education partners, representatives of labor organizations, GMWDB members, and other interested parties within the region. These emails requested review and solicited feedback about the contents of the plan.

WSGM staff and GMWDB reviewed all comments, recommendations, or other feedback received during the public comment period and made corrections and revisions as appropriate. Copies of all public comments that expressed

disagreement with the plan are included in Attachment 4. The revisions were presented to the GMWDB for final review and approval of the plan for submission. Once the GMWDB voted to approve the plan, it was finalized and submitted to TCSG-OWD.

## 3.0: Service and Delivery Training

### 3.1: Expanding Services to Eligible Individuals

*Provide a description of how the local board, working with the entities carrying out core programs, will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment. Include how the local board will facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment in core programs, as appropriate; and how it will improve access to activities leading to a recognized post-secondary, academic, or industry-recognized credential.*

The Georgia Mountains Workforce Development Board works closely with all entities carrying out core programs to ensure that partners operate as a team to provide all eligible individuals access to employment, training, education, and supportive service resources. Special consideration is given to ensuring that outreach, intake, referral, and service delivery methods are accommodative of individuals with barriers to employment. WIOA Services Program Overviews are provided throughout the WorkSource Georgia Mountains region regularly. In addition, there are virtual overviews and application assistance provided weekly or as scheduled. WSGM also schedules regular overviews in all GDOL Career Centers and technical colleges. Program Overviews are available on the WSGM website and regularly promoted on various social media platforms.

Partner locations also have signage explaining WIOA and application information. WSGM also maintains a customized one-stop website for providing outreach and application materials. Access to interpreters and other resources are made available through the one-stops. One-stop partner meetings have focused on accessibility, universal design, and other topics relevant to service expansion and consideration of barrier mitigation.

WorkSource Georgia Mountains also utilizes SARA, a cloud-based communications tool that streamlines communications with participants through texts, email, and other in-app communications. SARA also allows jobseekers to upload documentation from their phones, reducing the need for office visits to collect intake paperwork, supportive service documentation, or other eligibility paperwork. SARA is used for intake eligible review and submission of supporting documentation. It is also used for case management and participant follow-up. The addition of text communications has improved response rates from participants and reduced the time necessary for intake documentation collection and eligibility review.

In addition to the comprehensive One-Stop location, the Georgia Department of Labor provides four formalized access points for WIOA services. As the provider of Unemployment Insurance and Wagner-Peyser services, GDOL is a natural entry point for many jobseekers. Through the GDOL Career Centers, interested individuals receive information and assistance from the greeter, pointing them towards internet applications and providing assistance with basic resume preparation, web-based EmployGeorgia access for career search and job applications, and other basic computer software. Wagner-Peyser staff is also available to aid with job search and placement once the individual is ready. If training services are needed, referrals are made to providers for WIOA Title I, adult education, or vocational rehabilitation.

WSGM encourages co-enrollments for all eligible participants. This coordinated approach ensures the most efficient utilization of non-duplicated program resources and assures that the participant receives the broadest array of eligible services.

Updates and information about Program Overviews, training services, and other resources are provided through the WorkSource Georgia Mountains One-Stop website. This website houses information for the partner programs, links to learn more about their specific program services and requirements, a calendar of workforce development events with the WSGM region, information about additional available resources, WIOA services applications, and other information relevant to participants and jobseekers.

Additional information about how GMWDB seeks to promote career pathways and training services may be found in Sections 3.2 through 3.10.

WSGM works with all eligible participants to identify training programs of study that are in demand and lead to recognized credentials. Where applicable, WSGM staff work to ensure participants understand stackable credential options available within their program of study. WSGM staff review supportive service eligibility with all participants and coordinate resources amongst partners to ensure participants are receiving the wrap-around services necessary for training success.

## 3.2: Description of Services to Adults and Dislocated Workers

*Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area.*

Adult and Dislocated Worker services are foundational to the success of the workforce system. WSGM offers various career and training services to adult and dislocated worker jobseekers.

Adults and Dislocated Workers are eligible to receive self-service resources, career services, training services, supportive services, and follow-up services through WSGM. Participants may receive services in any order that is deemed appropriate.

### Career Services

At a minimum, the following career services are made available to all participants who need them:

- Determination of eligibility to receive assistance
- Outreach, intake, and orientation to information and other services available through the workforce system
- Initial assessment of skill levels, aptitude, abilities, and supportive service needs
- Labor exchange services, including job search and placement assistance as well as career counseling
- Referral to and coordination with other workforce system resources
- Workforce and labor market information
- Performance information and program cost information on eligible training providers
- Information on WSGM and the workforce system's performance
- Information on and referral to supportive services or assistance
- Meaningful assistance to individuals seeking assistance in filing a claim for unemployment compensation

- Assistance in establishing eligibility for financial aid for programs not funded through WIOA
- Individualized career services necessary for an individual to obtain or retain employment, including comprehensive and specialized assessments, diagnostic testing, and/or in-depth interviews and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals
- Development of an individual employment plan
- Group counseling
- Individual counseling
- Career planning
- Short-term pre-vocational services
- Workforce preparation activities
- Financial literacy services
- Out-of-area job search assistance and relocation assistance
- English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs

#### Training Services

Training services may be made available for participants who have been determined to need additional assistance to obtain or retain employment. Individuals must be unable to obtain or retain employment, be determined in need of training services, and be able to successfully participate in the selected training services program and meet the training service's qualification requirements. WSGM also applies service priority as part of the training service eligibility process. There are a variety of training services funded by WIOA. Training services may include adult education and literacy services, occupational skills training for nontraditional employment, training programs operated by the private sector, work-based learning training, and other services provided on the ETPL or through state and local policy.

Educational training opportunities are predominantly provided through Individual Training Accounts. An ITA allows individuals to select a training institution from the Eligible Training Provider List. Additionally, WSGM staff consults with each participant to choose a training program in a demand industry occupation.

GMWDB assists with the cost of training, including but not limited to books, tuition, and fees, general supplies, tools, uniforms and shoes, certification, licensing, testing fees, drug testing for entrance into training, medical requirements for entry into training, as well as supportive services for eligible participants.

Work-based training services are also available. More information about these services and how they are utilized in Georgia Mountains Area 2 are found in other plan sections.

#### Follow-Up Services

All participants receive follow-up services for at least twelve months from the first day of unsubsidized employment. Each participant will be contacted a minimum of four times (once per quarter) after exit. Contact includes employment assistance, counseling, and supportive services when necessary.

### 3.3: Description of Rapid Response Services

*Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities.*

The Georgia Department of Labor oversees the State's Rapid Response Dislocated Worker program. GMWDB and WSGM collaborate with GDOL to provide local Rapid Response services. Following the federal Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) guidelines, Georgia's Rapid Response team responds to layoffs with 50 or more impacted workers from eligible employers. Georgia also seeks to respond to all layoffs of 25 or more employees. Georgia's approach to Rapid Response leverages the relationships and the knowledge of GDOL and the LWDAs to help provide services to dislocated workers. This integrated approach ensures a timely localized response that is available during and after the layoff event.

Rapid Response teams include GDOL Rapid Response staff, WSGM staff, GDOL local career center staff, and other economic development and community partners as appropriate for each event. WSGM staff assists impacted workers with accessing community resource services including WIOA Title I funding. These resources are designed to support workers' transition to a new job or career. WSGM regularly works with the Trade Adjustment Act (TAA), Wagner-Peyser, and Unemployment Insurance staff from GDOL and TANF staff from the Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS) to provide all needed resources without duplicating services.

Rapid Response services are designed to provide customized on-site services at an impacted company. These services are designed to accommodate different work schedules to assist the employer as well as all impacted workers through the transition associated with job loss. Available services frequently include, but are not limited to:

- Employee information sessions
- Employee orientations on unemployment insurance and other GDOL Employment Services
- Employer assistance with filing Unemployment Compensation and Trade petitions
- Shared work/short-term compensation options
- Job fairs
- Development of OJT and customized training programs for transitioning workers
- Onsite transition centers and onsite training services, often through the use of the Mobile Training Units
  
- Workshops on a variety of topics, such as:
  - Job search techniques
  - Career explorations
  - Career assessments
  - Labor market information
  - Resume writing
  - Interview skills
  - Money management
  - Community resource exploration
  - Basic computer skills
  
- Educational opportunities through programs including:
  - WIOA Title I
  - HOPE and Pell grants and scholarships
  - Adult Education and GED assistance

- Postsecondary school growth and demand programs
- TAA, as eligible

Where possible, the Rapid Response team looks for opportunities to work with employers on layoff aversion efforts. Leveraging GDOL and WSGM partnerships and local employer relationships, the Rapid Response team gathers information and looks for opportunities for intervention in the workforce system. Through conversations with local employers and appropriate Rapid Response partners, the Rapid Response team identifies strategies such as IWT to help businesses upskill workers to become more productive or to learn new technologies.

### 3.4: Description of Youth Services

*Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce development activities in the local area, including activities with youth with disabilities. This description and assessment shall include an identification of successful models of such youth workforce development activities.*

Youth Services are a key part of the dynamic workforce system in Georgia Mountains Area 2. There are a variety of training options and resources available to area youth. The WorkSource Georgia Mountains staff actively seek out service providers and partners who can provide additional services to assist area youth in gaining needed skills and employment. All workforce opportunities are made available to youth with disabilities. WSGM partners with GVRA to ensure that the broadest available resources and opportunities are available to youth with disabilities. WSGM and GVRA co-enroll participants where possible and participate in quarterly partner meetings to discuss better integration of services and resources.

WSGM ensures that all fourteen basic elements are available to youth requiring those services. The following is a description of how the basic youth elements are provided:

#### Tutoring, Study Skills Training, Instruction, and Evidence-Based Dropout Prevention and Recovery Strategies:

Currently, this service is provided on an individual, case-by-case basis. When a participant is not performing well in school, the case manager will recommend tutoring through partner agencies. If other services are needed, funding may be provided to support those services.

WSGM staff also provide workshops with strategies for dropout prevention and future planning. WSGM offers incentives to participants who achieve credits towards a high school diploma, GED, and other progress and skills attainment benchmarks.

Alternative Secondary School Services or Drop-out Recovery Services: Credit recovery programs are designed to assist youth participants who have dropped out of high school or who have been withdrawn from high school. Credit recovery programs assist those participants with retrieving the credits necessary for diploma completion.

WSGM works with the Mountain Education Charter High School, the Lanier Career Academy, and other alternative schools in Georgia Mountains Area 2. For students returning through the alternative school system, incentives and supportive services are offered for recovering credits and working towards a secondary diploma. WSGM staff partner directly with alternative school staff in referring and recruiting students. WSGM also offers workshops for career planning, including post-secondary and work-based opportunities such as internships and work experience.

Paid and Unpaid Work Experience: Through work experience and internships, WSGM provides youth participants with exposure to the workforce, career professionals, and work practices and expectations. Work experiences can help clarify career interests, enhance occupational skills, prevent learning loss over the summer, help youth develop a sense of providing, and help develop workplace-appropriate social skills. Youth must complete a work ethic workshop to be eligible for work-based learning opportunities.

WSGM partners with employers and partner agencies to identify work-based learning opportunities for participants. The most common opportunity is work experience, but depending on the participant's needs and interests, other options such as on-the-job training, Registered Apprenticeship, and internships may also be appropriate.

WSGM has also partnered with Atlanta Career Rise to incorporate Virtual Work Experiences for participants that are new to the workforce or having difficulty maintaining employment. Participants gain exposure to different career paths, gain soft skills, and are able to learn how to function in the workplace.

Occupational Skills Training: WSGM offers assistance to eligible youth for post-secondary education and partners with eligible training providers to provide occupational skills training for in-demand fields in Georgia Mountains Area 2. Participants in this service may receive funding assistance to pay tuition costs, book costs, and other required materials and tools necessary for program participation. Supportive services are also offered to participants, including childcare assistance and transportation assistance. Occupational skills training participants are awarded funding for up to six semesters with a maximum training cost of \$10,000.

Education Offered Concurrently with and in the same context as Workforce Preparation: WSGM youth staff offer workshops to participants that include work ethic training, resume building, interview skills, "dress for success," character-building, and team building.

Leadership Development: Leadership development opportunities include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic engagement.

WSGM staff offer workshops that encourage team building with other WIOA participants. WSGM also partners with other agencies and regional partners to offer volunteer work with the hospital and other entities. Workshop topics include:

- Future planning, including post-secondary exploration
- Character-building
- Organized team-building activities
- Living a healthy life, including developing healthy relationships and drug and alcohol awareness
- College Knowledge
- Work ethic and worksite behavior
- Interviewing skills& Resume building
- Dress for Success
- Financial Literacy
- Time & Stress management

Supportive Services: WSGM offers supportive services, including transportation assistance and childcare assistance. Other support and needs-related payments may be offered on a case-by-case basis. Youth participants may also be eligible for incentives for completing workshops, work-training assignments, benchmark achievement, and credential completion. (Should we add something about the stipends, or is that covered in other support?)

Adult Mentoring: WSGM contracts with an Independent Living Mentor who provides one-on-one and group mentoring sessions, as appropriate. Participants in specific services may also receive program design-specific mentoring. For example, Project SEARCH participants receive worksite and life mentors for the duration of their program enrollment. Mentors connect with participants by phone and meet face-to-face to offer guidance and support for participants. Mentors also encourage good character and social behavior.

WSGM also offers mentors for youth participating in work experience services. The mentor visits the worksite and may act as a liaison when necessary. Work experience mentors encourage and prepare the mentee to become a mentor to other youth.

Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling: WSGM contracts with a counselor to provide mental health counseling in both one-on-one and group sessions. These sessions may be for preventative counseling or for managing mental health. Referrals are made for drug and alcohol abuse counseling.

Financial Literacy Education: Financial literacy education is provided for participants in a variety of methods. Financial education may be included in the participant's program design and may be administered through a series of workshops or one-on-one sessions as appropriate for each participant. As part of the youth conference, WSGM invites guest speakers from local banks to provide a workshop on financial literacy.

Entrepreneurial Skills Training: WSGM provides workshops on entrepreneurial skills. Georgia Mountains partners with local businesses, the Center for Rural Prosperity and Innovation, Junior Achievement, and other local resources to provide options for entrepreneurial skills training.

Labor Market and Employment Information Services: Services such as career counseling and career exploration are made available to all participants to provide information about the local labor market and in-demand industry employment opportunities. Participants may also utilize the WorkSource Georgia Portal and EmployGeorgia for independent resource review.

Participants attend a workshop that presents labor market information in an accessible and easy-to-understand format. Workshop curriculum typically includes growth and demand industry careers and their education requirements, entry-level wages and possible growth in demand career pathways, awareness of "unusual" careers or careers that may not be as popular or well-known, and career exploration to match participants' assessed skills and interests with in-demand career pathways.

Activities that Prepare for Transition to Post-Secondary Education and Training: WSGM staff utilize one-on-one sessions, group workshops, and individual assessments to assist participants in preparing to transition to post-secondary education and training. Participants are invited to career fairs, technical colleges, and other schools, as well as tours of campuses. WSGM staff will also review career assessments to further assist participants in identifying growth and demand career fields that may be best for the participants. Participants may also be advised on the program credential lengths and stackable credential options within the selected

career pathway. In some cases, services and/or assistance may be given through partners to support college entrance testing preparation.

Follow-Up Services: Each participant will be contacted no less than four times (a minimum of once per quarter) after exit. Contact includes employment assistance and supportive services when necessary.

WSGM has also worked to develop integrated programming designed to provide youth with seamless access to various services in a setting that fully supports participants and encourages success. Below we have highlighted several innovative programs we are implementing to support area youth.

#### Route 180 Youth Center

The Route 180 Youth Center was opened in 2020 and is designed to provide a “safe” place for youth participants and potential participants. The Route 180 Youth Center's mission is to provide a pathway to employment for youth adults in Georgia Mountains Area 2 by equipping them through education, training, and advancing skills in a competitive market that will lead to self-sufficiency. The Center provides opportunities for growth, future/career planning, specified training, tutoring, workshops, work skills training, entrepreneurship skills development, mentoring, and peer groups.

The Route 180 Youth Center provides:

- GED tutoring
- General tutoring
- Work Excellence training
- Financial Literacy classes and workshops
- Entrepreneurship training
- Life skills
- Certification training
- Peer groups
- Clothing and Baby Closets
- Game room

#### Project SEARCH Program

The Project SEARCH High School Transition Program is a unique, business-led, one-year school-to-work program that occurs entirely at the workplace. This program is specifically designed to meet the needs of youth with disabilities. Youth must have had an Individualized Education Plan or 504 plan while in secondary school To qualify for program participation. The program emphasizes total workplace immersion, facilitating a seamless combination of classroom instruction, career exploration, and hands-on training through worksite rotations. Project SEARCH has been active in Hall County for more than ten years. WSGM plays a vital role in preparing youth for the assigned rotation at the local hospital. WSGM utilizes WIOA funding to provide necessary work items such as school and work uniforms for eligible youth. WSGM also provides supplies needed for classroom instruction, including laptops, printers, and copy paper. During the Project SEARCH training period, eligible youth also receive transportation supportive service assistance.

WSGM also plays a role in assisting Project SEARCH youth to develop skills to assist them in transitioning from high school to adult life. Youth attend weekly workshops prepared and presented by WSGM staff. These workshops teach skills in character-building, independent living, work ethics, interviewing, resume building, and budgeting. These topics complement the instruction presented by Project SEARCH instructors.

WSGM works with business partners to assist with subsidizing work experience for youth to provide them with valuable experience that assists in the hiring process.

WSGM youth staff participates in monthly evaluation and employment planning meetings, including future planning to assist students in setting goals and identifying resources for further education or employment opportunities. Funding is available for WIOA-eligible youth to assist with approved post-secondary education or occupational skills training.

### Transition to Success

The Transition to Success program is a collaborative transition program between GMWDB Lanier Tech Adult Basic Education program. Lanier Tech's Adult Basic Education program provides a GED instructor to prepare eligible youth for the GED test. Once youth have passed the GED practice test, the GED instructor schedules testing at the college. If participants complete and pass all portions of the GED, the instructor may assist interested participants in applying for online college programs.

Youth who have successfully obtained a GED are encouraged to give back by assisting struggling students. Youth are also given opportunities to motivate and encourage their struggling peers who may want to give up. These opportunities help build confidence and develop leadership skills in the youth.

GMWDB supports Transition to Success through a contract with Lanier Technical College to provide funding for the GED instructor and the GED testing fees for eligible youth. For youth interested in college programs, WSGM works with participants to identify eligible training providers and pay for tuition and supplies.

WSGM staff also offer workshops and mentoring to incarcerated youth participating in Transition to Success. An Independent Living Mentor offers workshops and provide mentoring on transitioning from incarceration back into the community. Workshops include the following topics:

- Character-building
- "So I have my GED – now what?"
- Mapping Your Future
- Soft skills training
- Employability skills
- Interviewing skills
- Dressing for success
- "How to Get a Job and Keep It"

Mentoring also includes resume building, job search and placement assistance, one-on-one interview preparation, and meetings with social workers, probation officers, parents, and counselors to create a transition plan.

### Youth Conference

GMWDB hosts a youth conference to educate “at risk” youth and young adults ages 16-24. WSGM staff, business and community partners, and motivational speakers present. Topics include character building, healthy personal and professional relationships, financial literacy, and work readiness. All attendees also participate in the “game of life,” a hands-on financial literacy program that educates students about budgets, bills, and how far a paycheck truly goes.

WSGM utilizes this conference as a recruitment tool to inform eligible individuals about the resources and services available through the one-stop system. Current and former participants also give testimonials about the program’s impact on their lives. The youth conference concludes with door prizes, including a grand prize for a laptop computer. All door prizes are donated by business and community partners.

### 3.5: Implementation of Work-Based Learning Initiatives

*Provide a description of how the area will implement initiatives such as Incumbent Worker training programs on-the-job training programs, Customized Training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies designed to meet the needs of employers in the corresponding region in support of the business services strategy. If these services are not utilized, provide a description of why.*

As part of a broader business services strategy, GMWDB has developed and implemented robust work-based learning programs to meet the needs of area employers. The insight gained from the sector strategies initiatives has led to the development of robust career pathway programs and awareness opportunities for jobseekers and participants. Additional sector strategy successes are discussed in Section 1.5.

One part of the business services strategy is developing and expanding an array of services such as OJT, Incumbent Worker Training, Apprenticeships, Customized Training, and Internships. Employers can share their concerns and hiring issues through business services staff and contractors and learn more about available WSGM options. Many of the business services staff and contractors have a business and economic development backgrounds, helping them to speak the employer’s language and help employers understand the value of the program offerings. GMWDB also works closely with local Economic Developers and Chambers as intermediaries to help ensure increased awareness of the array of employer services available through the workforce system.

GMWDB is working to ensure workforce services are accessible to employers of all sizes and industries. Outreach and public awareness are critical components of GMWDB’s mission and strategic goals. GMWDB continues to build relationships with employers throughout Georgia Mountains Area 2 to secure GMWDB’s place as a partner in developing and growing local businesses.

GMWDB is also working to identify additional technological enhancements and other ways to streamline the work-based learning development and onboarding process.

#### On-the-Job Training

OJT programs assist participants by placing them in employment opportunities to help them gain knowledge, hands-on experience, and skills needed for long-term success in-demand industry sectors. OJT programs

also benefit employers by offsetting the costs of hiring and training an employee who may not have been selected through their traditional hiring process.

GMWDB continues to expand its OJT program in-demand industry sectors. GMWDB continues to develop and strengthen the pipeline from occupational skills training to OJT opportunities.

#### Incumbent Worker Training

GMWDB utilizes IWT to assist employers with financial assistance for expenses associated with new skills or skills upgrades for permanent full-time employees. IWT may be used as a layoff aversion strategy or to support growth and advancement. GMWDB works with the employer to backfill positions with other WIOA participants where possible. GMWDB continues to align IWT opportunities with the GMWDB strategic goals and performance objectives.

#### Apprenticeships

Through the support of the local technical colleges and the state's American Apprenticeship Initiative grant, Georgia Mountains Area 2 has seen increased interest in Registered Apprenticeship programs for training workers in critical, skilled, hard-to-fill positions.

WSGM supports apprenticeships through funding ITA, OJT, and IWT costs as appropriate for each apprentice.

#### Customized Training

GMWDB continues to research the need for and interest in Customized Training. However, many technical colleges have robust training opportunities through credit and non-credit educational courses, so GMWDB has not seen much demand for Customized Training programming.

#### Internships

GMWDB utilizes short-term internships to provide an opportunity for adults with minimal work experience to gain hands-on experience and exposure to soft skills to assist them in identifying industries or career pathways that may interest them.

GMWDB is committed to developing internships as a pipeline to long-term employment. GMWDB is working to find ways for internships to serve as a bridge to employment for current training participants who may not have work-based learning as part of their training curriculum.

### 3.6: Provision of ITAs

*Provide a description of how training services in WIOA §134 will be provided through the use of ITAs. If contracts for the training services will be used, describe how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of ITAs and how the local board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided.*

Individuals determined eligible for WIOA-funded training services may select an eligible training provider from the Georgia Mountains Workforce Development Board-approved provider list. Individuals may also request to attend training at a provider on the TCSG-OWD approved provider list.

WIOA funds may be utilized for training in occupations that GMWDB has identified as growth or demand occupations or in occupations where the participant has documented local employment prospects.

GMWDB has established a two-year time limit for ITA program completion. For the majority of programs, GMWDB limits ITA vouchers to \$6,000 in the first year and \$10,000 in total costs. Certain exceptions may be made for medical programs, Registered Apprenticeship training, and other programs as identified in WSGM policy.

### 3.7: Entrepreneurial Skills Training and Micro-enterprise Services

*Provide a description of how the area will coordinate and promote entrepreneurial skills training and micro-enterprise services.*

WorkSource Georgia Mountains has access to a variety of resources to offer participants who want entrepreneurial skills training and micro-enterprise services.

The Manufacturing Development Center (MDC) serves as an incubator and accelerator for small businesses in an integrated environment at the Featherbone Community center. The MDC is overseen by Brenau University and also provides participants access to rental space, assistance with business financials, and potential partnerships with a number of education institutions.

Access may also be available to the Appalachian Regional Commission's entrepreneurship and business development program, which supports the expansion of the entrepreneurial ecosystem and for start-up and small businesses within the Appalachian Region. Georgia also has the Center for Rural Prosperity and Innovation. The Center serves as an information and resource hub for rural best practices, including small business and industry assistance and planning. The Center for Rural Prosperity and Innovation recently opened a North Georgia office, enabling more accessible access to resources and support.

The University of Georgia and the Georgia Department of Economic Development also offer small business development support that may be available to participants who want to open their own small businesses.

After conversations with interested participants, WSGM staff identify which resources and opportunities will be a best fit for participant success and make recommendations and referrals as appropriate.

For youth participants, in addition to the services mentioned above, workshops on entrepreneurial skills are offered on a regular basis.

### 3.8: Coordination with Education Programs

*Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate education and workforce development activities carried out in the local area with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.*

The Georgia Mountains Workforce Development Board works closely with TCSG, the University System of Georgia (USG), non-public postsecondary providers, and Registered Apprenticeship program providers to ensure customer choice through a broad array of educational offerings.

Participants are encouraged to enter for-credit programs with postsecondary credentials such as diplomas, certificates, and degrees. Both TCSG and USG also offer continuing education offerings providing access to non-credit industry credentials, helping to create stackable credentials and short-term training opportunities.

GMWDB, one-stop partners, and eligible training providers coordinate to ensure adequate training funds are available to support students without duplicating funding support. GMWDB ensures that Pell Grant, HOPE Scholarships, Zell Miller Scholarships, and other resources are utilized before WIOA funds are applied to the costs of training services. All participants must apply for financial aid, as applicable, through their training provider.

GMWDB also works closely with the Technical College System of Georgia's Office of Adult Education to provide adult education services. TCSG-OAE local providers are actively engaged in the one-stop system, including serving as affiliate sites. GMWDB has also awarded sub-recipient grants to local adult education providers for holistic services for Out-of-School Youth. Where appropriate, WSGM staff also refer participants in need of a high school diploma to the Mountain Education Charter System, where students can participate in night classes and other alternative education options to earn their high school diploma.

### 3.9: Description of Supportive Services

*Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out under this title in the local area with the provision of transportation, including public transportation, and other appropriate supportive services in the local area. Describe the coordination of transportation and other supportive services regionally, as applicable.*

Georgia Mountains Area 2 has many fairly rural areas with minimal access to public transportation. Currently, the only direct access to public transportation is in Hall County. Due to limited routes, very few participants take advantage of public transportation. Given the distances to employment, education, and other needed services, WSGM offers transportation supportive services to eligible participants. Supportive service amounts are dependent on the number of miles between the participant's residence and the location of training and/or employment services.

GMWDB also offers childcare supportive services to eligible participants. All participants must first apply for assistance through the Childcare and Parents Services (CAPS) program available through the DECAL. Those who do not receive assistance through the CAPS program may be eligible for childcare support services. WSGM pays for childcare supportive services on days when participants are actively participating in educational or occupational training programs.

WSGM's current supportive services policies are included in Attachment 5.

### 3.10: Coordination with Social Services Programs

*Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate with social service providers, including SNAP and TANF. The description should include the utilizations of both programs as a referral source.*

WorkSource Georgia Mountains continues to grow its partnership with DHS through Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). TANF and SNAP representatives are invited to all bi-monthly one-stop partner meetings, which include a variety of one-stop

partners as well as other community partners providing social services with Georgia Mountains Area 2. All attendees have an opportunity to share a brief update about their organization's services, and time is dedicated to collaboration and referrals between one-stop partners and other social service partners. Some meetings specifically feature a focus on different programs and the services offered. One-stop partner meetings regularly discuss leading practices for service integration, non-duplication of effort and resources, streamlined referral processes, and universal design principles.

WSGM staff and the One-Stop Operator also regularly participate on community boards, committees, and organizations to present information about One-stop services. Examples include United Way of Hall County's One Hall Committee on Economic Stability, Gainesville Salvation Army Advisory Board, Boy and Girls Club of Lanier, Rehabilitation Industries of Northeast Georgia (RING), and Girl Scouts of Historic Georgia.

TANF and SNAP staff are aware of the services available through the one-stop system. They have received cross-training to refer job seekers to the one-stop for additional assessment and determination of eligibility. WSGM and other one-stop partners also refer partners to TANF and SNAP and log all referrals to keep track of all referrals made.

When participants are co-enrolled, WorkSource Georgia Mountains continues to work with DHS staff to share information about resources available through each program and participant outcomes. WSGM also utilizes the SNAP system of supportive services to supplement the supportive services available through WIOA to ensure no duplication of services. This communication also ensures that participants can take advantage of program differences, such as the TANF supportive service Work Support Payments (WSP), which provides supportive services for up to a year after transitioning to employment.

## 4.0: Coordination with Core Partners

### 4.1: Description of the Workforce System

*Provide a description of the workforce development system in the local area that identifies all relevant programs and how the local board will work with the entities to carry out both core and other workforce development programs to deliver well-aligned services in support of the strategies identified in the state plan. This should include programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 USC 2301 et. seq.).*

Through the Georgia Mountains Area 2 one-stop system, GMWDB can offer various services tailored to meet the needs of local businesses and job seekers. These services may include:

- WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker services
- WIOA Title I Youth Services
- WIOA Title I Job Corps and Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker programs
- WIOA Title I Veterans' workforce programs
- Wagner-Peyser Act programs
- WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy activities
- Programs funded under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act
- Programs funded under Title V of the Older Americans Act

- Postsecondary vocational education activities funded under Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (Carl Perkins Act)
- TAA and NAFTA Transitional Adjustment Assistance activities
- Local veteran’s employment representatives (LVERs) and disabled veterans outreach programs (DVOPs)
- Employment and training activities under Community Services Block Grants and the Department of Housing and Urban Development
- Programs authorized under State employment compensation laws

All the above partners present within Georgia Mountains Area 2 are part of the one-stop MOU and Infrastructure Funding Agreement that details the services and cost-sharing present in the region.

As noted in the plan, GMWDB continues to grow and expand relationships with the partners providing these vital services within the region. Through GMWDB membership, one-stop system engagement, one-stop partner meetings, and other opportunities for collaboration and communication, the Georgia Mountains Area 2 one-stop system is more vital than ever and continues to grow. WSGM staff regularly participate in meetings with one-stop partners and participate in the Carl Perkins annual planning process for the majority of local Carl Perkins Act supported program in the region (Career, Technical and Agricultural Education programs in the local public school systems and occupational training programs at Athens Technical College, Lanier Technical College, and North Georgia Technical College). In addition, WSGM provided feedback about local growth and demand career pathways, updated information about resources and services available to bolster the services offered by Perkins Act recipients and sub-recipients, and learned more about the vocational education strategy and direction being taken by each of the local programs.

GMWDB provides WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker Services and WIOA Title I Youth Services. These programs offer many career services through the physical one-stop centers and mobile training units. Career services include individualized job search, resume and cover letter writing assistance, workforce skills and typing training, computer skills training, Microsoft Office training, and skills assessments for OJT, GED, and career aptitude. Eligible participants may also receive more intensive services including assistance with training, such as funding for tuition, books, and the cost of program supplies; supportive services and needs-related payments; and work-based learning programs such as apprenticeships, internships, OJT, IWT, and layoff aversion. Through WIOA Title I and coordination with the partner programs listed above, Georgia Mountains Area 2 can meet many of the needs of local job seekers and employers. GMWDB will continue to develop strategic relationships and partnerships to expand access to the resources and services available throughout the region.

More information about coordination with specific programs is found below.

## 4.2: Coordination with Wagner-Peyser

*Provide a description of plans and strategies for, and assurances concerning, maximizing coordination of services provided by the state employment service under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 USC 49 et. seq.) and services provided in the local area through the one-stop delivery system, to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services.*

The Georgia Department of Labor has four Career Center offices serving the residents of Georgia Mountains Area 2. They are Gainesville Career Center (serving Dawson, Forsyth, Hall, Lumpkin, and White Counties); Toccoa Career Center (serving Banks, Franklin, Hart, and Stephens Counties); Blue Ridge Career Center (serving Towns and Union Counties); and Habersham Career Center (serving Habersham and Rabun Counties).

GDOL Career Centers offer services including, but not limited to:

- Employ Georgia access and assistance
- Job placement assistance
- Unemployment insurance claims filing and case management
- DVOP and LVER representatives and monthly workshops
- Specialized ex-offender workshops
- Specialized assistance for migrant and seasonal farmworkers
- Resource center and computer programs including resume development, TapDance, typing tutorials, labor market information, in-demand field information, training and education resources, and financial aid options
- Information on GED, educational training, and occupational training offerings
- Job fairs
- TAA services
- Limited English Proficiency (LEP) services including language line, bilingual staff, technology, and written materials in a variety of languages
- Vocational assessments
- Referrals to partner programs and services such as WIOA, GVRA, Adult Education, HomeSafe, and other community and faith-based resources as appropriate
- Job clubs

GDOL's Business Services Unit often hosts recruitment events (including recruitment events specifically for veterans) in the career centers and other locations throughout the region. GDOL's Business Services Unit engages with partners such as WSGM and local technical colleges to host these events. Recruitment events serve employers and job seekers. Employer Committees also utilize the career centers to host training seminars and other employer meetings.

GDOL also has TOPPSTEP (The Offender Parolee Probationer State Training Employment Program) available to transitioning citizens. TOPPSTEP is a joint effort of the Georgia Department of Labor, Georgia Department of Corrections, Georgia Department of Community Supervision, and the State Board of Pardons and Paroles. TOPPSTEP's mission is to help every returning citizen become gainfully employed and self-sufficient. This program provides a variety of resources, including access to job openings, federal bonding and WOTC, community resource access for clothing, food banks, housing assistance, etc., retraining and OJT resources, specialized job search workshops, online resume tutorials, and other resources available through the DVOP and LVER program. Workshops are regularly held at corrections centers throughout Georgia Mountains Area 2, and GDOL career center staff members regularly collaborate with local Probation Office staff.

GMWDB continues close coordination with all GDOL services available within Georgia Mountains Area 2. These collaborative efforts will make a greater spectrum of workforce development resources available to area customers.

### 4.3: Coordination with Adult Education

*Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with the provision of adult education and literacy activities under Title II in the local area, including a description of how the local board will carry out the review of local applications submitted under Title II, consistent with subparagraphs (A) and (B)(i) of section 107(d)(11) and section 232 of WIOA.*

GMWDB coordinates workforce development activities in Georgia Mountains Area 2 with the eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities under Title II. Adult education and literacy activities include academic instruction and education services below the postsecondary level that increase an individual's ability to:

- Read, write, and speak English and perform mathematics or other activities necessary for the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent
- Transition to post-secondary education and training
- Obtain employment

In accordance with federal regulation, eligible providers may receive adult education funding for the delivery of any of the following adult education and literacy activities:

- Adult education
- Literacy
- Workplace adult education and literacy activities
- English language and acquisition activities
- Integrated English literacy and civics education
- Workforce preparation activities
- Integrated education and training

Adult education and literacy activities may also be combined, concurrently and contextually, with both workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster. Local adult education providers regularly coordinate with WSGM and other one-stop partners to develop collaborative training and resource provision for eligible participants.

Currently, three technical colleges provide adult education and literacy activities under Title II in Georgia Mountains Area 2. As part of the one-stop system in Georgia Mountains Area 2, each technical college has designated a staff member to speak with job seekers and direct them to the appropriate learning center for support.

Adult education programs from all three technical colleges provide quality instruction to residents of all counties to ensure eligible individuals receive their High School Equivalency Diploma (GED, HiSET, or Career Plus HSE as appropriate). Quality soft skills training and effective study skills are emphasized in the classroom. Faculty members and peer tutors at each of the three colleges can also provide free tutoring once a student is enrolled in the credit program. All three colleges also provide evidence-based dropout

prevention and recovery strategies and are involved in the entire process, from orientation all the way through student follow-up. Instructors design lessons aligned to the College and Career Readiness Standards (Or English Language Proficiency Standards for students in English Language Acquisition classes) and use resources based on the latest revisions.

In addition to basic skills training, the Adult Education program at Athens Technical College offers English as a Second Language (ESL) classes and Civics/Citizenship classes to students in an eleven-county service area. Athens Tech also offers Digital Literacy Certification pathways, GeorgiaBEST Certification, and short-term Integrated Education and Training (IET) pathways, including ManufactuREADY, Welding to Work, and Home Health Aide. These pathways prepare students for internships and/or direct job placement with local employer partners.

Athens Technical College was also one of five technical colleges selected to provide a pilot High School Equivalency Career Plus program. This program allows students who have not obtained their high school diploma or GED to simultaneously earn two technical certificates of credit and a high school equivalency credential. This integrated program reduces the time to complete college and enter employment, making it an appealing option for many job seekers. Program pathways include HOPE Career Grant approved Technical College Certificates in high demand career fields such as diesel, welding, commercial truck driving, computer programming, early childhood care and education, health science, industrial maintenance, and precision manufacturing.

In accordance with WIOA § 232 and § 107(d)(11)(B), GMWDB also reviews and makes recommendations on all local applications to provide adult education and literacy activities under Title II. This review confirms that the services and activities in the proposer's application are aligned with the GMWDB Local Plan. Where appropriate, GMWDB also provides recommendations to promote further alignment between local adult education providers and the local plan.

#### 4.4: Coordination with Vocational Rehabilitation

*Provide a description of the cooperative agreement between the local Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation office and the local board which describes efforts made to enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, cross-train staff, provide technical assistance, share information, cooperate in communicating with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination.*

GVRA collaborates with WIOA partners to provide a wide variety of workforce development services for individuals with disabilities, including students and youth with disabilities, to offer them multiple opportunities to be empowered to maximize employment, economic self-sufficiency, independence, and inclusion. GVRA will continue to work collaboratively with all the core programs and other state agencies to integrate and embed vocational rehabilitation services as efficiently and effectively as possible.

To facilitate expanding programmatic accessibility at the local Comprehensive One-Stop Center, 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 training that focuses on disability awareness for staff, 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, increase accessibility, and maximize resources.

WSGM's One-Stop system engages youth in customized career pathways through collaborative partnerships. GVRA provides transition services to out-of-school youth with the timely development and approval of an Individualized Plan for Employment, with the goal of increasing the number of students who achieve competitive integrated employment.

GVRA's Employment Services team also collaborates with core partner programs to support individuals with disabilities securing competitive integrated employment. GVRA Employment Specialists interact with businesses to identify specific employer workforce needs and to provide employers with qualified candidates to meet those needs. They also interface with employers to create experiential opportunities for individuals with disabilities, such as on-the-job training and work-based learning. Additionally, educational opportunities are available to businesses, such as information about 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.

To complement the utilization of the technical college system, GVRA will further leverage relationships with educational institutions to enhance GVRA services in post-secondary schools. GVRA supports eligible students in their pursuit of post-secondary academic and training goals, including those thriving in an inclusive post-secondary education program.

## 5.0: Performance, ETPL, and Use of Technology

### 5.1: Description of Performance Measures

*Provide a description of the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official pursuant to WIOA § 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the local board for measuring the performance in the local area of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under subtitle B, and the one-stop delivery system.*

PY19 performance measures are included in Attachment 6. PY20 performance negotiations had not been completed at the time of local submission. Once PY20 performance is finalized the plan will be updated to include those performance measures. Updated on 08-05-2020 with PY20 – PY21 Performance Measures.

### 5.2: One-Stop System Performance and Assessment

*Provide a listing of locally developed one-stop performance standards and describe the criteria used to develop the performance standards. Describe how the one-stop system and regional service delivery is assessed by the local board.*

GMWDB continues to utilize WIOA performance measures in assessing the performance of the one-stop system. By utilizing data available in FutureWork Systems, an online tool that provides LWDA-level performance indicator reporting, WSGM staff report on the WIOA Performance Measures at every called board meeting, keeping GMWDB members updated on the progress of all performance goals.

GMWDB has also identified additional criteria that assist in presenting a comprehensive look at system performance. At each GMWDB meeting, the One-Stop Operator reports on many applicable one-stop metrics.

Each of WSGM's partners also has its own goals, objective, and performance measures that demonstrate its success in serving the citizens of Georgia Mountains Area 2. All partners share best practices, innovative ideas, and other ways to assist with performance achievement during the partner meetings.

GMWDB is also responsible for reviewing and certifying the one-stop system and all centers at least once every three years.

### 5.3: ETPL System

*Describe the regional Eligible Training Provider System, including the elements listed below.*

#### 5.3.a: Provide a description of the public notification to prospective providers.

The Georgia Mountains Workforce Development Board accepts new training providers and new training program applications on an ongoing basis. Application forms are available on GMRC's website. Submitted applications are reviewed by WSGM staff and presented at the next called board meeting.

#### 5.3.b: Provide a description of how the board(s) evaluates providers and proposed training programs for initial eligibility, based on (at a minimum) criteria of proven effectiveness, local employer/industry demand, accreditation and customer accessibility.

WSGM staff review the application and complete the pre-award application checklist. This checklist reviews applications for responsiveness criteria to determine if the application is responsive and eligible for a full review. For non-responsive applications, the submitter is notified in writing that their application was non-response and the reason(s) for the determination.

WSGM staff complete the Evaluation Criteria for Provider Agreements for applications that have been determined responsive. A copy of the Evaluation Criteria is included in Attachment 7.

For new providers or programs, WSGM staff conduct an on-site pre-operational review of the training institution and the programs under review. WSGM staff may waive the on-site pre-operational review if WIOA-funded training was provided within the last two years and there was no change in the facility, program, equipment, or other elements material to the program of study.

For organizations that are not physically located within the WorkSource Georgia Mountains geographic area, WSGM staff will ascertain if the local WDB has conducted on-site reviews or evaluations. Results will be documented as part of the application review.

WSGM staff presents all responsive applications to the GMWDB during their regularly scheduled meetings. The presentation will include summaries of provider information, program(s) of study information, performance measures, costs, and other information relevant to the review process. Applicants not currently listed on the State ETPL are presented to the GMWDB, where they may choose to approve, not approve,

conditionally approve, or delay a decision and request additional provider information. All applicants are notified of the GMWDB's action within five business days of the board meeting.

Provider applications from those currently on the State ETPL are reviewed by staff for approval with all information shared with the Board at the next scheduled meeting.

For all approved and conditionally approved providers, WSGM staff submit those provider applications to TCSG-OWD. TCSG-OWD reviews, evaluates and certifies that the provider meets statewide eligibility criteria. These criteria include application adherence to local policy; minimum state performance standards; review of State and Federal debarment, suspension, or voluntarily exclusion status; and other eligibility factors established by the state.

TCSG-OWD notifies Local Workforce Development Boards of provider eligibility determination electronically. The State is responsible for maintaining the State-wide Eligible Training Provider List.

After receiving notification from TCSG-OWD, WSGM reaches out to approved providers to establish provider agreements. These agreements must be signed prior to the enrollment of any participant.

### 5.3.c: Provide a description of the formal appeals process for aggrieved ITA customers and providers of unapproved training programs.

ITA customers and providers of unapproved and ineligible training programs who are aggrieved may use formal appeals processes outlined in the ITA agreement and the provider application. The Rights Statement (included as Attachment 2) processes are also available on the WSGM website.

### 5.3.d: Provide a description of the ongoing process used to update the data on the eligible providers list (exclusive of the state-conducted continued eligibility process).

WSGM staff regularly update the local ETPL for program additions, revisions, or other updates. WSGM also conducts periodic reviews to ensure that all programs on the local ETPL are still offering the eligible programs and are in good standing.

Program performance is monitored annually for all providers with WIOA participants currently enrolled. Institutions may be removed from the approved provider list if monitoring reveals non-compliance with the act. Non-compliance may include the following situations:

- If inaccurate information regarding a program or provider is intentionally supplied to the GMWDB, eligibility will be terminated. This termination of eligibility will remain in effect for a minimum of two years.
- If the GMWDB or the state agency monitoring the ETPL determines that an eligible provider has substantially violated any requirements under the Act, the provider must commence corrective action as deemed appropriate or risk program approval. Substantial violations include the failure to submit timely and accurate information for the ETP and for initial and continued eligibility. If a provider files to take appropriate corrective action for a substantial violation, termination of eligibility will occur and will remain in effect for a minimum of two years.
- If a provider's program fails to meet minimum established local and State performance levels, the

provider's eligibility to receive funds for that program may be suspended for a period of one year. The 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. Reapplication procedures may begin no earlier than 90 days before the one-year exclusion period begins.

A provider may also be removed if it loses its license or the accreditation of its accrediting body or if it is inactive for a period of three program years.

#### 5.3.e: Provide a description of any regional policies or agreements for ITAs or training providers.

WorkSource Georgia Mountains' policies and procedures for ITAs and training providers are included as Attachment 8.

#### 5.3.f: Provide a description of the process to track and manage all ITA activity.

GMWDB utilizes the services of a GMRC Billing Specialist to monitor ITA obligations and associated supportive service activity. The GMRC Billing Specialist is also responsible for receiving and reviewing invoices from providers and sub-recipients.

GMWDB tracks all ITAs in WorkSource Georgia Portal, the statewide case management system. GMWDB also utilizes TrackSource to track all participants' ITAs, supportive service costs, and other participant information.

#### 5.3.g: Provide a description of local board policy on use of statewide eligible training provider list (including financial and duration limits, out-of-area training, service to out-of-area customers, etc.).

GMWDB maintains a comprehensive training provision policy that includes the recognition of the statewide eligible training provider list, financial caps, duration limits, out-of-area training eligibility, and service to out-of-area customers. This policy is included in Attachment 8.

#### 5.3.h: Provide a description of how registered apprenticeship programs are added to the ETPL.

GMWDB has established a policy that specifically addresses registered apprenticeship program eligibility, including automatic inclusion on the state ETPL and local ETPL inclusion upon notification from the Registered Apprenticeship sponsor. The financial caps and duration modifications are included in the WSGM training provision policy, found in Attachment 8. GMWDB has also modified provider agreements to address the automatic ETPL inclusion and the waiver of the performance requirements and eligibility review process.

### 5.4: Implementation of Technology

*Provide a description of the technology used to enhance customer (participant and business) experience and any additional data analytics used to enhance planning and measure outcomes beyond mandated performance measures.*

GMWDB has embraced various technology-advancement initiatives to ensure enhanced access and customer support. GMWDB utilizes the Mobile Training Units to provide additional resources throughout Georgia Mountains Area 2.

WSGM, in partnership with the GMRC, recently launched an updated website. The website offers updated program information along with resources from additional community partners. Virtual overview sessions and application materials are also made available online. Staff are encouraged to use Zoom and other meeting platforms to stay connected with customers and provide services.

WSGM utilizes SARA, a cloud-based communications tool that streamlines communications with participants through texts and emails. SARA also allows jobseekers to upload documentation from their phones, reducing the need for office visits to collect intake paperwork, supportive service documentation, or other eligibility paperwork. SARA is used for intake eligibility review and submission of supporting documentation. It is also used for case management and participant follow-up. The addition of text communications has improved response rates from participants and reduced the number of office visits necessary for intake documentation collection and eligibility review.

As part of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy established by the GMRC Economic Development Division, several benchmarks were established to track local and regional economic development performance better. These measures also serve as strong indicators of the overall economic health of the region's communities and citizens. In the Workforce Development performance category, GMRC CEDS has identified the following measurable benchmarks: job growth in non-manufacturing industries, average wage growth, unemployment rate, SAT scores, educational attainment, and drop-out rates. GMWDB works with GMRC to continue tracking and reviewing regional performance against these measures.

## 6.0: State Initiatives and Vision

### 6.1: State Branding

*Provide a description for how the area has adopted and will continue to utilize the state brand.*

The Georgia Mountains Workforce Development Board and WorkSource Georgia Mountains have embraced the adoption of the WorkSource Georgia brand. The WorkSource Georgia brand is prominently displayed throughout the Comprehensive One-Stop, including wayfinding signs and building identification signs. WSGM has also updated the branding of all outreach material, including a comprehensive business services outreach guide. WorkSource Georgia also utilizes the brand through the One Stop website.

### 6.2: Priority of Service

*Describe how the area will identify and administer the state's priority of service policy. Identify if the region will add target populations in addition to those specified by state and federal policy.*

All persons eligible for priority of service will be identified at the point of entry to one-stop programs and/or services to take advantage of the priority of service. Points of entry include the WSGM Comprehensive One-Stop, WSGM affiliate one-stops, the Mobile Training Units, and the WSGM and One-Stop websites. All persons will be informed of their entitlement to priority of service, the full array of programs and services available to them, and any applicable eligibility requirements for those programs and/or services.

More details about GMWDB's priority of service requirements are found in the WSGM priority of service policy in Attachment 9.

Georgia Mountains Area 2 has not added any target populations in addition to those specified by state and federal policy.

## 6.3: Alignment with State Goals

*Describe how the area will align with each of the goals listed in the State Unified Plan.*

### 6.3.a: Utilize sector partnerships to inform and guide strategic workforce development strategies and enhance partnership coordination.

GMWDB has made significant progress in implementing TCSG-OWD's sector partnership program to provide assistance to advanced manufacturers in Georgia Mountains Area 2. Details of GMWDB's progress can be found in Section 1.5. GMWDB is working to develop a career pipeline to assist employers in meeting both immediate and long-term workforce needs. GMWDB regularly collaborates with the local K-12 education systems as well as post-secondary education partners to share information about industry needs and ensure that all partners are working together to design workforce development strategies.

GMWDB receives regular updates about sector partnership efforts and successes at board meetings.

GMWDB has embraced the sector partnerships framework and looks forward to implementing the framework in additional industry sectors in the coming years.

### 6.3.b: Further develop regional integration to ensure streamlined services to both businesses and individuals.

While Georgia Mountains Area 2 is only comprised of one Local Workforce Development Area, WSGM regularly works with LWDA's in bordering regions on issues such as business services, eligible training provider review, and other inter-region collaboration issues enhancing the services GMWDB can offer participants. GMWDB has also embraced the "no wrong door" approach advocated by USDOL and TCSG-OWD. Through this approach, WSGM ensures seamless service delivery throughout the region. One-stop partners are represented on the GMWDB and are engaged and active participants.

### 6.3.c: Utilize the workforce system to increase statewide prosperity for rural and urban communities.

Georgia Mountains Area 2 is comprised of both urban centers and rural communities. This mix of community size and needs has led GMWDB to a multi-pronged approach to ensuring workforce system resources are available to meet all needs. GMWDB currently has two mobile units that may be sent into all thirteen Georgia Mountains Area 2 counties. In addition, WIOA Services Program Overviews are available at any time in a virtual capacity.

GMWDB strategically focuses on business services as a method for increasing statewide prosperity. The business services available through WIOA and WSGM one-stop partner programs meet Georgia's employers' needs while also providing job seekers opportunities to enter growing and demand industry sectors with jobs that allow for growth and advancement. An emphasis on sector strategies enable us to connect with industry partners of all sizes to learn of needs common to the industry. GMWDB can develop system-level responses and solutions to meet industry needs by understanding common needs regardless of business size or sub-industry specification. Sector strategies also bring secondary and post-secondary education partners to the table, allowing the workforce system to create a pipeline of workers to meet the industry's long-term needs.

WSGM has also partnered with local technical colleges to promote Registered Apprenticeship opportunities, with the technical colleges often serving as the program sponsor. Registered Apprenticeship allows businesses of all sizes to

access specialized training and educational opportunities while also assisting job seekers who may not be able to attend traditional full-time educational opportunities.

WSGM regularly partners with the technical colleges on creating and promoting economic development resources and solutions to regional employers. Technical college economic development staff regularly attend WSGM Business Services meetings to share information about employer needs and ensure there is no duplication of services or resource delivery.

GMWDB also has a variety of entrepreneurial resources to offer participants, as outlined in Section 3.7.

#### 6.3.d: Align the workforce system with education systems at all levels.

GMWDB has a robust relationship with both secondary and post-secondary education providers in Georgia Mountains Area 2 including public and private secondary school systems, adult education providers, TCSG, USG, and DECAL as appropriate. GMWDB membership includes both a technical college and an adult education representative. Through WSGM's sector strategies development, Georgia Mountains Area 2 has created a robust group of community partners committed to linking secondary and post-secondary education offerings with the needs of local business and industry partners.

WSGM's business services team regularly works with local secondary school systems to provide insight and connections on growth and demand industry sectors. WSGM is also looking to implement short-term training options for students immediately after high school graduation to provide them with exposure to demand occupations as well as an initial credential to assist them with finding employment or continuing their post-secondary education. WSGM's youth team also works with local high schools to identify students who may need additional assistance and support in succeeding in a post-secondary environment.

WSGM also works with local adult education providers and Mountain Education Charter School system to identify resources and opportunities for job seekers to obtain their GED or high school diploma and continue their career development.

GMWDB regularly advertises the opportunity for education providers to be included in the local ETPL and has developed streamlined processes for currently approved providers to request approval for additional programs of study. GMWDB will continue to engage local education providers to ensure a wide variety of institutions and programs are represented on the local ETPL.

#### 6.3.e: Alleviate a tightened labor market by increasing the participation of strategic populations in the workforce system.

GMWDB is committed to mitigating barriers for all job seekers who need assistance entering or staying in the labor market. WSGM's Comprehensive One-Stop regularly hosts partner meetings to discuss common barriers and the resources available to assist jobseekers in overcoming those barriers. The one-stop system also emphasizes universal design to ensure the greatest possible level of accessibility for all job seekers and individuals who may seek assistance from the one-stop system.

WSGM also regularly utilizes the mobile units to provide access to communities and populations that may otherwise have limited accessibility to the one-stop system.

GMWDB has developed programs focusing on returning citizens in both juvenile and adult detention centers. These programs include assistance with obtaining a GED as well as occupational training in growth and demand industries that provide returning citizens with career pathway opportunities.

GMWDB works with GVRA to integrate programs and provide resources for individuals with disabilities. WSGM's Youth department regularly works with the local foster care system to identify and support youth who may need assistance with career search and occupational training.

WorkSource Georgia Mountains also utilizes SARA, a cloud-based communications tool that streamlines communications with participants through texts, email, and other in-app communications. SARA reduces the number of office visits required for paperwork submission and other administrative tasks. SARA streamlines the intake process and allows for adaptive case management, allowing for more flexible and responsive assistance for individuals with barriers to entry into the workforce.

For transitioning service members and veterans, WSGM has a priority of service policy. WSGM also works closely with GDOL's DVOPs and LVERs to understand the needs of this population and how to align their needs with the workforce needs of local demand industries.



## Attachment 1: GMWDB In-Demand Occupation List

# WSGM Demand Occupations List

WorkSource Georgia Mountains provides occupational specific skills training for industries that are stable or have projected growth in the 13-county Georgia Mountains Region comprised of the following counties: Banks, Dawson, Forsyth, Franklin, Habersham, Hall, Hart, Lumpkin, Rabun, Stephens, Towns, Union and White.

This list serves as a guide for in-demand jobs and is not meant to be an all-inclusive list of acceptable WIOA funded occupational skills training options. There may be additional occupations in which demand occurs based on the job market or specific opportunities within the broad spectrum of occupations. This list includes occupations that show a favorable mix of projected long-term job growth, projected annual job openings, and median wages. WIOA customers seeking training in an occupation not on this Demand Occupations List may discuss the appropriateness and relevance of the proposed training with their case manager for additional consideration. WIOA customers can learn more about additional occupations at [www.onetonline.org](http://www.onetonline.org). \*Notes occupations/training targeted to youth or special populations.

SOC Code (ONET-8)	Occupation Title	Total Jobs	Average Hourly Wage	10-Year Total New Demand	Typical Education Needed for Entry	Typical On-the-Job Training Needed	Median Wage
<b>Business &amp; Financial Operations Occupations</b>							
11-3071.00	Transportation, Storage and Distribution Managers	900	\$46.34	10,000	Bachelor's degree	None	\$37.27
13-1071	Human Resources Specialists	826	\$25.85	990	Bachelor's degree	None	\$24.17
13-1111	Management Analysts	1,121	\$37.07	1,389	Bachelor's degree	None	\$32.62
13-2011	Accountants & Auditors	1,697	\$31.72	2,060	Bachelor's degree	None	\$28.92
13-2051	Business Operations Specialists, All other	1,049	\$32.59	1,291	Bachelor's degree	None	\$29.62
13-2052	Personal Financial Advisors	241	\$50.89	302	Bachelor's degree	None	\$42.81
<b>Computer &amp; Mathematical Occupations</b>							
15-1121	Computer Systems Analysts	541	\$40.43	668	Bachelor's degree	None	\$38.49
15-1131	Computer Programmers	330	\$34.77	351	Bachelor's degree	None	\$31.31
15-1132	Software Developers, Applications	902	\$46.28	1,265	Bachelor's degree	None	\$43.32
15-1133	Software Developers, Systems Software	486	\$45.67	597	Bachelor's degree	None	\$44.47
15-1142	Network and Computer Systems Administrators	407	\$38.31	497	Bachelor's degree	None	\$36.71
15-1151	Computer User Support Specialists	989	\$23.76	1,229	Some college, no degree	None	\$22.54
<b>Architecture and Engineering Occupations</b>							
17-2051	Civil Engineers	691	\$38.08	889	Bachelor's degree	None	\$31.54
17-2112	Industrial Engineers	338	\$39.11	446	Bachelor's degree	None	\$36.99
17-2141	Mechanical Engineer	394	\$34.33	528	Bachelor's degree	None	\$32.86
<b>Community and Social Service Occupations</b>							
21-1021	Child, Family, and School Social Workers	344	\$17.94	401	Bachelor's degree	None	\$16.47
<b>Education, Training, &amp; Library Occupations</b>							
25-2011	Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	1,063	\$13.78	1,155	Associate's degree	None	\$12.66
25-2012	Kindergarten Teachers, Except Special Education	413	\$25.62	455	Bachelor's degree	None	\$26.15
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	3,953	\$25.42	4,393	Bachelor's degree	None	\$25.87
25-2022	Middle School Teachers, Except Special Education and CTAE	1,709	\$28.20	1,908	Bachelor's degree	None	\$28.04
25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special Education and CTAE	1,977	\$28.67	2,255	Bachelor's degree	None	\$28.23
25-9041	*Teacher Assistants	2,511	\$10.19	2,812	Some college, no degree	None	\$9.47

SOC Code (ONET-8)	Occupation Title	Total Jobs	Average Hourly Wage	10-Year Total New Demand	Typical Education Needed for Entry	Typical On-the-Job Training Needed	Median Wage
<b>Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, Media Occupations</b>							
27-1024	Graphic Designers	405	\$22.52	471	Bachelor's degree	None	\$20.48
<b>Healthcare Practitioners &amp; Technical Occupations</b>							
29-1122	Occupational Therapist	146	\$25.73	195	Master's Degree	None	\$22.47
29-1123	Physical Therapist	200	\$57.91	7,270	Master's Degree	None	\$42.27
29-1141	Registered Nurses	3,509	\$31.48	4,692	Bachelor's degree	None	\$29.97
29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	372	\$48.82	530	Master's Degree	None	\$46.97
29-2018	Clinical Laboratory Technologists and Technicians	584	\$30.84	767	Associate degree	None	\$26.47
29-2021	Dental Hygienists	446	\$33.62	594	Associate degree	None	\$34.45
29-2034	Radiologic Technologists	410	\$39.49	518	Associate degree	None	\$33.51
29-2041	Emergency Medical Technicians & Paramedics	1,389	\$14.77	2,177	Postsecondary non degree award	None	\$14.31
29-2052	Pharmacy Technicians	817	\$13.74	928	High school diploma or equivalent	Moderate-term	\$13.06
29-2055	Surgical Technologists	784	\$25.32	899	Postsecondary non degree award	None	\$22.09
29-2061	Licensed Practical & Licensed Vocational Nurses	1,340	\$19.73	1,544	Postsecondary non degree award	None	\$19.73
29-2071	Medical Records & Health Information Technicians	364	\$26.10	450	Postsecondary non degree award	None	\$21.67
<b>Healthcare Support Occupations</b>							
31-1011	Home Health Aides	628	\$12.39	901	High school diploma or equivalent	Short-term	\$12.22
31-1014	Nursing Assistants	1,843	\$11.97	2,272	Postsecondary non degree award	None	\$11.66
31-9091	Dental Assistants	649	\$18.72	878	Postsecondary non degree award	None	\$18.74
31-9092	Medical Assistants	1,691	\$15.19	2,278	Postsecondary non degree award	None	\$14.88
31-9097	Phlebotomists	267	\$15.49	368	Postsecondary non degree award	None	\$15.82
<b>Protective Service Occupations</b>							
33-2011	Firefighters	896	\$16.47	997	Postsecondary nondegree award	Long-Term	\$16.30
33-3051	Police & Sheriff's Patrol Officers	1,292	\$18.80	1,469	High school diploma or equivalent	Moderate-term	\$18.18
33-9032	*Security Guards	1,1114	\$11.59	1,338	High school diploma or equivalent	Short-term	\$10.10
<b>Food Preparation &amp; Serving Related Occupations</b>							
35-2014	*Cooks, Restaurant	2,460	\$10.73	2935	No formal educational credential	Moderate-term	\$10.23
<b>Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations</b>							
37-2011	*Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	3,362	\$11.71	4,094	No formal educational credential	None	\$11.32
37-2012	*Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	1,980	\$9.74	2,328	No formal educational credential	None	\$9.76
37-3011	Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	2,585	\$12.75	2952	No formal educational credential	Short-term	\$11.72
<b>Personal Care &amp; Service Occupations</b>							
39-9011.00	Childcare Workers	1,419	\$9.23	1,503	High school diploma or equivalent	Short-term	\$8.49
39-9021.00	Personal Care Aides	1,595	\$11.17	2,207	High school diploma or equivalent	Short-term	\$10.85
<b>Sales and Related Occupations</b>							
41-2011	*Cashiers	6,962	\$9.24	7,740	No formal educational credential	Short-term	\$8.81
41-2031	*Retail Salespersons	8,625	\$11.24	10,218	No formal educational credential	Short-term	\$9.87

SOC Code (ONET-8)	Occupation Title	Total Jobs	Average Hourly Wage	10-Year Total New Demand	Typical Education Needed for Entry	Typical On-the-Job Training Needed	Median Wage
<b>Office &amp; Administrative Support Occupations</b>							
43-3011	Bill and Account Collectors	478	\$17.02	554	High school diploma or equivalent	Moderate term	\$16.76
43-3021	Billing and Posting Clerks	765	\$16.39	971	High school diploma or equivalent	Moderate term	\$16.39
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, & Auditing Clerks	2,341	\$17.66	2,628	Some college, no degree	Moderate- term	\$17.34
43-5061	Production, Planning, and Expediting Clerks	543	\$20.06	649	High school diploma or equivalent	Moderate term	\$18.66
43-5071	Shipping, Receiving, and Traffic Clerks	1301	\$15.43	1482	High school diploma or equivalent	Short-term	\$14.77
43-6013	Medical Secretaries	1,339	\$15.91	1,745	High school diploma or equivalent	Moderate- term	\$15.21
43-6014	Secretaries & Administrative Assistants	4,200	\$16.02	4,534	High school diploma or equivalent	Short-term	\$15.63
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	5,473	\$13.23	6132	High school diploma or equivalent	Short-term	\$11.76
<b>Farming, Fishing and Forestry Occupations</b>							
45-2041	Graders and Sorters, Agricultural Products	576	\$10.09	583	No formal educational credential	Short-term	\$10.10
45-2092	Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, Nursery, and Greenhouse	1,244	\$11.70	1,410	No formal educational credential	Short-term	\$10.94
45-2099	Agricultural Workers, All Other	1,800	\$14.49	1,800	Some college, no degree	Moderate term	\$13.49
<b>Construction &amp; Extraction Occupations</b>							
47-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	1,182	\$26.37	1,269	High school diploma or equivalent	5 years or more	None
47-2031	Carpenters	2,452	\$17.78	2,523	High school diploma or equivalent	Apprenticeship	\$15.30
47-2051	Cement Masons and Concrete Finishers	356	\$17.15	370	No formal educational credential	Moderate term	\$16.56
47-2061	Construction Laborers	3,526	\$15.23	3,794	No formal educational credential	Short-term	\$14.17
47-2073	Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators	791	\$18.38	889	High school diploma or equivalent	Moderate term	\$16.57
47-2111	Electricians	1,032	\$21.03	1,116	High school diploma or equivalent	Apprenticeship	\$19.51
47-2152	Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	897	\$19.15	1,041	High school diploma or equivalent	Apprenticeship	\$17.77
<b>Installation, Maintenance &amp; Repair Occupations</b>							
49-2022	Telecommunications Equipment Installers and Repairers, Except Line Installers	370	\$23.71	451	Postsecondary nondegree award	Moderate term	\$22.32
49-3023	Automotive Service Technicians & Mechanics	1,493	\$16.83	1,704	Postsecondary non degree award	Short-term	\$14.62
49-3031	Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists, including Marine	457	\$20.20	541	High school diploma or equivalent	Long-term	\$19.08
49-9021	Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	710	\$19.69	823	Postsecondary non degree award	Long-term	\$18.23
49-9041	Industrial Machinery Mechanics	1,045	\$21.40	1,202	High school diploma or equivalent	Long-term	\$20.10
49-9051	Electrical Power-Line Installers and Repairers	439	\$27.12	509	High school diploma or equivalent	Long-term	\$27.27
49-9071	Maintenance & Repair Workers, General	2,767	\$16.17	3,216	High school diploma or equivalent	Moderate- term	\$15.60
49-9099	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Workers, All Other	341	\$18.64	399	High school diploma or equivalent	Moderate-term	\$16.73

SOC Code (ONET-8)	Occupation Title	Total Jobs	Average Hourly Wage	10-Year Total New Demand	Typical Education Needed for Entry	Typical On-the-Job Training Needed	Median Wage
<b>Production Occupations</b>							
51-2028	Electrical, Electronic, and Electromechanical Assemblers, Except Coil Winders, Tapers, and Finishers	319	\$17.12	334	High school diploma or equivalent	Moderate term	\$16.44
51-2098	Assemblers and Fabricators, All Other, Including Team Assemblers	4,722	\$14.11	4,829	High school diploma or equivalent	Moderate	\$13.09
51-4011	Computer-Controlled Machine Tool Operators, Metal and Plastic	408	\$17.67	496	High school diploma or equivalent	Moderate	\$17.43
51-4121	Welders, Cutters, Solderers, & Brazers Cutting, Punching, and Press Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic	1,388	\$16.09	1,627	High school diploma or equivalent	Moderate-term	\$15.66
51-4031		329	\$14.54	398	High school diploma or equivalent	Moderate term	\$14.19
51-4041	Machinists	689	\$19.91	862	High school diploma or equivalent	Long-term	\$18.61
51-8031	Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant and System Operators	319	\$18.17	336	High school diploma or equivalent	Long-term	\$17.73
51-9061	Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers	1526	\$16.16	1579	High school diploma or equivalent	Moderate-term	\$14.49
<b>Production Occupations (continued)</b>							
51-9111	Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders	1,372	\$13.59	1,503	High school diploma or equivalent	Moderate-term	\$12.61
51-9198	Helpers--Production Workers	1256	\$12.08	1486	High school diploma or equivalent	Short-term	\$11.53
51-9199	Production Workers, All Other	470	\$13.54	572	High school diploma or equivalent	Moderate-term	\$11.73
<b>Transportation &amp; Material Moving Occupations</b>							
53-3022	Bus Drivers, School or Special Client	980	\$11.34	1029	High school diploma or equivalent	Short-term	\$8.99
53-3031	Driver/Sales Workers	693	\$13.90	751	High school diploma or equivalent	Short-term	\$11.18
53-3032	Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	3,780	\$20.91	4383	Postsecondary non degree award	Short-term	\$19.94
53-3033	Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	1,531	\$17.53	1787	High school diploma or equivalent	Short-term	\$15.34
53-7051	Industrial Truck & Tractor Operators	1,457	\$15.72	1667	No formal educational credential	Short-term	\$13.22
53-7062	Laborers & Freight, Stock, & Material Movers, Hand	7,433	\$12.39	8,467	No formal educational credential	Short-term	\$11.49
53-7064	*Packers and Packagers, Hand	1,576	\$11.15	1,785	No formal educational credential	Short-term	\$10.84
<b>Source: EMSI, Burning Glass, Onet</b>		<b>Apr-21</b>					



## Attachment 2: WSGM Rights Statement

**WORKSOURCE GEORGIA MOUNTAINS  
GEORGIA MOUNTAINS REGIONAL COMMISSION  
P.O. BOX 2278, GAINESVILLE, GA 30503  
(770) 538-2727 PHONE ♦ (770) 538-2729 FAX**

### **RIGHTS STATEMENT**

#### **Equal Opportunity Is The Law**

It is against the law for WorkSource Georgia Mountains/Georgia Mountains Regional Commission (WSGM/GMRC) (as the recipient of federal financial assistance) to discriminate on the following bases: Against any individual in the United States, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions, sex stereotyping, transgender status, and gender identity), national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, disability, or political affiliation or belief, or, against any beneficiary of, applicant to, or participant in programs financially assisted under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, on the basis of the individual's citizenship status or participation in any WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity. The recipient must not discriminate in any of the following areas: Deciding who will be admitted, or have access, to any WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity; providing opportunities in, or treating any person with regard to, such a program or activity; or making employment decisions in the administration of, or in connection with, such a program or activity.

Recipients of federal financial assistance must take reasonable steps to ensure that communications with individuals with disabilities are as effective as communications with others. This means that, upon request and at no cost to the individual, recipients are required to provide appropriate auxiliary aids and services to qualified individuals with disabilities. People with hearing impairments may contact the Georgia Relay Center by calling TTY 1-800-255-0056, Voice 1-800-255-0135 or dialing 711.

#### **Discrimination Grievance Procedures**

If you think you have been subjected to discrimination under a WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity, you may file a complaint within one hundred and eighty (180) days from the date of the alleged violation with either:

Application for a Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funded program **does not create an entitlement** to services, and nothing in the Act shall be construed to establish a right of action for an individual to obtain services under WIOA.

WorkSource Georgia Mountains  
Georgia Mountains Regional Commission  
Equal Opportunity Officer:  
P.O. Box 1720  
Gainesville, GA 30503

770-538-2626  
apage@gmrc.ga.gov

Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) Office of Workforce Development (OWD)  
Equal Opportunity Officer/Compliance Director  
1800 Century Place NE, Suite 150  
Atlanta, GA 30345-4304  
404-679-1371

The Complainant may file their discrimination-based complaint with the United States Department of Labor's Civil Rights Center at

<http://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/crc/external-enforc-complaints.htm>. Or by contacting:

Director of Civil Rights  
U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL)  
200 Constitution Ave, NW Room – N4123  
Washington, DC 20210

People with hearing impairments may contact the Georgia Relay Center at 1-800-255-0056 or by dialing 711.

1. If the Complainant chooses to file the discrimination complaint with the WSGM/GMRC or with TCSG, the Complainant must wait either until the recipient issues a written Notice of Final Action, or until ninety (90) days have passed (whichever is sooner), before filing with the Civil Rights Center (see address above).
2. The Complainant has the right to be represented in the complaint process by an attorney or other representative.
3. If the recipient does not give the Complainant a written Notice of Final Action within 90 days of the day on which you filed your complaint, the Complainant may file a complaint with CRC before receiving that Notice. However, you must file your CRC complaint within thirty (30) days of the 90-day deadline (or within one hundred and twenty (120) days after the day on which the Complainant filed the complaint with the recipient).
4. If the recipient does give the Complainant a written Notice of Final Action on the complaint, but the Complainant is dissatisfied with the decision or resolution, the Complainant may file a complaint with CRC. The Complainant must file the CRC complaint within 30 days of the date on which the Complainant received the Notice of Final Action.
5. Further, WSGM/GMRC shall fully cooperate with any local, state, or federal investigation in accordance with the aforementioned proceedings or with any criminal investigation.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, and the WIOA of 2014, as amended, guarantees the right to file a complaint or alleged action concerning discrimination as stated above.

### **Fraud, Abuse, Waste, Misconduct or Illegal Activity Grievance Procedures**

In the event that a complaint involves allegations of fraud, abuse, waste, misconduct or illegal activity stemming from a WIOA-funded program, the Complainant shall immediately contact one of the entities listed below:

Technical College System of Georgia Office of Workforce Development  
Equal Opportunity Officer/Compliance Director  
1800 Century Place NE, Suite 150  
Atlanta, GA 30345-4304  
404-679-1371  
Georgia Office of Inspector General  
2 M.L.K. Jr. Dr., SW  
1102 West Tower  
Atlanta, GA 30334

1-866-435-7644 (1-866-HELPOIG)

Complaint form may be found at <http://oig.georgia.gov/file-Complaint>

Office of Inspector General, USDOL

US Department of Labor

200 Constitution Ave., NW, Room S-5506,

Washington, DC 20210

1-800-347-3756

Complaint form may be found at <https://www.oig.dol.gov/hotlinecontact.htm>

### **General or Non-Discriminatory Grievance Procedures**

1. Complaints arising at the WorkSource Georgia Mountains office level must be in writing, signed by the Complainant, dated within 120 days of the alleged incident, and must include the following information:
  - a. the full name, telephone number (if any) and address of the person making the complaint (Complainant);
  - b. the full name and address of the Respondent against whom the complaint is made;
  - c. a clear and concise statement of fact, including pertinent dates, and witnesses (if any) constituting the alleged violation, and
  - d. the type of relief requested.

A complaint will be considered to have been filed when the reviewing authority receives from the Complainant a written statement, including information specified on the complaint form which contains sufficient facts and arguments to evaluate the complaint.

2. Complaints must be submitted to the Director, WorkSource Georgia Mountains, and P.O. Box 2278, Gainesville, GA 30503.
3. A log of all complaints received by WSGM/GMRC will be filed on-site. The log will include the name of the Complainant, the name and/or organization of the Respondent, the date of the complaint, and the resolution of the complaint (if rendered).
4. The Director shall investigate the complaints and attempt to resolve the matter through mediation within ten (10) business days of receipt of the complaint.
5. If the complaint cannot be resolved within ten (10) business days, a hearing shall be conducted within sixty (60) days of receipt of the initial complaint. When a hearing is necessary, the Complainant and the Respondent will be given reasonable notification by certified mail of the following information:
  - a. A statement of the date, time and place of hearing, including the name of the impartial hearing officer;
  - b. A statement of the authority and jurisdiction under which the hearing is to be held;
  - c. A reference to the particular section of the Act, regulations, grant or other agreements under the Act involved;
  - d. A statement of the alleged violations of WIOA (This may include clarification of the original complaint, but must accurately reflect the content of the submitted documentation of the Complainant);
  - e. The right of both parties to be represented by legal counsel;
  - f. The right of each party to present evidence, both written and through witnesses;
  - g. The right of each party to cross-examine; and
  - h. The name, address, and telephone number of the contact person issuing the notice.
6. A hearing can be rescheduled at the request of either party for just cause.
7. The hearing shall be conducted by the Executive Committee of the Georgia Mountains Workforce Development Board (GMWDB). The committee may designate staff and/or other parties to serve as the impartial hearing officer. However, no GMWDB or staff member who has been directly involved in the events from which the complaint arose shall serve as a decision-maker in such complaint. If the complaint is against WorkSource Georgia Mountains itself, an impartial person will be secured by WorkSource Georgia Mountains to serve as the hearing officer. Impartial hearing officers shall be chosen from qualified individuals with expertise in the area from which the complaint arises. When an impartial hearing officer is necessary, the WorkSource Georgia Mountains Director will be notified to provide a qualified person. The right to an impartial decision-maker shall not be abrogated by the GMWDB or WorkSource Georgia Mountains. In the age of advanced communication options and to encourage timely responses to all complaints, the GMWDB may utilize e-mail, internet-based meeting facilities, in-person or any other mutually acceptable formats to conduct a hearing.

8. The Executive Committee of the GMWDB, or, its designee acting as a hearing officer, shall have the authority to regulate the course of the hearing, set the time and place for continued hearings, fix the time for filing briefs, and dispose of motions. A final decision must be rendered by the GMWDB Executive Committee or its designee within sixty (60) days of the completed hearing unless all parties are notified by certified mail of the need for additional time. The hearing officer shall issue a written decision which shall serve as the WSGM/GMRC's official resolution of the Complaint. The decision shall include the following information, at a minimum: The date, time and place of hearing, a recitation of the issues alleged in the Complaint, a summary of any evidence and witnesses presented by the Complainant and the respondent; an analysis of the issues as they relate to the facts; and a decision addressing each issue alleged in the Complaint.
9. A complete record of the hearing shall be made and maintained for three (3) years and include the following:
  - a. All pleadings, motions, and intermediate ruling;
  - b. Detailed minutes or mechanical recording of the oral testimony and all other evidence presented;
  - c. A statement of matters officially noted;
  - d. All staff memoranda or data submitted to the GMWDB Executive Committee or its designee in connection with their consideration of the case;
  - e. Findings of facts based on the evidence submitted at the hearing;
  - f. Notification of both parties of further appeal procedures, if applicable; and
  - g. Final decision of the hearing officer.
10. The Complainant shall be informed of the right to request a review of his/her complaint by the TCSG if:
  - a. The Complainant does not receive a decision from WSGM/GMRC within (60) sixty days of the filing the complaint, or
  - b. The Complainant receives a decision unsatisfactory to the complainant

The request for review should be submitted to:

Technical College System of Georgia, Office of Workforce Development  
Attn: Compliance Director  
1800 Century Place NE, Suite 150  
Atlanta, GA 30345-4304  
404-679-1371

Once TSCG has received the Complaint form and the local resolution, TSCG shall issue its own resolution on the issue within sixty (60) days of receipt. Any resolution reached by TSCG may be appealed to the US Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration.

### **Other Grievances**

1. Complaints arising from contracts or vendor agreements with Georgia public schools such as those which pertain to disciplinary actions of teachers or students, grading policy or teacher employment contracts will be handled by the grievance procedure outlined in OCGA §20-2-1160.
2. Complaints which pertain to terms of the contract between the school and the WSGM/GMRC, which may include curriculum and course content, provision of teaching materials and equipment, eligibility, customer selection, or other terms made part of the contract, should be handled by the grievance procedure as presented by the General or Non-Discriminatory Grievance Procedure section.
3. Complaints against the Georgia Department of Labor Career Centers should be filed with the Complaint Specialist or Career Center Manager in accordance with their policies and procedures.
4. Complaints alleging labor standards violations may be filed using the established local and State Grievance Procedures or submitted to a binding arbitration procedure, if a collective bargaining agreement covering the parties to the grievance so provides.
5. Applicants, customers, service providers, bidders, WIOA funded staff or other interested parties alleging violations of the Acts, regulations, sub grants, or other contracts under WIOA (other than discrimination complaints) shall utilize the General or Non-Discriminatory Grievance Procedures in filing a complaint. Individuals shall be informed of this right by the WSGM.

**Definitions:**

- *Days* – Days are consecutive calendar days, including weekends and holidays. If a deadline imposed under the provisions of this section falls on a holiday or weekend, then the deadline shall be the next business day.
- *Complainant* – A Complainant is the person or entity filing the Complaint.
- *Complaint* – A Complaint is the written document which contains the alleged violation.
- *General Complaint* – A Complaint involving a general, non-discriminatory WIOA violation.
- *Participant* – A Participant is an individual who has been determined eligible to participate in, and who is currently receiving services under a program authorized by WIOA.
- *Respondent* – A Respondent is the person or entity against whom the Complaint is made.
- *Subrecipient* – A Subrecipient is a non-Federal entity that receives a subaward from a pass-through entity (generally from a recipient) to carry out part of a Federal program. This term does not include an individual that is a beneficiary of such a program. A Subrecipient may also be a recipient of other Federal awards directly from a Federal awarding agency.

\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*

**I have read and understand the Rights Statement and acknowledge so with my signature.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Please Print Name**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Customer's Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Parent's/Guardian's Signature (if applicable)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**\*A copy of this document should be given to the customer and one copy should be retained in his/her file (if applicable).**

## Babel Notice

**IMPORTANT:** This document contains important information about WIOA training guidelines including eligibility, application procedures, benefits and your rights. It is critical that you understand the information in this document. Translation assistance is available for WIOA services at <http://onestopworkgamtns.org/>. Scroll to the bottom right side of the page and click on the language dropdown. Telephone translation of this vital document is available at the WorkSource Georgia Mountains One Stop Center. Please contact (770)-538-2727 if you are in need of telephone translation assistance.

**Background: 29 CFR 38.9(g)(3):** "Recipients must include a "Babel notice," indicating in appropriate languages that language assistance is available, in all communications of vital information, such as hard copy letters or decisions or those communications posted on websites."

### Spanish

**¡IMPORTANTE!** Este documento contiene **información importante** sobre sus derechos, responsabilidades y/o beneficios. Es importante que usted entienda la información en este documento. Nosotros le podemos ofrecer la información en el idioma de su preferencia sin costo alguno para usted. **Llame al (770)-538-2727** para pedir asistencia en traducir y entender la información en este documento.

### Chinese - Traditional

**重要須知!** 本文件包含**重要資訊**，事關您的權利、責任，和／或福利。請您務必理解本文件所含資訊，而我們也將使用您偏好的語言，無償為您提供資訊。**請致電 (770) 538-2727** 洽詢翻譯及理解本文件資訊方面的協助。

### Vietnamese

**LƯU Ý QUAN TRỌNG!** Tài liệu này chứa **thông tin quan trọng** về quyền hạn, trách nhiệm và/hoặc quyền lợi của quý vị. Việc hiểu rõ thông tin trong tài liệu này là rất quan trọng, và chúng tôi sẽ cung cấp miễn phí cho quý vị thông tin này bằng ngôn ngữ mà quý vị ưa dùng. **Hãy gọi (770) 538-2727** để được hỗ trợ về việc thông dịch và hiểu thông tin trong tài liệu này.

### Tagalog

**MAHALAGA!** Naglalaman ang dokumentong ito ng **mahalagang impormasyon** tungkol sa iyong mga karapatan, responsibilidad at/o benepisyo. Napakahalaga na nauunawaan mo ang impormasyong nakapaloob sa dokumentong ito, at ibibigay namin nang libre ang impormasyon sa pinili mong wika. **Tumawag sa (770) 538-2727** upang humingi ng tulong sa pagsasalang-wika at pag-unawa sa impormasyong nasa dokumentong ito.

### French

**IMPORTANT!** Le présent document contient **des informations importantes** sur vos droits, vos responsabilités et/ou vos avantages. Il est essentiel que vous compreniez les informations figurant dans ce document, et nous vous fournirons gratuitement les informations dans la langue de votre choix. **Appelez au (770) 538-2727** pour obtenir de l'aide pour la traduction et la compréhension des informations contenues dans le présent document.

### Haitian Creole

**ENPÒTAN!** Dokiman sa a gen **enfòmasyon enpòtan** ladan konsènan dwa, responsablite ak/oswa avantaj ou yo. Li ap vrèman enpòtan pou ou konprann enfòmasyon yo ki nan dokiman sa a, epi n ap ba ou enfòmasyon sa yo nan lang ou prefere a gratis. **Rele (770) 538-2727** pou jwenn asistans pou tradui ak pou konprann enfòmasyon ki nan dokiman sa a.

### Portuguese

**IMPORTANTE!** Este documento contém **informações importantes** sobre os seus direitos, responsabilidades e/ou benefícios. É essencial que compreenda as informações constantes neste documento, as quais disponibilizaremos, gratuitamente, na língua à sua escolha. **Contacte o número (770) 538-2727** para solicitar ajuda para traduzir e compreender as informações contidas neste documento.

**Arabic**

مهم! يحتوي هذا المستند على معلومات مهمة حول حقوقك ومسؤولياتك و/أو فوائدك. من الأهمية بمكان فهم المعلومات الواردة في هذا المستند، وسنوفر المعلومات بلغتك المفضلة دون تحميلك أي تكلفة. اتصل على الرقم (770) 538-2727 للحصول على مساعدة في ترجمة المعلومات الواردة في هذا المستند وفهماها.

**Russian**

**ВАЖНО!** В настоящем документе содержится **важная информация** о ваших правах, обязанностях и/или преимуществах. Крайне важно, чтобы вы поняли информацию, содержащуюся в данном документе, а мы бесплатно предоставим вам эту информацию на выбранном вами языке. **Позвоните по телефону (770) 538-2727** для получения помощи в переводе и понимании информации, содержащейся в данном документе.

**Korean**

**중요!** 본 문서는 귀하의 권리, 책임 및/또는 이익에 관한 **중요한 정보**를 포함하고 있습니다. 귀하가 본 문서에 있는 정보를 이해하는 것은 대단히 중요하며, 귀하가 원하는 언어로 정보를 제공받으실 수 있습니다. **(770) 538-2727** 로 전화하여 본 문서에 있는 정보의 번역 및 이해를 위해 도움받으시길 바랍니다.



## Attachment 3: GMWDB Membership Roster

Member Name	Title	Entity	Board Category
Armstrong, Melissa	MSA, Chief Exec. Officer, AAA Director	Legacy Link, Inc	Govt. & Ed/CBO
Boling, Vicki	Operations Manager, WDB Vice Chair	Data Survival & Document Destruction	Business
Cagle, David	Marketing Rep	Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Service Technicians Local Union # 72	Workforce/Labor
Carter, Ricky	Owner	J & R Builders Inc.	Business
Chafin, William	Chairman	Hartwell Housing Authority	Govt & ED/Housing
Cole, Shannon	Dean of Adult Education	Lanier Technical College	Workforce Youth
Cooley, Jody	Associate General Counsel	Wayne Farms LLC	Business
Dockery, Chris	Business Owner	County Commission Chairman/ Owner DockCo, LLC Const.	Business/Public
Gibby, Andrea	Consultant	Appalachian Children's Center, Inc.	Business
Griggs, Mitch	Executive Director	Union County Industrial Development Authority	Econ. Dev
Mack, Deborah	Community Volunteer,	Hall County Family Connection	Workforce/CBO
McDonald, Timothy	President	Lanier Technical College	Education and Training
McGraw, Mike	Owner	PrideStaff/Ranger Manufacturing	Business
McGriff, Betsy	Business Development Director	Cooper & Company	Business
Vacant as of 5/23/22			Business
Merck, Terry	Vice President	American Yazaki	Business
Moller, Jurgen	Vice President	IMS Gear	Workforce /Apprenticeship
Spear, Shandra	Supervisor	Vocational Rehab Program	Govt. & Ed/Rehab Services
Overholt, Mary	HR Manager	Kubota	Business
Powers, Tonya	Director	Franklin County Industrial Business Authority	Business
Ward, Shelby	Dean of Adult Education	North GA Tech College	Education and Training
Vacant as of 5/25/22			Business
Williams, Jon	Corporate Recruiter	Fieldale Farms Corp	Business
Williams, Sandra	Executive Director	Atlanta North GA Labor Council	Workforce/Labor
Hankinson, Kevin	Gainesville Career Center Supervisor	Georgia Department of Labor	Govt & ED/Wagner Peyser
Scarborough, Dean	Stephens County Commission	Stephens County Commission	Non-Member for standing Committees
Taylor, JoAnne		Dahlonega City Council Member	Non-Member



## Attachment 4: GMWDB Local Plan Public Comments

No comments were received that require a response from GMWDB.

Comment 1	
<b>Originating Entity:</b>	
<b>Comment:</b>	

Comment 2	
<b>Originating Entity:</b>	
<b>Comment:</b>	

Comment 3

**Originating Entity:**

**Comment:**

Comment 4

**Originating Entity:**

**Comment:**



## Attachment 5: WSGM Supportive Services Policy

## WSGM SUPPORTIVE SERVICE POLICY

### Summary of Changes:

#### Previous Policy Effective June 2017

**10/25/18- Determination of need was based entirely on a determination of household income less than 250% of poverty levels. Determination of need has been revised to include the language from the State Policy and Procedures Manual Section 3.4.4.**

**10/24/19- State removed 35% cap on support funding. Revised to reflect this change.**

**07/30/20- Adjustments to supportive service amounts**

**04/11/2022-Supportive service before participation**

WSGM has developed a process by which participants who are determined eligible and in need of supportive services may participate in Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) activities. Federal Law states that supportive service costs should be necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under WIOA Title I. Eligibility and determination of need for supportive services should be conducted by a case manager, on a case-by-case basis and may be provided to individuals receiving Basic Career Services. Such individuals must be registered as WIOA participants and are subject to performance outcomes. Exemptions for limited supportive services to individuals before they are enrolled as participants will be approved by WIOA Director on a case-by-case basis and must be noted in the case file.

The following policy applies to participants enrolled under the adult and dislocated worker programs under WIOA which include career services and Individual Training Account (ITA)-based training.

### Documentation of Eligibility and Determination of Need for Supportive Services

All supportive services must be approved and recorded in Georgia Work Ready Online Participant Portal (GWROPP) before the participant receives or obtains goods or services. Backdated requests for services will not be approved. A participant may waive WIOA payments (except for Work Experience) if accepting payment would mean the loss of benefits. The participant may request the payment to start at a later date but may not claim retroactive payments. Advances against future payments are not allowed. The documentation required to determine eligibility for supportive services must be submitted during the intake process and the request for supportive services made before WIOA registration. An exception may be made for customers whose circumstances have changed after enrollment and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by their case manager.

To be eligible for any WIOA financial assistance payments, participant must have been determined WIOA eligible and:

1. Be participating in career services and/or training services.
2. Be unable to obtain supportive services through other programs providing such services; and
3. Must comply with program regulations and policies during the period of training and/or enrollment to continue to receive support service payments.

#### Determination of Need

- A. Financial/Physical Need: There must be documentation in the participant's case file and/or the GWROPP system that participants are incapable of providing these services for themselves. Documentation may consist of:
  1. Low-income verification
  2. Receipt of federal or state public assistance
  3. Receipt of UI benefits
  4. Documentation of skill upgrading that would lead to employment in a local or state in-demand occupation
  5. Documentation of lack of employment or underemployment
  6. Separation from employment notice
  7. Transportation distance to attend training
  8. Birth certificates of children receiving childcare
- B. Resource Coordination: There must be documentation that supportive services are not available from other state or federal grant programs. There must be analysis of all federal/state/local resources available and how they are being coordinated. For example, WSGM will document the total basis of need considering UI, Pell, Hope etc., or other instances of federal/state/local resources available, to determine how resources are being coordinated. Examples of acceptable documentation:
  1. Participant time sheets
  2. Income determination
  3. UI records
  4. Supportive Services Request Form

#### Allowable Supportive Service

Allowable supportive services provided during training include, but are not limited to:

1. Transportation
2. Dependent Care
3. Health Care and Medical Services – These services are of a one-time nature, such as a physical examination, prescription drugs, prescription eyeglasses, immediate dental care, and mental health care which are needed to enable an individual to participate in any reemployment activity
4. Legal Services: Cost for legal services may be covered when the law, courts and related situations interfere with the participant's ability to continue training or seek employment

5. **Out-of-Area Services:** A participant may be provided assistance with costs incurred for out-of-area training or other activities (such as travel to take a licensing test) that are documents in case notes. Lodging, per diem, mileage and other reasonable and necessary costs may be covered. When calculating the level of assistance, providers may opt to cover actual costs, the transportation daily rate or use Federal mileage, lodging and per diem rates and cover any amount up to that level based on available budget and other sources of assistance

Support Service Request Form: Each participant requesting supportive services will complete a request for support service form. The WIOA career advisor will determine the basis of need and sign off on the justification for the amount of support that is necessary and reasonable to complete WIOA activities. This documentation should be collected and included in the participant's case file.

All participants' Supportive Service expenditures must be submitted, utilizing the attendance forms; dependent care forms; or other methods required by WSGM to the WSGM Case Manager for approval and for processing.

- a. Customers must attend class or clinical placement to receive any transportation support payment for that day. Attendance forms are completed by the customer and signed by the instructor(s). The attendance form is submitted to the Case Manager on a bi-weekly basis and maintained in the customer file.
- b. The Case Manager verifies the actual costs that are being submitted for payment and reviews previous authorizations in the participant record to avoid duplication of services or double billing of the item.
- c. Payments will be made directly to the participant as a reimbursement. Payments will not be made for sick days, holidays, days when no class is scheduled, days when class has been cancelled, or for internet classes. Customers must be making satisfactory progress (a minimum of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale each semester or a minimum of a C on an A, B, C, D, F scale or 70% on a 100% scale) and cooperating with instructional process to continue to receive support payments. Support payments will not be made for classes taken for the second time when supports were paid during the first attempt.

### Dependent Care

If dependent care is not otherwise available from Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS), or other funding sources, WSGM may reimburse the cost of care for dependent children up to a maximum of \$200 per week per family, excluding late fees.

Dependent care is classified as one or more of the following: child or dependent under age 14 who is receiving 50% or more of their daily living needs from the participant; or dependent, regardless of age, which requires assistance due to disability or medical condition or documented care need.

This assistance is available while the participant is enrolled in basic career services or an ITA training service. Assistance is available when the individual is scheduled and/or commuting to training activities. Assistance may also be available for children during times when school is not in session. Funds from other sources, such as TANF, may be combined with WIOA funds with written approval by the WSGM Case Manager. In those instances, WIOA funds may only be used for those expenses not covered by the other

funding source. For participants receiving TANF benefits, service providers must document that the participant is not receiving dependent care benefits from TANF before providing dependent care assistance through WIOA.

Participants are encouraged to use licensed dependent care providers whenever possible. If not licensed, the service must be provided by a dependent care provider who cares for children outside of the participant's home. Reimbursement will be up to \$15 per day, per child for both licensed and unlicensed childcare providers.

Dependent care costs will be reimbursed to the participant. Payments are based on receipts from the dependent care provider and include verification of a child's attendance record and verification of class attendance by the participant. Payments will be made biweekly and will depend on timely receipt of the specified documentation.

No reimbursements will be made for registration or late fees incurred by participants.

#### Transportation

Eligible participants will receive \$5 to ensure mobility between home and location of training or practicum/clinical site. Those traveling over 80 miles round trip may be eligible to receive \$15 as long as need is documented by case manager in file. Transportation assistance is not available if provided by another agency such as DFCS.

#### Additional Allowable Support Services:

Allowable limited supportive services provided before training in order to enable the participant to complete their eligibility and enable their participation in a program, to include but are not limited to:

1. State ID
2. Birth certificate
3. Social security card

Allowable supportive services provided after training in order to obtain employment include, but are not limited to:

1. Tools, work clothing, and boots/shoes required for employment
2. Bonding and liability insurance for employment
3. Drug testing required by employer

4. Financial counseling, and
5. Auxiliary aides and services necessary for persons with disabilities.

For participants enrolled in programs such as HVAC, automotive technology and automotive collision, which require expensive tools for training as well as employment, supportive services may be used to supplement tool purchase costs during training in the event the participant's training ITA funds are exhausted by tuition, books, fees and other training costs. This determination will be made on a case-by-case basis by the WSGM Director.

#### Other Requirements and Policies

A participant continues to be eligible for support services only as long as he/she is active in the program. Failure to participate fully, without good cause, will result in termination of assistance.

During the assessment period individual needs are identified and a plan is developed and documented in the Individual Employment Plan (IEP) for support provided by WSGM, DFCS or other programs. To maximize the support available, WSGM will actively promote coordination with organizations to provide supportive services at no cost to the program or the participant. These services could include assistance in housing, legal problems, financial planning, dental/medical care, mental health, and other areas.

No supportive service payments can be made until the day after a participant's enrollment / orientation. With the exception of documents needed by WIOA to complete their eligibility and enable participation.

#### Unallowable Supportive Services

Payments are not allowed for titled or deeded items or when recovery of the expense is anticipated. Such items include:

1. Rent deposits or housing deposits
2. Mortgage payments
3. Car payments
4. Purchase of vehicles
5. Fines
6. Late Fees



## Attachment 6: WSGM Performance Measures

**Performance Goals for PY22 & PY23 – Area 2**

<b>Adult</b>	<b>PY22</b>	<b>PY23</b>
Q2 Entered Employment Rate	81%	82%
Q4 Entered Employment Rate	83%	84%
Q2 Median Earnings	\$7,900	\$7,900
Credential Attainment Rate	76%	77%
Measurable Skills Gains	68%	68%

<b>Dislocated Worker</b>	<b>PY20</b>	<b>PY21</b>
Q2 Entered Employment Rate	87%	88%
Q4 Entered Employment Rate	83%	84%
Q2 Median Earnings	\$10,000	\$10,000
Credential Attainment Rate	84%	85%
Measurable Skills Gains	55%	55%

<b>Youth</b>	<b>PY20</b>	<b>PY21</b>
Q2 Entered Employment Rate	77%	77%
Q4 Entered Employment Rate	82%	82%
Q2 Median Earnings	\$3,100	\$3,300
Credential Attainment Rate	72.5%	72.5%
Measurable Skills Gains	38%	38%



## Attachment 7: ETPL Provider Application Evaluation Criteria

**PROVIDER APPLICATION  
EVALUATION CRITERIA  
WSGM  
To be Completed by WSGM Staff Only**

**NAME OF PROVIDER:** \_\_\_\_\_

**TRAINING PROPOSED:** \_\_\_\_\_

**RATER:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**I. APPROPRIATENESS/OUTCOMES**

		Yes	No	N/A
1	Is (Are) the proposed training program(s) in a growth occupation identified in the application, or has the provider submitted documentation of a need for proposed training?			
2	Does the provider site indicate a positive learning atmosphere with training curriculum and equipment that are up-to-date and considered state-of-the-art?			
3	Does the tuition include costs for supplies, etc., as part of the total cost?			
4	Job search assistance included?			
5	Do references of both participants and employers indicate that completers attain marketable job skills after training?			
6	Will training lead to a certificate, diploma or degree?			
7	Are training schedules on-going?			
8	Is the cost in line with similar programs provided throughout the local area?			

**II. PAST PERFORMANCE**

		Yes	No	N/A
1	Does the provider have previous successful completion rate, defined as meeting or exceeding WSGM goals for the previous 12 months?			
2	Does the provider have previous successful experience in placing individuals in training related occupations classified as unsubsidized employment defined as meeting or exceeding WSGM goals for the previous 12 months?			
3	Does the provider have previous successful unsubsidized employment in training related occupations experience, defined as meeting or exceeding WSGM goals for the previous 12 months?			
4	Does the training program(s) result in an employment at a wage necessary to attain self-sufficiency?			
5	Will placement occur in full time positions with potential growth and benefits?			
6	Does the student loan default rate exceed 25%?			
7	Is the provider listed on current Federal, State or local debarment/suspension lists?			

**III. CAPABILITY OF TRAINING ORGANIZATION**

		Yes	No	N/A
1	Has the organization been in operation for more than 6 months and submitted evidence of financial stability, i.e., sound financial statement, audit report, tax return?			
2	Has the curriculum been certified by an appropriate accrediting agency?			
3	Has the organization's programs been certified by NPEC (if applicable)?			
4	Has the provider submitted a signed debarment statement?			

**IV. BONUS**

		Yes	No	N/A
1	Does the provider have experience with training special populations, such as disabled, homeless, low income, individuals with language or cultural barriers?			

**V. RANKING INFORMATION**

(0 = Not Acceptable, 1 = Weak, 2 = Average, 3 = Good, 4 = Excellent)		Ranking	Weight	Total
1	Appropriateness/Outcomes		2	
2	Past Performance		2	
3	Capability of Training Organization		1	
4	Point		1	
5	<b>Total</b>			

**Maximum Score= 21**

**Minimum Score Required for Consideration = 12**

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## Attachment 8: WSGM ITA Policy

## Individual Training Accounts

Additions and Revisions highlighted in yellow.

An individual determined eligible for WIOA-funded training services may select an eligible training program/provider from the Georgia Mountains Workforce Development Board/STATE approved ETPL in consultation with a WSGM representative located at WSGM Office located at 1856 Thompson Bridge Rd. Gainesville, GA 30501 Suites 2-4 and 1F.

### **Policies:**

1. Training must be in occupations identified in the local WIOA plan as growth and/or demand occupations or documentation of employment prospects for areas not listed in the Plan must be provided. Growth and Demand Occupation lists are subject to change at any time due to fluctuating economic conditions.
2. Training must result in an employment wage sufficient to maintain or increase income.
3. ITAs may be utilized for expenses related to training, including but not limited to the following: books, tuition and fees, general supplies, tools, uniforms and shoes, certification, licensing, testing fees, drug testing for entrance into training, medical requirements for training entrance, and such items specifically required for a course or program. The following items are not provided by ITAs: Certain WSGM computers and related equipment, computer program software, peripherals, electronic and wireless equipment unless approved on a case-by-case basis by WSGM.
4. Funding limitations will be as follows:
  - a. Up to \$6,000 in training costs, excluding support may be expended for each participant for the first year (three consecutive semesters) of training assistance.
  - b. For training assistance that extends beyond one year, total training costs may not exceed \$10,000 (excluding support.)
  - c. For the following programs: Nurse Practitioner MS, Bachelors of Science Nursing, Associates of Science Nursing Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, Physical Therapy Assistant AAS, Dental Hygiene AAS, and Health Care Information Technology AAS, funding for the first year of training assistance may be up to \$7,000 and for training that extends beyond one year of assistance, total training costs may not exceed \$14,000. An increase to these limits requires WSGM case manager approval for each participant. (Effective from July 1, 2017 forward with revisions)
  - d. The total cost of training may exceed the available WIOA funding limitations however customers must provide evidence that additional financial support is available to cover the total training cost. In a case where the total cost of training exceeds the available WIOA funding limitations, customer funding will be utilized until the remaining training amount is within local area funding limitations. WIOA supportive services may be paid during the time in which the customer funding is being utilized.

- e. Up to \$11,000 excluding support for a specialized Welding Program. (Effective 7/1/2014)  
WSGM does not assist with training that is outside the contiguous United States of America.
- 5. Programs should not exceed 104 weeks (two years). Exceptions to this policy may be approved on a case- by-case basis and requests should include evidence that financial support is available during extended training periods.
- 6. In addition: WSGM assists with one (1) program of study with limited exceptions:
  - a. Stackable Credential: Part of a sequence of credentials that can be accumulated over time to build up an individual's qualifications and help them to move along a career pathway or up a career ladder to different and potentially higher-paying jobs (Customers must reapply and be found eligible and suitable; Maximum training dollar limit of \$10,000 per individual for all WSGM training combined will not be exceeded)
  - b. Programs that require a prerequisite, e.g. Air Conditioning Technology with Commercial Refrigeration, Licensed Practical Nurse, and Health Care Assistant Certificates (Total training must fall within the WSGM length and cost of training limits)
  - c. A participant may take no more than two approved training programs identified under the Career Ladder Training Program. They must fully complete the first program before being considered for advancement to the next program. Completion, for the purposes of Career Ladder Training, is completion of training, all tests required per training provider curriculum), and receipt of credential(s). Also, participants are not required to continue training with the same training provider after completion of the first program. They may elect to continue additional training at another approved training program/provider.
- 7. Customers applying for training services that have recent (within last three years) training and attainment of a recognized credential in a growth and demand occupation may not be considered to be "in need of training" services. (Exceptions require WSGM Director approval)
- 8. Changes in Training Provider are not allowed. (Any exceptions, as noted under Career Ladder, require WSGM Director Approval)
- 9. An upgrade to a degree program is not permitted due to the length of program guidelines, available funding, and Individual Training Account (ITA) requirements. A downgrade from a degree or diploma credential level program, or lateral change of program within the same credential level, may be allowed based on documented statements or evaluations by the Training Provider, and the WSGM Case Manager; or in case of documented medical condition(s).
- 10. A customer cannot change their major, program of study or add/drop a course without prior approval by their WSGM Case Manager. In the event of withdrawal from/failure of a course or program, WSGM will not provide the funds to re-enroll in that course at a later date.
- 11. All customers must maintain a full-time training status as determined by the training provider. Exceptions to this policy may be approved on a case-by-case basis at the case manager's discretion. Customers who can provide documentation from their employer that they are working 20 or more

hours a week may be eligible for a Full-Time status exemption at the case manager's discretion. Exemption will require documentation of hours worked by employer and verification from the training provider that the training program can be completed within the 104 week (two year) time period.

12. In general, all training programs must be within a reasonable commute (30-40 miles one way) of the WIOA local area. Out-of-the-area training programs that are not within commuting distance to the WIOA local area may be approved on a case-by-case basis. All approved training must be located within the contiguous United States. Lodging may be provided by some training providers (CDL of GA, LLC, Daly's Truck Driving School or Georgia Driving Academy) either free or at a reasonable cost. WIOA funding may be provided for lodging if the customer lives outside of a reasonable commute (30-40 miles one way) or reliable transportation is not available.
13. All potential training customers must apply to the potential training site and apply for all applicable sources of financial aid. Upon application to the WSGM for training services, applicants must provide proof of acceptance to the training provider and financial aid award/denial letter, if applicable. All customers who apply for training services must complete a Customer Financial Summary and provide information that will explore all available sources of financial aid (i.e., Pell, HOPE Grant, HOPE Scholarship, TANF) to avoid duplication. The enrollment agreement should detail all loans or personal funds that are included to cover the total cost of training as a means of cost analysis. If it is determined through the analysis of the cost of attendance that the total cost of training exceeds the amount available through HOPE and WIOA funding, then PELL funds may be utilized by the participant for living and other appropriate personal expenses during the training period. Provision of WIOA funding for training shall be limited to individuals who are unable to obtain other grant assistance for such services, or who require assistance beyond the financial aid available under these grant assistance programs.
14. WIOA funding may be provided for college level and post-baccalaureate instruction only if all of the following conditions have been met:
  - a. The customer must be accepted into a certificate, diploma, or degree program and the course of study must be occupation-specific (i.e. radiology technician, accounting, STEM teacher certification or a customer is a Registered Nurse seeking a graduate degree in Nursing to fill a vacant Nursing instructor position at a university or technical college.) No funds shall be provided for general academic programs (i.e. General Studies, Bachelors of Business Administration, Bachelors of Art, etc.).
  - b. Total course of study will take no longer than 104 weeks (2 years) to complete and be a certificate, diploma, or degree program. Exceptions: Extended critical shortage health care curricula lasting 3 years will be reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis, i.e. Registered Nursing, Nurse Practitioner, Occupational Therapist.
  - c. The customer must demonstrate that he/she has the financial resources to attend long-term training.
15. Continuing Education and other similar courses may be approved if the following conditions apply:

- a. The customer must have a specific occupational goal.
  - b. The customer must have a work history or educational background that relates to the occupational goal.
  - c. The customer must present evidence describing how the proposed training will increase his/her employment marketability.
16. Customers accepted on a provisional basis may receive assistance, but certain restriction and requirements apply and are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. If assistance is approved, provisional classes must be taken at the beginning of the training program and completed as soon as possible.
  17. ITAs will not be used for payment of late fees caused by customer error or delay. The customer will be responsible for these fees, as he/she is responsible for other fines or penalties.

ITAs will be issued for training providers/programs that are currently on the State of Georgia Eligible Provider/Program List and with whom WSGM has a signed WIOA Training Provider Agreement. WSGM office maintains a list of the providers with executed agreements through the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission office in Gainesville. This list is updated as needed.



## Attachment 9: WSGM Priority of Service Policy

## **EXCERPTED**

### **ADULT / DISLOCATED WORKER WORK STATEMENT GEORGIA MOUNTAINS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD WORKSOURCE GEORGIA MOUNTAINS**

#### **C. PRIORITY OF SERVICE / SERVICE PRIORITY FOR INDIVIDUALIZED SERVICES AND TRAINING SERVICES**

Priority for adult services must be given to recipients of public assistance or other low-income individuals, with added priority for individuals who are basic skills deficient. Priority applies regardless of funding levels.

Individualized career services and training services must be given on a priority basis, regardless of funding levels, to:

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

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

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

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