WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT

LOCAL PLAN: July 2024-June 2028

Original APPROVED

Approved by Board: June 13, 2024
Approved by CEO: June 20, 2024

Modification Draft April 2026

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Advance Wisconsin Employment

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Program Year 2024-2027 WIOA Local Plan Guidelines
MODIFICATION

Local Plans serve as a four-year action plan (July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2028) to develop and align service delivery strategies with the State's strategy, vision, and goals as outlined in the PY2024-PY2027 WIOA State Plan Overview. WIOA Section 108(a) requires local WDBs and Chief Elected Officials to develop and submit a comprehensive four-year Local Plan that supports the vision of the State Plan. The Local Plan must address all of the following:

Local Area: Advance Wisconsin Employment (AWE)

Units of Local Government: Adams; Forest; Langlade; Lincoln; Marathon; Oneida; Portage; Vilas; Wood Counties

Plan Period: July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2028

Section I: Local Analysis
For those local WDBs that are part of a planning region, Section I may be removed from the Local Plan submission since it duplicates the questions in the Regional Plan.

1. Provide an analysis of the labor market data and economic conditions in the local area, including:
   - **a.** Existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and
   - **b.** The employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations.

   The analysis may include:
   - An assessment of industry sectors that are considered mature but still important to the local area's economy.
   - A discussion of geographic factors (advantages or disadvantages) that may impact the local area's economy and the distribution of employers, population, and service providers in the local area.

2. Provide an analysis of the knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the local area, including the employment needs of in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

3. Provide an analysis of the workforce in the local area, including current labor force employment and 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.

Regional Profile

This Regional Profile provides an overview of Workforce Development Area 6 (WDA 6) including demographics like population and age distribution. Encompassing nine counties - Adams, Forest, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Oneida, Portage, Vilas, and Wood - WDA 6 profile serves a dual purpose. Firstly, it establishes a foundation for the Advance Wisconsin Employment's updated WIOA Report. Secondly, it acts as a handy reference guide, offering key information to supplement the report.

Labor Force (LAUS)	2022	2021	Percentage Change
Labor Force	207,363	209,972	-1.24%
Employed	201,003	201,972	-0.41%
Unemployed	6,360	8,137	-21.84%
Unemployment Rate	3.1%	3.9%	-20.51%

In the calendar year 2022, Advance Wisconsin Employment's labor force totaled 207,363 participants consisting of 201,003 employed and 6,360 unemployed. From 2021 to 2022, the labor force decreased by 2,609 participants, a
1.24 percent decrease. The number of employed decreased by 0.41 percent over the year and the number of unemployed decreased by 21.84 percent over the year.

Advance Wisconsin Employment's regional unemployment rate was 3.1 percent in 2022, down from 3.9 percent in 2021. This rate was still higher than the statewide unemployment rate of 2.9 percent. Generally, the region experiences a higher unemployment rate than that seen statewide.

The labor force participation rate (LFPR) is defined as the share of the 16 and older non-institutional population (not incarcerated or in nursing facilities) that is in the labor force (working or seeking work). North Central Wisconsin's labor force participation rate (LFPR) in 2022 was 59.7 percent, sitting well below the state's LFPR of 64.3 percent. The region's LFPR decreased by 0.9 percentage points relative to 2021. It's likely that both the state and the national LFPR will continue to decline as the "baby boomer" population continues to age.

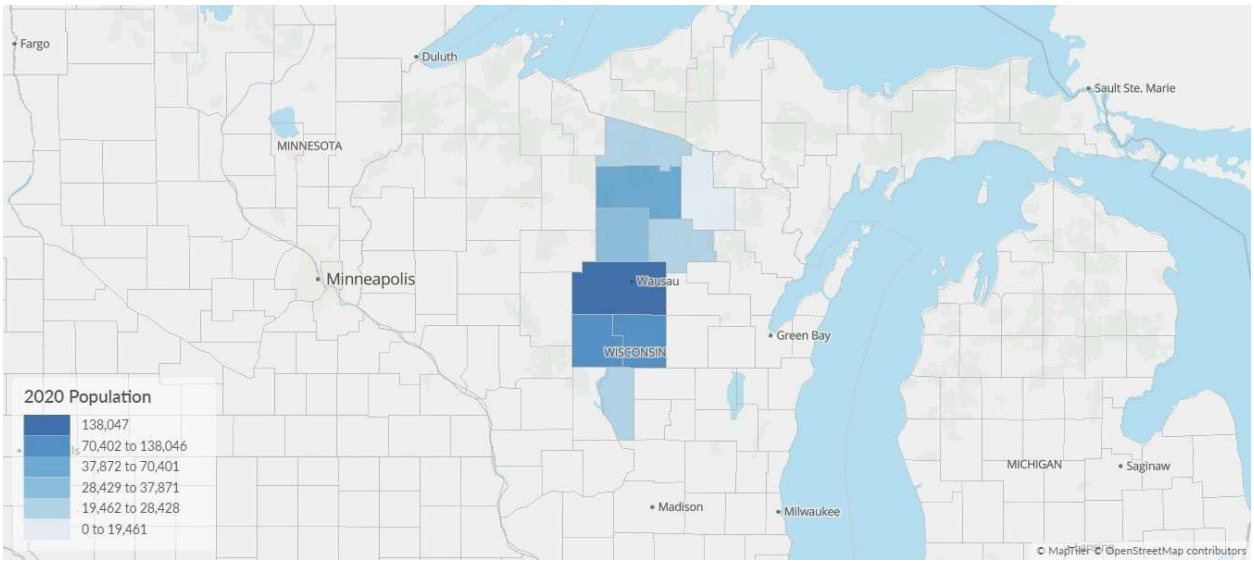
Population Projections

Demographic (Expand All)	2020 Population	2030 Population	Change	% Change	2020 % of Pop.	2030 % of Pop.	2020 Demographic Concentration	2030 Demographic Concentration
Under 5 years	21,297	21,001	-296	-1%	5%	5%	0.88	0.86
5 to 9 years	22,560	21,112	-1,448	-6%	5%	5%	0.88	0.88
10 to 14 years	25,241	24,551	-690	-3%	6%	6%	0.93	0.93
15 to 19 years	25,471	25,452	-19	0%	6%	6%	0.91	0.89
20 to 24 years	25,655	25,300	-355	-1%	6%	6%	0.91	0.81
25 to 29 years	23,366	23,084	-282	-1%	6%	5%	0.81	0.78
30 to 34 years	22,315	23,399	1,084	5%	5%	5%	0.77	0.84
35 to 39 years	24,280	26,870	2,590	11%	6%	6%	0.86	0.88
40 to 44 years	23,219	26,326	3,107	13%	6%	6%	0.89	0.86
45 to 49 years	23,487	27,119	3,632	15%	6%	6%	0.91	0.93
50 to 54 years	27,083	25,802	-1,281	-5%	6%	6%	1.03	0.97
55 to 59 years	33,240	26,307	-6,933	-21%	8%	6%	1.19	1.02
60 to 64 years	33,779	30,860	-2,919	-9%	8%	7%	1.27	1.22
65 to 69 years	29,558	35,530	5,972	20%	7%	8%	1.30	1.41
70 to 74 years	23,179	32,080	8,901	38%	6%	7%	1.26	1.43
75 to 79 years	16,039	23,917	7,878	49%	4%	5%	1.30	1.40
80 to 84 years	10,990	15,419	4,429	40%	3%	3%	1.37	1.32
85 years and over	10,587	11,589	1,002	9%	3%	3%	1.28	1.23
	421,346	445,716			100%	100%		

The table above, provided by Lightcast, offers a breakdown of projected demographic changes within the North Central Workforce Development Area (NCWDA) for the decade 2020-2030. While overall population is expected to remain relatively stable, with a slight decrease of 0.2% by 2030, the age distribution is poised for significant shifts. The table below breaks down population projections in the 9 counties of WDA 6.

The most noteworthy trend is a projected decline in younger age groups. All populations under 30 are expected to decrease, with the most significant drop (6%) occurring among 5–9-year-olds. Conversely, populations aged 35 and over are projected to grow, with the largest increase (49%) anticipated for the 75–79-year-old demographic.

This trend suggests a potential shrinking workforce alongside a growing elderly population within NCWDA. This could necessitate adjustments to social services and healthcare systems in the region to best serve the evolving needs of its residents.



County	County Name	2020 Population	2030 Population	Change	% Change	Veterans	2020 % of Pop.	2030 % of Pop.	2020 Demographic Concentration	2030 Demographic Concentration
55073	Marathon	138,047	143,684	5,637	4%	8,018	100%	100%	1.00	1.00
55141	Wood	74,197	77,983	3,786	5%	5,353	100%	100%	1.00	1.00
55097	Portage	70,402	65,052	-5,350	-8%	4,056	100%	100%	1.00	1.00
55085	Oneida	37,872	46,296	8,424	22%	2,982	100%	100%	1.00	1.00
55069	Lincoln	28,429	31,069	2,640	9%	1,711	100%	100%	1.00	1.00
55125	Vilas	23,097	28,350	5,253	23%	2,012	100%	100%	1.00	1.00
55001	Adams	20,675	22,089	1,414	7%	1,740	100%	100%	1.00	1.00
55067	Langlade	19,462	20,567	1,105	6%	1,611	100%	100%	1.00	1.00
55041	Forest	9,165	10,627	1,462	16%	652	100%	100%	1.00	1.00
		421,346	445,716			28,135				

Long Term Industry Projections

The following chart provided by the Office of Economic Advisors, DWD, depicts long-term industry projections for WDA 6 between 2020 and 2030. Overall, a modest employment growth of 6.97% (14,792 jobs) is anticipated. Growth is expected across most sectors, with the strongest gains in construction (9.25%) within goods-producing industries and leisure and hospitality (16.48%) within service-providing industries. The projected increase in service-providing sectors, alongside growth in healthcare and education, suggests a potential shift in WDA 6's economy. These trends could necessitate a workforce with skills aligned to these growing service industries. Investing in training programs to equip residents with in-demand skills and planning for an aging population's needs are potential considerations for the AWE in navigating these forthcoming changes.

NORTH CENTRAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA-LONG TERM INDUSTRY PROJECTIONS, 2020-2030				
WDA6: ADAMS, FOREST, LANGLADE, LINCOLN, MARATHON, ONEIDA, PORTAGE, VILAS AND WOOD COUNTIES				
Industry	**2020 Employment [1]**	**2030 Projected Employment**	**Employment Change (2020-2030)**	**Percent Change (2020-2030)**
Total All Industries	**212,222**	**227,014**	**14,792**	**6.97**
Goods Producing	*47,951*	*51,454*	*3,503*	*7.31*
Natural Resources and Mining	6,702	7,242	540	8.06
Construction	7,479	8,171	692	9.25
Manufacturing	33,770	36,041	2,271	6.72
Services Providing	*150,079*	*161,547*	*11,468*	*7.64*
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	40,606	42,506	1,900	4.68
Information	2,282	2,268	-14	-0.61
Financial Activities	14,562	15,272	710	4.88
Professional and Business Services	12,155	13,458	1,303	10.72
Education and Health Services	41,542	45,466	3,924	9.45
Leisure and Hospitality	16,782	19,548	2,766	16.48
Other Services (except Government)	10,546	11,093	547	5.19
Government	11,604	11,936	332	2.86
Self Employed	14,192	14,013	-179	-1.26

Understanding WDA 6 Workforce

The following table provided by Lightcast offers a combined view of WDA 6 workforce, presenting both current employment figures and projected growth trends across various industries. It reveals that in 2022, the largest employment sectors are office and administrative support, production, and transportation and material moving positions, comprising 33% of the total workforce. However, the projected growth rates (2020-2030) suggest potential shifts towards service-providing industries.

Industry Composition and Growth

While some of the current leading sectors in terms of employment numbers may not necessarily align with the areas of highest projected growth, valuable insights can be gleaned from this combined data. For instance, office and administrative positions are currently the top jobs, but sectors like food preparation and restaurant workers are much lower on the list but are anticipated to see significant growth.

Earnings and Skill Alignment

The table also highlights the disparity in median hourly earnings across industries. Management occupations offer the highest median wage at $38.48 per hour, while food preparation and serving occupations have the lowest at $12.49 per hour. This information, coupled with the projected growth trends, can help identify areas where there might be a mismatch between current skillsets and future job demands.

Planning for the Future

The AWE can leverage this data to develop strategic initiatives. Considering the projected growth in service-providing industries, investments in training programs that equip residents with the necessary skills for these sectors could be crucial. Furthermore, this data can inform planning efforts to ensure social services and healthcare systems are prepared to address the needs of an aging population, potentially indicated by the growth in healthcare and education sectors.



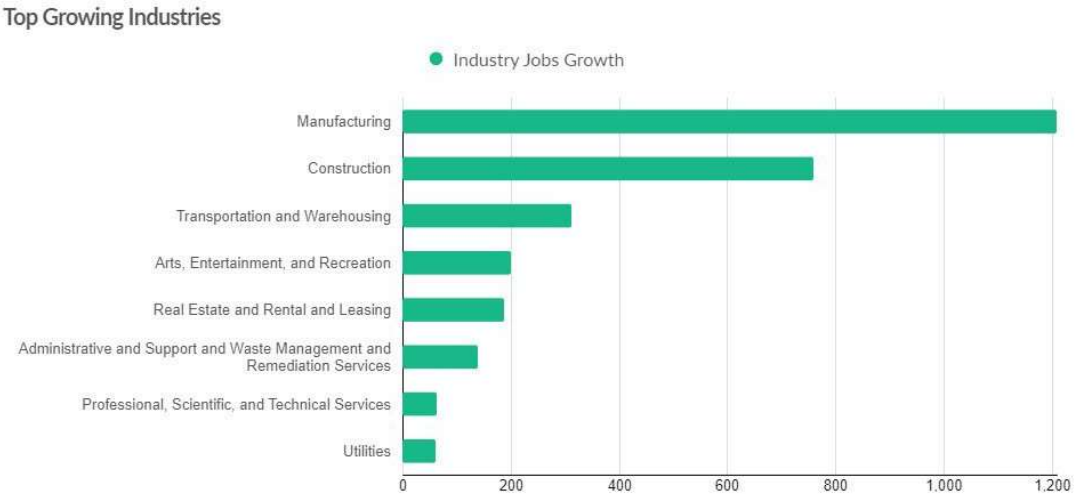
Occupation	2020 Jobs	2030 Jobs	Change in Jobs (2020-2030)	% Change	2022 Median Hourly Earnings
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	25,460	23,948	-1,512	-6%	$19.04
Production Occupations	23,613	24,119	506	2%	$20.61
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	20,645	22,354	1,709	8%	$19.24
Sales and Related Occupations	19,550	19,236	-314	-2%	$16.06
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	13,712	15,410	1,698	12%	$12.49
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	13,058	12,625	-433	-3%	$34.72
Management Occupations	12,410	13,719	1,309	11%	$38.48
Educational Instruction and Library Occupations	9,955	10,384	429	4%	$23.53
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	9,791	10,897	1,106	11%	$31.55

Understanding Industry Dynamics in WDA 6

The following graph and table provided by Lightcast can be viewed alongside previous information in this report. This chart sheds light on the evolving industry landscape within WDA 6. This chart highlights the **fastest growing** industries between 2018 and 2023, with real estate and rental and leasing leading the surge at 11%. Current job opportunities and projected job growth should both be considered when formulating plans that will potentially train current and future job seekers.

Growth and Considerations

This combined analysis paints a picture of dynamism within WDA 6's workforce. While established sectors maintain a strong presence, new opportunities are emerging in areas like construction (8% growth) and transportation and warehousing (3% growth), potentially linked to e-commerce growth. The significant rise in real estate and rental and leasing (11%) aligns with the projected growth in the service sector, potentially driven by an aging population or a strong housing market. This growth across various industries presents exciting possibilities for job creation within WDA 6. However, it's crucial to consider potential challenges such as ensuring a skilled workforce is available to meet the demands of these growing sectors, and potential impacts on infrastructure.



Industry	2018 Jobs	2023 Jobs	Change in Jobs	% Change in Jobs	2023 Employment Concentration	2023 Earnings Per Worker	2022 GRP
Manufacturing	34,360	35,569	1,209	+4%	2.15	$77,454	$4.76B
Construction	9,886	10,645	759	+8%	0.87	$69,670	$1.03B
Transportation and Warehousing	10,605	10,917	312	+3%	1.17	$67,875	$1.00B
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	2,951	3,151	200	+7%	0.85	$25,681	$115.20M
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1,716	1,903	187	+11%	0.50	$61,717	$657.22M
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	6,330	6,469	139	+2%	0.49	$46,595	$445.12M
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	5,426	5,490	64	+1%	0.36	$84,005	$674.10M
Utilities	582	644	62	+11%	0.90	$146,308	$361.04M

Industry Concentration and Workforce Composition in WDA 6

The next graph and table provided by Lightcast complements the previous information by revealing the distribution of employment across various industries within WDA 6 in 2018 and 2023. It highlights that while manufacturing remains the leading industry in terms of employment concentration (21.5% in 2023), with a modest increase of 1,209 jobs since 2018, the growth trends point towards a more diversified economy.

Shifting Landscape

When viewed in conjunction with the previously analyzed table showing projected growth, this data suggests a potential shift in WDA 6's workforce composition. While manufacturing shows modest growth, some of the fastest-growing industries like construction (8% growth) and real estate (11% growth) are not reflected as leading employers in terms of concentration yet. This indicates an evolving landscape where new sectors are gaining traction but have not yet surpassed established industries in terms of overall employment numbers.

Healthcare and Service Sector

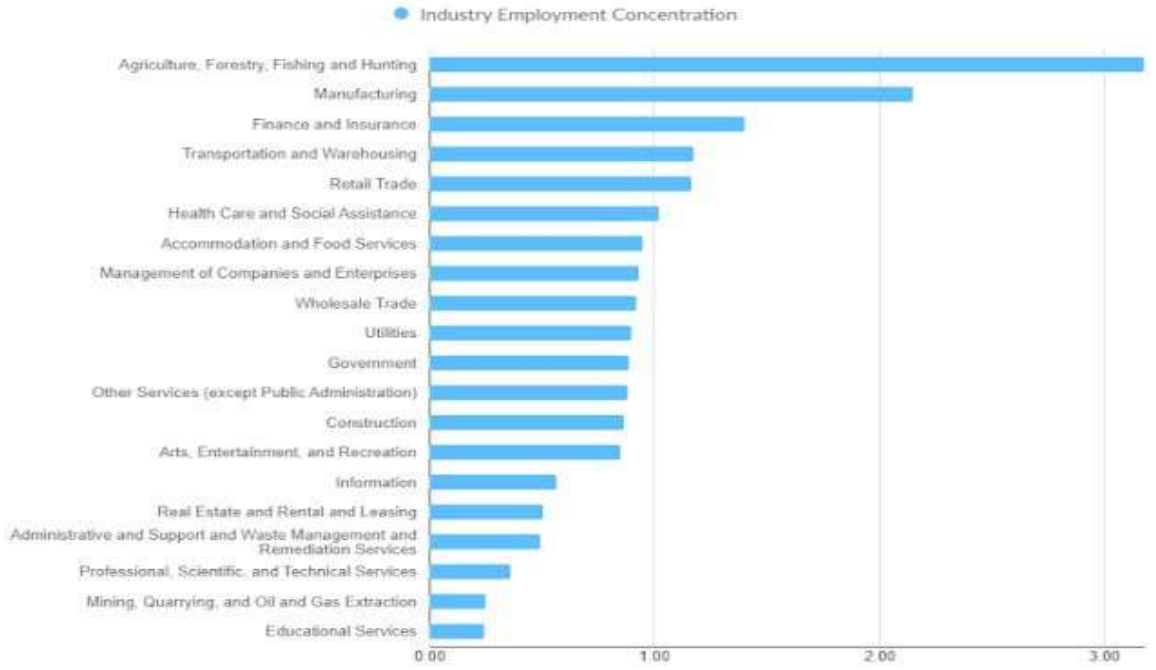
The table also shows a significant presence of healthcare and social assistance (10.2% concentration in 2023) which aligns with the projected growth in service-providing industries like education and health services (9.45% growth). This further emphasizes the potential growth within the service sector.

Considerations for WDA 6

The AWE can use this data on employment concentration alongside the projected growth trends to develop a comprehensive workforce development strategy. While established industries like manufacturing remain a cornerstone, focusing on building skills for jobs in growing sectors like construction, real estate, and healthcare makes sense for WDA 6.

Another factor AWE must consider are the effects artificial intelligence will have on all industries. According to a presentation provided by Dennis Winters, DWD, there is uncertainty about how AI will affect the labor market. AWE will certainly be watching and willing to align workforce development strategies with state efforts, specifically the information coming out of the Governor's new AI Taskforce.
AWE is also interested in using layoff aversion strategies related to potential AI outcomes.

Top Industry Employment Concentration



Industry	2018 Jobs	2023 Jobs	Change in Jobs	% Change in Jobs	2023 Employment Concentration	2023 Earnings Per Worker	2022 GRP
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	8,580	7,966	-614	-7%	3.18	$50,252	$743.67M
Manufacturing	34,360	35,569	1,209	+4%	2.15	$77,454	$4.76B
Finance and Insurance	12,929	12,290	-639	-5%	1.40	$99,957	$2.92B
Transportation and Warehousing	10,605	10,917	312	+3%	1.17	$67,875	$1.00B
Retail Trade	24,934	23,672	-1,262	-5%	1.17	$39,840	$1.75B
Health Care and Social Assistance	29,225	28,002	-1,223	-4%	1.02	$79,901	$2.62B
Accommodation and Food Services	17,177	16,742	-435	-3%	0.95	$23,942	$713.48M
Management of Companies and Enterprises	3,133	2,963	-170	-5%	0.93	$83,833	$278.39M
Wholesale Trade	8,424	7,137	-1,287	-15%	0.92	$81,461	$1.48B
Utilities	582	644	62	+11%	0.90	$146,308	$361.04M
Government	28,103	27,019	-1,084	-4%	0.88	$71,239	$2.05B
Other Services (except Public Administration)	9,780	9,266	-514	-5%	0.88	$36,607	$491.45M
Construction	9,886	10,645	759	+8%	0.87	$69,670	$1.03B
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	2,951	3,151	200	+7%	0.85	$25,681	$115.20M
Information	2,451	2,297	-154	-6%	0.57	$78,218	$456.80M
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1,716	1,903	187	+11%	0.50	$61,717	$657.22M
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	6,330	6,469	139	+2%	0.49	$46,595	$445.12M
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	5,426	5,490	64	+1%	0.36	$84,005	$674.10M
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	231	184	-47	-20%	0.25	$74,105	$43.63M
Educational Services	1,307	1,259	-48	-4%	0.24	$26,777	$39.53M

Hot Jobs in WDA 6: Growth and Alignment

The next table provided by the Office of Economic Advisors, DWD, highlights occupations projected for high growth within WDA 6 between 2020 and 2030, alongside factors like education needed and annual median wages. By cross-referencing this data with the previously analyzed information on industry trends and employment concentration, valuable insights emerge regarding the skills and qualifications most in-demand for future job opportunities.

Growth Areas and Skill Alignment

The table aligns with the projected growth trends identified earlier. Occupations in sectors like construction (Welders, Cutters, Soldering and Brazers; projected growth of 37.7%) and healthcare (Registered Nurses; projected growth of 7.28%) are listed as hot jobs. This highlights the need for a workforce equipped with the skills to support these growing industries.

Considering Current Landscape

Some of the hot jobs listed may not directly correspond with the current leading industries in terms of employment concentration. For instance, Welders, Cutters, Soldering and Brazers is a hot job, but manufacturing, a field it aligns with, has a moderate growth rate (4%) and ranks as the leading industry by concentration. This suggests potential upcoming growth within specific sectors of established industries.

Other Promising Areas

The table also highlights opportunities in other areas. Passenger Vehicle Drivers, Bus Drivers, Taxi Drivers, Ambulance Drivers, and Other Drivers are hot jobs with a projected growth of 25.23%, even though the transportation and warehousing industry shows modest growth at 3% according to the previous chart. This could be due to factors like an aging population or increasing demand for delivery services. Similarly, Social and Human Service Assistants is a hot job (projected growth of 13.74%) which aligns with the projected growth in service-providing industries.

Focus on Skills Development

The AWE can utilize this data on hot jobs to inform strategic investments in skills development programs. Programs that target high-growth sectors like construction, healthcare, and transportation and warehousing, alongside specializations within established industries like manufacturing, could be particularly beneficial.

Table: *WDA6 North Central Hot Jobs*, 2020-2030* [1]

RANK	SOC Code	Occupation	Employment 2020 [2]	Projected Employment 2030	Employment Change (2020-2030)	Percent Change (2020-2030)	Education [3]	Annual Separations Exits [4]	Annual Separations Transfers [5]	Annual New Openings	Annual Total Openings [6]	Median Wages [7]
1	29-1141	Registered Nurses	4,507	4,835	328	7.28	Associate's or Bachelor's degree	125	118	33	276	$68,635
2	41-4012	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	2,070	2,300	230	11.11	High school diploma or equivalent	65	148	23	236	$52,799
3	51-4121	Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	1,542	1,892	350	22.70	High school diploma or equivalent	45	135	35	215	$47,267
4	15-1256	Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	2,025	2,496	471	23.26	Bachelor's degree	52	111	47	210	$82,486
5	25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	2,517	2,715	198	7.87	Bachelor's degree	80	105	20	205	$55,870
6	51-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	1,843	2,004	161	8.74	High school diploma or equivalent	58	129	16	203	$59,943
7	53-3058	Passenger Vehicle Drivers, Except Bus Drivers, Transit and Intercity	1,181	1,479	298	25.23	No formal educational credential	88	66	30	184	$40,585
8	47-2031	Carpenters	1,619	1,737	118	7.29	High school diploma or equivalent	49	105	12	166	$41,316
9	13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	1,400	1,513	113	8.07	Bachelor's degree	41	86	11	138	$65,664
10	11-1021	General and Operations Managers	1,455	1,576	121	8.32	Bachelor's degree	30	94	12	136	$101,238
11	47-2111	Electricians	1,003	1,121	118	11.76	High school diploma or equivalent	31	78	12	121	$62,534
12	53-7051	Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators	901	1,008	107	11.88	No formal educational credential	29	73	11	113	$40,366
13	25-3021	Self-Enrichment Education Teachers	786	894	108	13.74	High school diploma or equivalent	50	45	11	106	$42,329
14	25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	1,306	1,416	110	8.42	Bachelor's degree	36	55	11	102	$58,801
15	49-9041	Industrial Machinery Mechanics	818	1,021	203	24.82	High school diploma or equivalent	28	50	20	98	$55,637
16	21-1093	Social and Human Service Assistants	734	804	70	9.54	High school diploma or equivalent	31	58	7	96	$42,036
17	51-4041	Machinists	611	826	215	35.19	High school diploma or equivalent	24	49	22	95	$39,952
18	13-1071	Human Resources Specialists	858	918	60	6.99	Bachelor's degree	24	59	6	89	$58,090
19	41-3091	Sales Representatives of Services, Except Advertising, Insurance, Financial Services, and Travel	705	767	62	8.79	High school diploma or equivalent	18	65	6	89	$51,550
20	51-9161	Computer Numerically Controlled Tool Operators	638	736	98	15.36	High school diploma or equivalent	24	51	10	85	$46,459
21	47-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	758	833	75	9.89	High school diploma or equivalent	22	52	8	82	$68,190
22	47-4051	Highway Maintenance Workers	718	775	57	7.94	High school diploma or equivalent	29	47	6	82	$43,029
23	13-1111	Management Analysts	718	811	93	12.95	Bachelor's degree	25	44	9	78	$71,078
24	13-1161	Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	624	741	117	18.75	Bachelor's degree	16	50	12	78	$52,464
25	33-3051	Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers	804	863	59	7.34	High school diploma or equivalent	21	42	6	69	$61,342

(1) Long -Term 2020-2030 projections are based on historical data through the year 2020 and include **COVID-19** impacts as could best be determined. The **2020 pandemic** caused a large drop in employment in the base year. As a result, much of the projected WDA growth to 2030 is recovery. Some occupations that typically have strong projected growth rates just above the WDA rate did not qualify as **Hot Jobs** in this

round if they did not have a significant decline in 2020 and subsequent recovery.

(2) Employment is a count of jobs rather than people, and includes all part- and full-time nonfarm jobs. Employment also includes jobs among self-employed. Totals may not add due to suppression.

(3) Typical education needed for entry is what most workers need to enter the occupation.

(4) Exits: Workers who leave the labor force entirely.

(5) Transfers: Workers who leave their occupation for a different occupation.

(6) Total Openings: Includes exits, transfers and growth.

(7) Wages estimates from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey May 2020.

Information is derived using May 2020 OEWS Survey, annual data 2020 QCEW and CES data. Unpublished data from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, CPS and US Census Bureau was also used. To the extent possible, the projections take into account anticipated changes in Wisconsin's economy from 2020 to 2030. It is important to note that unanticipated events may affect the accuracy of these projections.

*Hot Jobs are high projected growth occupations that must meet the following criteria: (1) Median salary must be above the WDA median; (2) Percentage change must be greater than the WDA average; and (3) Have the most projected openings.

Educational Attainment in WDA 6

Examining educational attainment data from the Office of Economic Advisors, WI DWD, alongside the other data presented provides a more comprehensive picture of WDA 6's workforce. The data reveals that in 2020, a significant portion of WDA 6 population aged 25 and over possessed a high school diploma or higher (67%). Broken down further, nearly a quarter (24.1%) hold a bachelor's degree or higher. This educational attainment profile aligns with the current leading industries in WDA 6, where some of the largest employers are manufacturing, healthcare and social assistance, and retail trade. These sectors often require a high school diploma or some college experience.

Gaps and Growth

However, the data also highlights potential gaps between educational attainment and future workforce needs. The projected growth trends in WDA 6 point towards an increase in service-providing industries such as healthcare and education, which often require higher levels of education and specialized skills. While a significant number hold a bachelor's degree or higher, there is room for growth in this area to keep pace with the projected job growth.

Focus on Skills Development

The AWE can address this potential gap by focusing on initiatives that promote educational attainment. Investments in programs that encourage residents to pursue associate degrees or bachelor's degrees in high growth fields could be crucial. Additionally, considering the projected growth in healthcare and social services, promoting programs that equip workers with the necessary skills for these sectors would align with the needs of the local workforce.

Row Labels	Sum of 2020 Employment (2)	Sum of 2030 Projected Employment	Sum of Employment Change (2020-2030)	Sum of Occupational Openings (5)	% of 2020 Employment	% of Total Openings
Associate's degree	3609	4040	431	368	1.9%	1.6%
Associate's or Bachelor's degree	4507	4835	328	276	2.3%	1.2%
Bachelor's degree	32446	35433	2987	2987	16.9%	12.8%
Doctoral or professional degree	3077	3318	241	170	1.6%	0.7%
High school diploma or equivalent	80120	84444	4324	9449	41.8%	40.6%
Master's degree	2764	3266	502	265	1.4%	1.1%
No formal educational credential	43717	47562	3845	7359	22.8%	31.6%
Postsecondary non-degree award	15771	16682	911	1806	8.2%	7.8%
Some college, no degree	5815	5919	104	593	3.0%	2.5%
Total	191826	205499	13673	23273	100.0%	100.0%
Note: excludes occupations with suppressed data						

Educational Attainment and Job Openings in WDA 6

The table provided by the OEA, WI DWD, displays the projected number of job openings in WDA 6 by educational attainment level for the year 2022. When viewed in conjunction with the previous chart on educational attainment in WDA 6, this table offers valuable insights into the potential alignment between the existing workforce's qualifications and the future job market.

The Match Between Skills and Jobs

The data on educational attainment shows that a significant portion of WDA 6 population aged 25 and over possessed a high school diploma or higher (67%) in 2020. This aligns with the job openings in

the table, where the largest share of openings is projected for those with a high school diploma or equivalent (41.8% of total openings).

Gaps and Opportunities

However, there are also some misalignments between educational attainment and projected job openings. The table indicates a growing number of openings in occupations that typically require a bachelor's degree (16.9% of total openings), while a considerably smaller portion of the population holds a bachelor's degree or higher (24.1%). This suggests a potential skills gap in WDA 6 workforce.

Strategies for a Future-Ready Workforce

The data presented in these exhibits presents a clear picture: WDA 6's workforce needs to adapt to meet the demands of a changing job market. While the current educational attainment levels align with the largest share of projected job openings (high school diploma or equivalent), a potential skills gap emerges when considering the growth in occupations requiring bachelor's degrees.

The AWE can take proactive steps to bridge this gap. Investing in programs that incentivize residents to pursue higher education in high demand fields, such as scholarships or partnerships with universities, could be crucial. Additionally, focusing on skills development initiatives tailored to the projected growth in service-providing industries would equip the workforce with the necessary qualifications for future job opportunities.

Individuals with Barriers to Employment

	Wisconsin	WDA6	Adams	Forest	Langlade	Lincoln	Marathon	Oneida	Portage	Vilas	Wood
Total	3,536,460	244,408	10,703	5,130	10,848	16,723	81,060	20,883	44,619	12,038	42,404
Worked full-time:	2,059,552	139,503	5,259	2,610	5,800	9,166	51,326	10,951	24,173	6,172	24,046
With a disability	93,331	6,696	389	226	406	501	2,023	446	1,043	379	1,283
No disability	1,966,221	132,807	4,870	2,384	5,394	8,665	49,303	10,505	23,130	5,793	22,763
Worked less than full-time, year round:	947,847	66,033	2,740	1,224	2,808	4,640	19,193	5,535	14,618	3,627	11,648
With a disability	88,626	6,989	325	151	307	429	2,409	621	1,130	356	1,261
No disability	859,221	59,044	2,415	1,073	2,501	4,211	16,784	4,914	13,488	3,271	10,387
Did not work:	529,061	38,872	2,704	1,296	2,240	2,917	10,541	4,397	5,828	2,239	6,710
With a disability	160,676	13,622	1,178	339	851	1,181	3,653	1,513	1,780	617	2,510
No disability	368,385	25,250	1,526	957	1,389	1,736	6,888	2,884	4,048	1,622	4,200

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Table C18121

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act identifies several populations which may experience significant barriers to employment. The North Central Region is no different than any other state or region in recognizing that many of its residents may have trouble gaining and maintaining employment. WDA 6 WIOA plan will develop a strategy to assist these individuals.

Among the individuals with significant barriers to employment, the following are most notable:

Total WDA 6 population The Advance Wisconsin Employment area has a total population of 420,899.

People with disabilities Approximately 64,215 or 15% of individuals in the region have a disability. The disability rate shows significant variation across counties, ranging from a low of 10.6% in Portage County to a high of 21.7% in Adams County.

Low income 45,545 individuals fall below the poverty rate within the region. There is a notable difference between counties, with a low of 7.9% in Marathon County and a high of 14.1% in Forest County. It's important to note that low-income is defined as earning less than 125% of the federal poverty level wage. In 2024, 125% of federal poverty level for a single person is $18,825 and $39,000 for a family of four.

Veterans WDA 6 population has an estimated 37,733 veterans.

Institutionalized - In 2022 roughly 5,128 people or 1.2% of the region's population is institutionalized.

Foreign Born/Language barrier the region has approximately 8,584 foreign-born residents. There are over 20,000 people that speak a language other than English at home. Nearly 15,000 of these people reside in the counties of Marathon, Portage, and Adams.

Section II: Local Strategies

4. **Provide an analysis of the workforce development activities (including education and training) in the local area. Include an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of such services.**

   The AWE carries out many workforce activities by partnering locally though Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) to implement core and partner programs. Successful partnerships, collaboration, and programs that exist and leveraged are an area of strength in WDA 6. Under WIOA, workforce development activities are categorized within the following areas – Career Services, Training Services, and Business Services.

   WIOA Title 1 programs have a variety of workforce activities available. The activities can take place in the area's job centers, community libraries, virtually, or other community-garnered space and typically involve other job center partners and programs. One exception being the on-site Rapid Response (RR) services for dislocated workers. The Adult and Dislocated Worker programs offer a variety of basic and individualized career services starting with the provision of general labor market information, informational workshops, and hiring events. Services are provided in small groups or specialized one-on-one sessions.

   Another strength is that AWE has built strong relationships with its three regional technical colleges as well as the K-12 school districts throughout the WDA 6 region. The technical colleges have played a critical role in developing and delivering the training which has been identified by business and industry; developing and continuously refining pathways in high demand industries such as advanced manufacturing, healthcare, transportation, and information technology; and exploring and expanding new training opportunities and tools (youth apprenticeship, registered apprenticeship, customized training, etc.). The AWE staff interface with technical college industry advisory groups and the North Central Wisconsin Business Solutions Team. A

representative from a local technical college serves on AWE's Board. Technical college representatives are also advisory members of AWE's industry alliances.

AWE and its Business Solutions Team offer a variety of services to assist employers in meeting their workforce needs. In collaboration with DWD, the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, and economic modeling tools like LightCast, AWE can provide employers with quality labor market data and wage analysis to assist in forecasting future needs, and when state and federal grant opportunities arise. AWE works with its local technical colleges to create short-term training opportunities based on input from its sector partnerships.

The AWE continues to strive to bring together all required WIOA partners in WDA 6 through the MOU process. However, a shared common language to communicate the variety of services available to jobseekers and employers across the workforce system would improve the system. Other challenges are the continued decrease in federal WIOA funds for WDA 6. Declining funds limit program capacities and available dollars for training and support services. The lack of a common intake and data system across the workforce system also creates challenges and additional burdens for both the customer and the workforce development professionals.

AWE's strong partnerships and collaborations across the region help to achieve high performance and allow the capacity to deliver high-quality workforce programs and services to job seekers and employers. WDA 6 implements bi-annual customer satisfaction surveys at all Job Center locations to measure customer satisfaction and to identify areas of continuous improvement to ensure services are being delivered effectively and efficiently. The results of these surveys are shared with the OSO Consortium and the Job Center Management Team.

Evaluate the capacity of the available services within the local area to address the education and skill needs of the workforce (as identified in Section I, Question 3 of the Regional or Local Plan), including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of employers in the local area (as identified in Section I, Question 2 of the Regional or Local Plan).

In WDA 6, there is a wide range of workforce development activities and programs, service providers, and training providers available for adults, dislocated workers, youth, and employers. Services include:

Career Services: Through its workforce system partners, WDA 6 offers comprehensive WIOA-mandated career services (basic and individualized). The majority are provided by core partners at one-stop locations. Adults, dislocated workers, and youth populations have access to services including assessments, job search help, counseling, program referrals, labor market data, employment/career planning, financial literacy education, and more.

Training Services: Work-based learning and occupational training are available within WDA 6. These pathways include stackable credentials and traditional programs. Funding sources determines eligibility and requirements, but partners collaborate to streamline services

and maximize resources. Examples include on-the-job training, apprenticeships (adult and youth), short-term programs, and post-secondary education.

Business Services: WDA 6's Business Solutions Team (BST) coordinates employer-focused activities with workforce system partners, avoiding duplication and optimizing resources. Regular BST collaboration ensures employers receive the highest quality services. These include:

- **Hiring:** WDA 6 BST helps businesses find the right candidates. Services include hiring assistance, Job Center of Wisconsin postings, tax incentives, labor market information, accommodations support, and more.
- **Training:** WDA 6 BST offers programs and incentives to keep local businesses competitive. Options include on-the-job training, apprenticeships, internships, and work experiences.
- **Retaining Talent:** WDA 6 BST informs businesses about retention strategies. Services include incumbent worker training resources, i.e. FastForward Grants, Technical College resources and human resource guidance.
- **Dislocation & Rapid Response Services:** During closures or mass layoffs, Rapid Response services help the employer serve the affected workers understand their reemployment needs and resources. Services include information sessions, planning, and on-site support.

WDA 6 effectively delivers quality programs to employers and job seekers. Its success comes from the diverse service providers, extensive programs, and strong partnerships. The AWE consistently measures customer satisfaction to drive continuous improvement and ensure efficient service delivery.

5. **Describe the local WDB's strategic vision and goals to support economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. Include goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment. Identify specific goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on the primary indicators of performance described in WIOA Section 116(b)(2)(A).**

The strategic plan adopted in 2020, and reviewed in 2024, provides direction for the next four years. The mission, core values, and vision will guide its actions. The strategic themes and related strategic initiatives set the foundation for its key actions and guides allocation of resources. The key actions for each strategic initiative establish targets and benchmarks for success. While the strategic plan provides long-term direction, the planning process remains dynamic to respond to the needs of a changing landscape.

Mission Statement: AWE leads, innovates and supports the development and retention of a skilled workforce.

Vision Statement: We envision a strong workforce community, where businesses have the employees they need, job seekers have the skills required for the positions they desire, and the region served by AWE is thriving.

Strategic Theme #1: Workforce: AWE will advance the current workforce, develop the emerging workforce, and re-engage the past workforce.

Strategic Theme #2: Enhancing Partnerships: Through communication, collaboration, commitment, reinforcing AWE as the leader and partner in workforce development and a crucial link between individuals and businesses.

Strategic Theme #3: Technology Optimization: Leverage technology, including AI applications, to improve staff productivity and program success.

Strategic Theme #4: Resource Management: Identify, develop and cultivate multiple sources of revenue to improve AWE's financial stability.

As in the past, AWE will continue to operate within the philosophy of helping participants reach a "living wage" to move participants along a path towards self-sufficiency without public assistance. All workforce activities will be planned with the goal of preparing the workforce for placements in living wage positions that are in high demand. AWE believes this philosophy is a better investment of tax dollars and will also assist in meeting/exceeding performance indicators.

6. **Describe the local area's strategy to ensure that the entities carrying out WIOA core programs and the required one-stop partners align resources available to the local area to achieve the strategic vision and goals described in question 5 of this section.**

The North Central Wisconsin One-Stop Operators' Consortium continues to strive to maintain an integrated, connected system for community and faith-based organizations, government agencies, education partners and employers to share information and resources for customers. The Consortium and the Job Center Manager teams are represented by WIOA Title I, II, III, and IV programs. The Consortium and Job Center Managers, with assistance from AWE, is responsible for convening the annual one-stop partners' meeting to ensure resource sharing among the various programs. The annual one-stop partners' meeting has been utilized to keep partners connected with new resources and points of contact.
In addition, AWE convenes, coordinates, and participates in several different job center partner and community meetings. At each level, program and resource information is shared among the partners. There is also two-way information sharing between employers and job center partners using local employer forums, hiring events, and various communications tools.

7. **Provide a description of the workforce development system in the local area that:**
   a. **Identifies the programs that are included in that system;**

There are 4 job centers in WDA 6. The Marathon County location is designated as the one comprehensive job center, while Rhinelander is an affiliate site. The Marshfield and Adams job centers are considered access points. The job center partners have created a shared brochure for each job center that lists programs in each center. Also included are the locations and hours of business for job seekers and employers. There is also promotion of jobcenterofwisconsin.com for those who choose to connect online. Some job center services are also available through virtual platforms for those who choose not to come into a physical job center. Some partners also provide services in numerous libraries across the region. The non-located program partners are outlined in the local Job Center MOU. OSO's annual all partner meeting is also utilized to identify additional programs in the workforce system. AWE staff often participate in local events where presentations are provided to highlight job center programs and resources. Program presentations are a standing agenda item at the quarterly board meetings in WDA 6. Board members and guests learn about programs and resources to take back to their respective organizations and communities.

   b. **Describes how the local WDB will support the strategy identified in the State Plan and engage with the WIOA core programs and other workforce development programs, including programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 USC 2301 et. seq.), to support service alignment.**

AWE and its contracted provider representing Title I, are well aligned with the other WIOA core programs in the job centers. All have foundational relationships and work diligently to support service alignment at the local level through various ongoing meetings. The job center partners, including the technical colleges, are working together with shared participants to coordinate and expand resources each can offer, while reducing duplication of services. Not only are the technical colleges engaged with the job centers, they also work

directly with AWE to create and expand short-term training opportunities. When training opportunities are created, all job center partners become involved in outreach efforts so that all workforce development programs, i.e. Veterans, DVR, FSET, W2, Adult Education can provide opportunities for their respective and shared participants. AWE will continue to support and participate in DWD's efforts to secure additional programs of study and carry out those efforts locally through its service alignment.

8. **Describe how the local WDB will work with the entities carrying out WIOA core programs to:**
   a. **Expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment.**
   AWE, with the partnerships with WIOA core programs, will continue to reach out to the agencies and communities that work closely with individuals with barriers to employment to share program resources and opportunities. AWE has partnered with the Department of Correction to implement the Windows to Work Reentry Program.
   AWE's Reentry Coach keeps an office inside one of the region's job centers and participates in local team meetings and the regional Business Solutions Team. This model allows increased resource sharing between the partners to serve the justice-involved population, facilitating a greater connection between this untapped labor pool to area employers. AWE recently received a specialized WIOA/Reemployment Opportunity Grant to expand pre- and post-release services for those releasing from state correctional institutions as well as from county jails. The Wisconsin Pathway Home 4 (WPH4) Reentry Coach is also based in a regional job center to better connect individuals to resources and opportunities. AWE's Wisconsin Pathway Home 4 will run until December 2026.
   AWE, with the assistance of its WIOA core partners, will continue to participate in special population grants, when available. Examples include grants like Support to Communities: Fostering Opioid Recovery Through Workforce Development Grant Program (StC). Like all grant opportunities, StC was shared with WIOA partners through monthly job center and Manager meetings, quarterly OSO meetings, and the annual MOU Partner meeting. In addition, employment and training resources and opportunities are shared with community partners. AWE and its contracted service provider are connected to the local refugee resettlement organization, Ethiopian Community Development Council, Inc (ECDC). The regional providers for Wisconsin Works and Foodshare Employment and Training participate in the regional Business Solutions Team. Above are examples of creating connections for individuals with barriers to employment.

   b. **Facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs; and**
   AWE continually encourages co-enrollment for Title I participants in WIOA core and partner programs when appropriate and beneficial to the jobseekers' needs. AWE and its contracted service provider are eager to utilize enhanced co-enrollment reporting as DWD continues to implement a common customer intake-type system. The ability to identify if a participant is already working with another partner, track electronic referrals between participating partners, and collect basic information from other systems will streamline the experience for those customers who work with more than one partner agency. A system of this type will greatly enhance the facilitation of co-enrollment.
   AWE will continue its work with the local technical colleges and university system to assist with career pathway development and implementation. Through Title 1 and other

special grants, AWE will continue to develop short-term training projects that will ladder into later degree attainment for job seekers who cannot afford to be out of the workforce for longer lengths of time. AWE has experienced success in these types of projects.

c. Improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable).

The AWE will continue to improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential through collaboration and partnership with required job center partners and programs. The North Central Wisconsin OSO Consortium brings together all required job center partners to increase awareness of services and activities each partner can provide. This increase in communication among all partners improves the awareness and access to activities offered through core programs that can lead to a recognized postsecondary credential. AWE also works closely with its education partners to develop short-term training opportunities, including pre-Apprenticeships to upskill job seekers to meet employer demand. AWE also considers other training opportunities that may meet employer demand but may not be a recognized credential. When those situations arise, AWE will take the necessary steps to request a review by the credential attainment workgroup after consultation with its sector partnerships. AWE and its contracted providers will also pursue alternate means of gaining measurable skills gains to connect to living wage occupations.

9. Describe the strategies and services the local area will use to facilitate engagement of employers in workforce development programs. Include strategies and services aimed at small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations. Specifically address:

a. Strategies to support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area.

The Business Solutions team will divide their outreach to maximize the number of visits in each county within the WDA, covering all businesses, including small businesses. Additionally, members of the business solutions team meet with the regional SHRM groups, advisory committees, chamber and economic committees, and sector partners, to ensure active engagement across the industry sectors. The Business Solutions team ensures that all businesses, regardless of size, within WDA 6 are targeted for outreach. The Business Solutions team utilizes job posting analytics through various tools (JCW), to see which business outside of the sector partners are actively hiring. At that point, AWE makes sure that a member of the business solutions team is making contact, and that information is shared via email and through other methods with the Business Solutions team or shared at monthly business services meetings with all job center partners and providers. Additionally, AWE leads numerous hiring events and business services summits in each county within the region throughout the calendar year, and actively invites all businesses with current or future hiring needs to participate.

b. Coordination of workforce development programs and economic development.

The Business and Community Engagement Coordinator along with various members of the Business Solutions team regularly facilitate multi-industry and industry-specific

forums that include information sharing, labor market presentations, and workforce development initiative planning sessions to address challenges in local talent acquisition. Events also include economic development officials and local chambers of commerce.

c. Strategies to strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs.

There are a variety of ways the WIOA-required partners are included in the One-Stop delivery system. The North Central Wisconsin One-Stop-Operator Consortium is an advisor to the Board and comprises workforce partners. The North Central Board also includes a representative from Unemployment Insurance program. The unemployment insurance certification trainings, offered through the DWD Learning Center, are used for Rapid Response practitioners and WIOA Title I Career Planners and primary front desk staff. Unemployment insurance programs are an important part of NC's local Rapid Response process. At the time AWE receives knowledge of a WARN or layoff activity, the Rapid Response Policy and Process is put into action. The Rapid Response Team pulls together a worker informational meeting which generally includes an overview of unemployment compensation eligibility, benefits, and procedures.

d. Implementation of initiatives such as incumbent worker 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 regional employers.

Work-based learning is a key strategy the AWE supports to connect customers to our primary industry sectors and career pathways. AWE has two strong sector partnerships - CWIMA (Central Wisconsin Manufacturer's Alliance) and WATEA (Wisconsin Automotive Truck Education Association). Both are designed to be employer- led alliances to specifically build and develop a skilled youth pipeline and strong adult workforce to meet their immediate and future workforce needs. The Business Solutions Team uses these sector partnerships to promote work-based learning opportunities to employers and helps make connections for participants interested in these opportunities. Work-based learning is promoted through various ways including academic and career planning with customers, customer orientation, and partner meetings and presentations. AWE has two specific policies in place to maximize services for both business customers and individual customers: Customized Training and On-the-Job Training (OJT). The policy and procedure most utilized is the OJT policy and procedure. AWE, its contracted service providers, and Business Solutions Team will continue to promote and cultivate these opportunities, work experiences, internships, and apprenticeship to support job seekers and employers under WIOA. AWE will utilize non-ITA training services for on-the-job training, customized training, and Registered Apprenticeship, when appropriate. When meeting the needs of area employers, AWE will utilize contracted training following the guidelines in section 10 of TEGL 3-15. Specific to WIOA Youth, AWE requires its subrecipients to report work experience expenditures monthly to facilitate monthly monitoring of the subrecipient's progress towards the 20% minimum work experience expenditure requirement.

10. **Provide an examination of how the local WDB will coordinate local workforce investment activities with regional economic development activities that are carried out in the local area. Include strategies to promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.**

    The regional workforce system is tailored to meet the needs of regional economies. Therefore, it also must be aligned with primary and secondary education, higher education, and economic development entities. This alignment is achieved primarily through relationship building, networking, and collaborative programming and services. Centergy and Grow North are the two WEDC-recognized regional economic development entities in north central Wisconsin. There have been multiple collaborative initiatives between AWE and the regional economic development entities, including entrepreneurial development, regional labor market analysis and dissemination, and a Community Response Team for major dislocation events. AWE and its staff, specifically its Business & Community Engagement Coordinator, is an active partner in various initiatives of local chambers of commerce and county economic development corporations, primarily focusing on gathering business intelligence, development of a talent pipeline, and retention of young adults. AWE works with local community and economic development partners to provide microenterprise and entrepreneurial training and support such as the Small Business Development Center at UW-Stevens Point. AWE's ITA and Business Track policies are currently in place for participants who want to pursue microenterprise and entrepreneurial training.

11. **Describe the one-stop delivery system in the local area, in particular:**
    a. **Describe how the local WDB 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.**
    b. **Describe how the local WDB 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.**
    c. **Describe how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will ensure the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities as required by WIOA Section 188 and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 USC 12101 et.seq.).**
    Include a description of how one-stop center staff will be trained to address the needs of individuals with disabilities.
    AWE, the One Stop Operator, and job center partners will continue to comply with the physical and programmatic accessibility requirements of Section 188 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Job center basic services are available to all populations. There are dedicated resource room staff who are knowledgeable of job center programs and services. All programs provide access to any interested job seeker. Through the partners housed in the job center, information and services are provided to people with disabilities, older workers, justice-involved, minorities, etc. Job Service currently has bilingual staff that speak Hmong and Spanish and are available with reasonable notice. Other languages are provided through community contacts or vendors. The job center managers will use the monthly meeting structure facilitated by AWE staff to incorporate all relevant feedback from job seekers, service providers, and community-based organizations. Annual all-staff training events will include additional opportunities to ensure compliance and provide equal opportunity training. Our most recent training focused on

usage of the Language Line interpretation service as well as facilitating telephone calls for deaf and hard of hearing individuals using our IP Relay service.
AWE will continue to work with DWD to receive Technical Assistance regarding on-site monitoring of Equal Opportunity practices. AWE will visit each Job Center site annually to conduct on-site monitoring. Various auxiliary aids are available at the one-stops in WDA 6. Reasonable accommodations are available upon request. To date, AWE has never denied a reasonable accommodation request. According to its LEP analysis, the region is exceeding its multilingual communication and posting requirements providing AWE with excellent outreach and effective communication.

d. Attach or link to a copy of the most recent One-Stop Delivery System Memorandum(a) of Understanding (MOU) describing the roles and resource contributions of each of the one-stop partners.

12. Describe and assess the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area.

Activities and services available in the local area for adults and dislocated workers include:

- Adult education instruction;
- Apprenticeships;
- Assessments;
- Career exploration;
- Childcare and transportation assistance;
- Disability-related programs and services;
- Economic support programs;
- English as a second language instruction;
- Financial literacy services;
- GED and HSED;
- Internships;
- Job search assistance;
- Job skills training;
- Labor market information;
- Occupational skills training;
- On-the-job training;
- Rapid response and re-employment services;
- Support services;
- Workshops; and
- Work-based learning experiences.

The WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker Program, Wagner-Peyser re-employment services, TAA, and Unemployment Insurance routinely work together to coordinate services and expand offerings to dislocated workers. Co-enrollment often occurs amongst partner agencies to best serve the participant.

AWE's Adult and Dislocated Worker programs have various employment and training activities available. The Adult and Dislocated Worker programs offer a variety of basic and individualized career services starting with informational workshops, small group, and

specialized one-on-one sessions. Typically, career services are provided in the area job centers. On occasion some services may be provided in a local community library or virtually, when warranted. Under Title I, the provision of career services is built into the Adult and Dislocated Worker contracts of the sub grantees. However, career services are also provided by other one stop partners, and many times co-facilitated. Career planners can also provide participants with quality labor market data and wage analysis to assist in employment and/or training decisions.

In addition to the traditional training options available through the technical college system, AWE works with its local technical colleges to create short-term training opportunities based on input from its sector partnerships. Historically, some of these short-term training opportunities have been designated as pre-apprenticeship programs. Pre-apprenticeship programs bridge a gap, helping to give participants the hard and soft skills needed to gain admission into Registered Apprenticeship or related occupational advancement. These pre-apprenticeship options will provide exposure to a wide variety of high skill, high wage careers, and enabling participants to understand the workforce demands in a myriad of industries, learn the educational and vocational skills needed for entry, and address any deficits that may hinder employment success. AWE will encourage and promote the "Yes, WIOA Can" philosophy.

AWE has two specific policies in place to maximize services for both business customers and individual customers - Customized Training and On-the-Job Training (OJT). The policy and procedure most utilized is OJT. AWE, its contracted service providers, and Business Solutions Team will continue to promote and cultivate these opportunities under WIOA.

AWE has a strong history of utilizing formula funds for dislocated workers in the region. With dislocations of 25 or more, AWE and its contracted provider will work together to request Rapid Response Grants from DWD, when needed. As the dislocation activities progress, AWE will also request Additional Assistance grants from DWD to provide training services and expand the number served by training services. AWE has a strong history of collaborating with DWD in pursuing other National Dislocated Worker Grants from the Department of Labor.

AWE will continue to look for ways to refine its One-Stop system services and activities through strategic planning and the annual One-Stop-Operator Job Center Partners meeting. Using employer input and insight from the One-Stop system service providers, AWE can identify opportunities to coordinate and leverage resources to support its target populations. The AWE is well positioned to support customers with career, support, and training services through various regional collaborations described above. AWE has demonstrated this through its positive WIOA performance achievements for Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs. AWE, along with DWD, will encourage and promote the "Yes, WIOA Can" philosophy to serve customers.

AWE continues to review the labor market data and unemployment rates along with the size and frequency of company dislocations in the region to assess the economic and labor climate. Assessing the economic and labor climate assists AWE in determining the need for additional funding requests such as a dislocated worker grants, rapid response requests, and additional assistance grants to increase the capacity levels of its dislocated worker program.
When appropriate, the AWE will also use the option to transfer funds between the adult and dislocated worker programs to allow the best services and activities to target populations.

13. **Describe how the local WDB will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities.**

AWE's Business and Community Engagement Coordinator initiates contact with the business once a WARN or other type of notice is received regarding a closure. The information is entered into the RRETs system. The Business and Community Engagement Coordinator then works with the contracted dislocated worker provider to ensure employer and worker services are carried out per the local policy and Rapid Response procedure. As awareness of smaller closures is received, information and services become the responsibility of the contracted dislocated worker provider and coordinated with AWE staff. Information is also discussed and coordinated with the regional business solution and job center management teams.

14. **Describe and assess the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local area, including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities.**

Identify successful models of such activities.

Activities and services available in the local area for youth include the required 14 youth program elements:

- Adult mentoring;
- Alternative secondary school services or high school dropout recovery services;
- Career awareness, counseling, and exploration (e.g., labor market information, assessments);
- Case management and coaching;
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling;
- Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation and training; Entrepreneurial skills training;
- Financial literacy services;
- Follow-up services;
- Leadership development opportunities;
- Occupational skills training;
- Postsecondary preparation and transition activities;
- Support services;
- Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and dropout prevention and recovery services; and,
- Work experience, both paid and unpaid (e.g., pre-apprenticeship programs, internships, on the-job training)

AWE continues to evaluate and refine the design of its youth program and how to assist youth smoothly with the transition from secondary education to postsecondary education and/or the workforce. Career Planners work closely with the area high schools, alternative schools, technical colleges, and adult education agencies to help youth achieve education. Per the Individual Service Strategy, support services and incentives are used to assist and motivate youth. The youth service provider provides access to a comprehensive menu of the 14 program elements to support a participant's identified career pathway and postsecondary education

goals. Program elements are provided directly by the contracted youth service provider or by community organizations as identified in the local Youth MOUs.

AWE, through its contracted youth service provider, is well positioned to provide each of the 14 youth program elements. It has demonstrated this through positive WIOA performance achievements for the Youth Program. The Youth Program elements will be made available to young adults, as appropriate and according to the Individualized Service Strategy (ISS). AWE, its contracted providers, and WIOA partners will implement activities to meet the 14 required program elements.

One of the AWE's strengths is the strong relationship with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). DVR and the local school districts are collaborative partners while providing services to young individuals with disabilities. AWE also works closely with the DVR in improving a seamless referral system. With the ability to serve in-school youth and out- of-school youth in Title I, creating a strong, seamless transition for DVR in-school youth is a win-win situation for youth with disabilities. AWE may need to refine its emphasis pending the Department of Labor youth waiver granted to DWD.

AWE's contracted youth service provider and DVR collaborate to place youth with barriers into work-based learning experiences. DVR must spend a portion of their budget on specific Pre-employment Transitional Services for students with disabilities in high school. AWE and its contracted youth provider have a strong history of providing opportunities for youth participants through work experiences, internships, and on-the-job training. Through the local Business Solutions team, many successful connections with employers are made. AWE works to ensure funding is allocated to maximize opportunities and spending is monitored to ensure success.

AWE has adopted strategies to develop and retain a pipeline of talent. Those strategies include a stronger connection between the Business Solutions team, the employer alliances, and the various economic development partners to the 33 public school districts in WDA 6. AWE has strong sector partnerships with the Central Wisconsin Manufacturer's Alliance and the Wisconsin Automotive and Truck Education Association. AWE's partnerships with these employer associations assist in increasing short-term training opportunities and work- based learning activities for youth in the region.

AWE will continue to build upon its relationship with the four providers of youth apprenticeships in the region to increase work experience opportunities. AWE has also been assisting DWD in refining linkages between existing youth apprenticeship and adult apprenticeship opportunities. All strategies put into place are intended to increase an individual's employment skills and employer needs.

15. **Describe how the local WDB will coordinate relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.**

AWE has strong relationships with its three technical colleges. AWE staff facilitate meetings, typically held three times a year, with technical college staff, its contracted providers and other job center partners to discuss programs, services and opportunities to collaborate. During these meetings, local programming is discussed.

In addition, representatives from secondary and postsecondary education programs serve on the WDB. This representation allows for coordination of strategies and enhanced services.

AWE staff also help coordinate services with two employer alliances that have secondary and post-secondary representation. AWE's Workforce Services Director and Business & Community Engagement Coordinator share and collect program information as part of a strategy to coordinate and enhance services, while minimizing duplication of services.

16. **Describe how the local WDB will coordinate WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with the provision of transportation and other appropriate supportive services in the local area.**

Supportive services, including transportation, can play a critical role in the success of a participant. WIOA Title 1 Career Planners maintain up-to-date knowledge of transportation options in their respective areas. This is especially important in rural areas where public transportation can be limited. Career Planners can assist clients in navigating the public transportation system in areas where it is available. Career Planners may assist participants in researching available modes, schedules, costs, and reserving rides. Transportation resources include bus passes, gas cards, taxi rides, and the promotion of ridesharing. WIOA Title 1 Career Planners refer participants, when appropriate, to emergency funds and other community resources. These resources help participants manage transportation challenges, housing and food insecurities, and childcare needs. Career Planners use state and local policies to guide their provision of appropriate supportive services.

17. **Describe plans, assurances, and strategies for maximizing coordination, improving service delivery, and avoiding duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act (29 USC 49 et. seq.) services and other services provided through the one-stop delivery system.**

AWE coordinates a monthly manager meeting for the co-located partners for the planning and implementation efforts for the WDA 6 region. Titles I - IV, Migrant/Seasonal, Vets, and TANF/W-2 programs are co-located at the job centers within WDA 6. Job Center managers meet monthly to discuss programming and services in each area. Information is then shared with their respective staff who also meet as a team to carry out services. Team meetings, business services meetings, and shared workshop calendars improve planning and reduce duplication of services.

18. **Describe how the local WDB will coordinate WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with adult education and literacy activities under WIOA Title II.**
Include a description of how the local WDB will carry out the review of local applications submitted under Title II, consistent with WIOA secs. 107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and WIOA sec. 232.

AWE has a strong relationship with its three technical colleges. AWE staff will continue to facilitate meetings, typically held three times a year, with technical college staff, its contracted providers and other job center partners to discuss programs and services in the respective local regions. Two of the area technical colleges are co-located in the job centers and the third holds regular office hours at its local job center. Title II staff is onsite for Adult Education referrals and services and involved in the digital literacy services provided in the job center. Adult Education and other front-line staff are active members of the job center teams and are assisting in Title I recruitment. AWE also has a working relationship with two area Literacy Councils. Title I providers are informed about services and events through direct contacts, advisory councils, and newsletters.

Through the eligibility and initial assessment phase of Title I services, information releases are obtained from participants involved with other programs. Consultation and/or joint meetings are arranged to coordinate services. If additional service needs are identified, referrals are made on behalf of the participant. AWE looks forward to the work DWD may be doing to create a shared MIS system for the core titles. It will continue to promote subject matter experts in this work. AWE believes a shared MIS system will assist in identifying co- enrolled participants to ensure quality services without duplication.

AWE works closely with its three technical colleges when Title II applications are being prepared. Title II planners have access to the WIOA Local Plan to utilize to promote collaboration. Historically, AWE staff participate in the review process to provide feedback and recommendations regarding their applications. During the Title II application review process, AWE can assess programs and give consideration to future collaboration ideas.

19. **Attach, or link to copies of, executed cooperative agreements which define how all local service providers, including additional providers, will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the one-stop delivery system. This includes cooperative agreements between the local WDB and DWD's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination.**

The One-Stop Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) fulfills the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requirements to document and reach agreement among State and other required parties for negotiating cost sharing, service access, service delivery and other matters

required and essential to the establishment of the local one-stop delivery system. This MOU describes the commitment of the parties to provide integrated workforce services at the Marathon County Comprehensive Job Center, and the additional Affiliate Job Centers in North Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Area (WDA 6).

This MOU is updated on an annual basis and One-Stop Operator on operationalizing the MOU to integrate services for both customers and businesses. Further information on the coordination and collaboration as well as specific services can be found in the DWD-approved MOU located here.

20. Identify the entity responsible for the disbursal of grant funds, as determined by the chief elected official (i.e. fiscal agent).

AWE is the entity responsible for the disbursal of grant funds. The funds are approved and disbursed under the guidance of the CEO Consortium, along with ongoing monitoring by the Executive Committee of AWE.

Attach or link to the Fiscal Agent Agreement, or similar agreement, if applicable.
CEO Consortium Agreement

21. Describe the competitive process used to award the subgrants and contracts in the local area for the WIOA Title I activities.

Competitive proposals, via a defined Request for Proposal (RFP) process, are AWE's established method of procuring services for the Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker program under the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA). Three-year awards (one competitive year followed by two years of contract renewals) are the common practice of AWE contingent upon satisfactory performance, both program and fiscal, during the prior year. A mid-year review and assessment of contracted provider performance will be conducted by the AWE staff. Based on that assessment, the Executive Director will make a recommendation to the Executive Committee regarding contract renewals.

With satisfactory performance and Board approval, a contract renewal is an option that AWE utilizes. It allows for better continuity for participants and optimizes strategic planning with its contracted providers. Even with satisfactory performance, AWE is required to issue a competitive RFP every third year per its fiscal policy.

22. Provide the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official consistent with WIOA section 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the local WDB for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under WIOA Title I Subtitle B, and the one-stop delivery system, in the local area.

AWE and the CEO Consortium will work together with DWD to negotiate performance measures for the coming program years. Negotiations will be based on the five primary

measures within the Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs. The negotiations will be based on current performance, plus a review of current economic conditions, and participant characteristics. In addition, continuous improvement will be considered.
The primary measures include:

- Unsubsidized employment in the 2nd quarter after program exit
- Unsubsidized employment in the 4th quarter after program exit
- Median Earnings
- Credential Attainment
- Measurable Skills Gain

Youth Performance	**PY22 and PY23**
Unsubsidized employment in the 2nd quarter after exit	68%
Unsubsidized employment in the 4th quarter after exit	73%
Median Earnings	$3,600
Credential Attainment Rate	60%
Measurable Skills Gain	40%

Adult Performance	**PY22 and PY23**
Unsubsidized employment in the 2nd quarter after exit	80%
Unsubsidized employment in the 4th quarter after exit	76%
Median Earnings	$6,300
Credential Attainment Rate	70%
Measurable Skills Gain	50%

Dislocated Worker Performance	**PY22 and PY23**
Unsubsidized employment in the 2nd quarter after exit	78%
Unsubsidized employment in the 4th quarter after exit	79%
Median Earnings	$9,200
Credential Attainment Rate	66%
Measurable Skills Gain	84%

AWE and its CEOs will work with DWD for the PY24 and PY25 negotiation process.

23. Describe the actions the local WDB will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing WDB, consistent with the factors developed by the State WDB including but not limited to:

- **Local WDB Roles:**
  - **Identify the role of the Local WDB and Youth Council/Committee in supporting Business Services, Sector Partnerships, Career Pathways, and Work-Based Learning.**
  - **What actions will be taken to ensure that these areas are a priority for the local area?**
  - **What actions and commitments will be made of the local WDB or Youth Council/Committee members (in particular those representing business) to support these initiatives?**

Business Services and other workforce development activities are reported to the Board during the quarterly meetings. Members of the WDB and any workgroups created can provide feedback, support and suggestions for the initiatives as adopted in the strategic

plan. Members are called upon to share their expertise and ideas around sector partnerships, career pathways, and work-based learning. Representatives of each industry partnership (CWIMA and WATEA) participate in WDB meetings and work closely with WDB staff in carrying out workforce initiatives. When necessary, the local WDB has the authority to create ad hoc workgroups for the strategic goals.

- **Local WDB Participation:**
  - **Describe how the local WDB will make businesses in the local area aware of opportunities to participate on the local WDB to ensure representation of industry sectors with the greatest labor force demand.**
  - **Describe how the local WDB will maintain a minimum of at least 51% of businesses as active members and participants on the local WDB.**

The AWE membership roster is available for all to review. Board membership is also included as an agenda item at the quarterly meetings. New members are encouraged to provide information about themselves and their industry, while other members introduce themselves and their industries. In past meetings, members have presented their business and/or innovative approaches to workforce development issues.

The CEO Consortium is notified when a vacancy occurs. The CEOs discuss possible replacements based on the driver industries in the region. They make recommendations on possible members for the Executive Director to follow up on. The Executive Director works closely with its Business & Community Engagement Coordinator as vacancies occur. Once the CEOs determine the industry to be represented, the Director communicates with the Coordinator for possible leads. Outreach to local businesses through contacts with industry leaders, chambers and economic development entities is utilized.

The WDB chart created by DWD is used to maintain the 51% business representation + requirement.

24. Describe how training services outlined in WIOA section 134 will be provided through the use of individual training accounts.

For WIOA-enrolled participants who have been determined eligible for training services, the primary method of providing training services will be through the establishment of an Individual Training Account (ITA) utilizing the state-maintained Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). The ETPL provides eligible participants with a market-like choice for training programs.

AWE's ITA policies set a training cap of $10,000 per individual and limit the training options to "in-demand" occupations determined by labor market information. Applicants/Participants are strongly advised to complete training within the shortest period possible. Participants in technical colleges, proprietary schools, and universities are expected to complete training within 104 weeks. For programs that run longer, or a participant's circumstances warrant a longer duration, extensions are allowable upon a two-tiered review. A two-tiered review can also be used to make exceptions to the other ITA limitations. The two-tiered process involves a further review by at least

one person above the Career Planner/program staff and/or the Workforce Service Director based on the ITA policy and local program guidelines. AWE's policies fall within the policies set forth by DWD.

Identify whether contracts for training services, as described at 20 CFR 680.320, will be used, and, if so:

a. **Describe how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of individual training accounts;**
   On Occasion, AWE will use training contracts in compliance with section 134(c)(3)(G)(iii).
   Training contracts occur based on the determination by AWE that it would be most appropriate to award a training contract to facilitate the training of multiple individuals in an in-demand industry sector or occupation, while not limiting customer choice.

b. **Describe the process the local WDB uses to determine that there are an insufficient number of eligible training provides in the local area to accomplish the purpose of a system of ITAs (see 20 CFR 680.320(a)(2)), including the process for allowing a 30-day public comment period for interested providers; and**
   AWE has not historically experienced an insufficient number of training providers in the region with the presence of three technical colleges, one University, and several private training vendors. If a participant is looking at a program or vendor not listed on the ETPL to establish an ITA, the vendor is contacted and provided the ETPL information.
   Contracted training is considered when there are multiple individuals in an in-demand industry sector or occupation.

c. **Describe the process the local WDB will use to select the providers under a contract for services as required by 20 CFR 680.320(c).**
   AWE has a strong history in providing alternative training opportunities as special grants have evolved. For example, contracted training was provided utilizing the Worker Advancement Initiative, the Collaborative of Wisconsin, and the QUEST grants. Participants have been successful in getting in and out of training and connected to employment opportunities while in a supportive environment. Prior to the planning of any contracted training, there is a review and discussion on what is already available utilizing ITA training. AWE staff work closely as a team and with community partners when opportunities arise. Consideration is given to geographical areas, labor market analysis, timelines, employer involvement and participant needs. As funding allows, AWE will continue to assess the need for contracted training.

Describe how the local WDB will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided.

AWE has prioritized ensuring participants have informed consumer choice in the selection of training providers by requiring its service provider to deliver career counseling and labor market information on occupational projections. Participants are encouraged to select training programs linked to in-demand occupations in the region or other areas of the state where they are willing to relocate. AWE's contracted service provider utilizes the DWD-maintained ETPL with job seekers as a marketplace system for quality, affordable training options to connect to living wage employment opportunities. Informed customer choice also allows training programs to be reviewed and added to the ETPL.

25. Describe how one-stop centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA and by one-stop partners.

AWE welcomes guidance from DWD on implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enables intake and case management information system. AWE is routinely working with one-stop partners to increase efficiency through technology and integrated case management information systems and will promote subject matter expert participation. Career planners will continue to utilize the ASSET system and the CEPT tool for integrated, case management service.

26. Describe the direction given by the Governor and the local WDB to the one-stop operator(s) to ensure priority for adult career and training services will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient.

As part of the WIOA recruitment plan and efforts, AWE's staff and contracted provider reaches out to the community entities that serve those with barriers to employment. For example, outreach has been made to the Adult Education programs of the three technical colleges in the region to reach those with basic skills deficiencies. In addition, outreach and collaboration is made to local Community Action agencies, Literacy Councils, and TANF/W-2 providers to reach targeted populations. AWE has a fourteen-year relationship with the Department of Corrections serving justice-involved individuals through its Windows to Work Program. AWE will expand services to this population through its new Department of Labor-Wisconsin Pathways Home 4 Grant. Through WPH4, eligible recipients in 54 of Wisconsin's 72 counties may receive employment and training services as they transition back to their respective communities. The goal is to build talent pipelines to meet employer needs as well as reducing recidivism across the state. AWE and its contracted provider also comply with Priority of Service categories and requirements, and structure outreach efforts accordingly.
Local Priority of Service- 1.12.23.pdf

27. Describe the strategies, services, and activities employed within the local area to provide business services that meet the workforce investment needs of area employers.

Include, if applicable:

a. Customized screening and referral of qualified participants in training services to employers.

b. Customized employment-related services to employers, employer associations, or other such organizations on a fee-for-service basis that are in addition to labor exchange services available to employers under the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service.

The WDA's Business Solutions team recognizes the importance of a strong connection between local employers and the workforce development system. The Business Solutions team is made up of workforce development professionals from state agencies, universities and technical schools, community resource partners, chambers of commerce, and local economic development staff. To maximize employer outreach and facilitate more connections with local business, the Business Solutions team implemented a regional approach to business solutions. The Business Solutions team is divided into three geographic regions to better meet the needs of business and industry. Officially, it is maintained as one Business Solutions team, but

meetings and events are now regionally focused to facilitate more quality engagement from local teams. Each team now can focus on initiatives and events in their respective three county regions.
This has resulted in an increase in employer tours/visits, establishment of regionalized employer forums to meet the specific needs of local employers, and increased Business Solutions team engagement from team members. Members can now focus on the needs of businesses in their areas.
Business services has implemented a team approach to employer outreach that presents workforce development and resources accessible from the network of partners as opposed to compartmentalized resources that can be viewed as difficult to access. Access to the business solutions network is as simple as contacting any member of the team. Team members are encouraged to set up business solutions team tours and to help develop programs to meet the area businesses' needs.

The local business solutions team developed employer forums throughout the nine-county region to help employers connect with area resources to facilitate discussions in a peer-to-peer setting for employers. Recent forums have made the teams aware of the need for more hiring events in the counties, which include areas that are often underserved outside the reach of job centers. There will be a shift towards increasing the number of these events and allowing area employers a better chance of connecting with job seekers.

28. Describe any limitations the local WDB imposes on individual training accounts, such as limitations of the dollar amounts and/or duration.

Individual Training Accounts are subject to the local WIOA lifetime cap of $10,000. Requests to exceed the ITA lifetime cap of $10,000 must undergo a two-tier review by the service provider and AWE's Workforce Services Director.

WIOA participants may benefit from training services to achieve the goal of entering the workforce and securing family-supporting employment. Training resources are limited and are not an entitlement. The AWE is responsible for protecting resources by funding ITAs at reasonable costs based on market factors.

Participants are expected to complete training within 104 weeks (i.e. weeks when classes are in session). Special program requirements, availability of classes, waiting lists, prerequisites and skills upgrading will be taken into consideration and can extend the training period beyond 104 weeks. Using the two-tiered review process, the service provider's program coordinator may grant a waiver to the 104-week training period requirement.

Graduate Level Training - If individuals have already received WIOA funds for undergraduate level training, then they are ineligible for additional graduate level training. If WIOA has not funded undergraduate level training, then the participant must meet the same 104-training-week, financial aid requirements and other program responsibilities expected of technical college, proprietary school, and four-year university students.

Describe any exceptions to such limitations that may be provided for individual cases.
The $10,000 lifetime cap can be exceeded through a two-tier review by the service provider and AWE's Workforce Services Director. Using the two-tiered review process, a waiver may be granted to the 104-week training period requirement.

Provide assurance that any such limitations do not undermine WIOA's requirement that training services are provided in a manner that maximizes customer choice in the selection of an eligible training provider (ETP).
AWE works with its contracted providers to maximize customer choice based on the criteria listed above. Waivers can be granted to extend both funds available and the time in which training can be completed so each participant can be served appropriately.
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29. **Identify whether the local area will apply, for its WIOA Title I Youth program participants, the optional definition of "basic skills deficient" at 20 CFR 681.290(a)(2): "A youth is 'basic skills deficient' if he or she are [sic] unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society."**

    If yes, include the local WDBs policy for determining whether the criterion is satisfied.
    Yes. Career Planners use assessments, including the TABE Locator, to determine whether youth participants are basic skills deficient. Through the use of various assessments, career planners are better able to tailor services to address the needs of the youth.

30. **Identify whether the local WDB will apply, for its WIOA title I Youth program participants, the eligibility criterion "requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment."**

    If yes, provide the local area's definitions of the criterion for:

    a. **In-school Youth (see 20 CFR 681.310);**
        - Has a parent of guardian who has not graduated from high school.
        - Demonstrates “at risk” traits based on qualified, profession assessment or referral
        - Immediate family member with mental health diagnosis
        - Faces transportation barriers
        - Refugee/immigration of has a parents who has immigrant of refugee status
        - One or more grade levels behind
        - Suspended from school in the past 3 months
        - Fired from a job in the last six calendar months
        - Being raised by someone other than biological parent
        - Child of a parent offender
        - Gang affiliation
        - Substance abuse, current or past
        - Family history of chronic* unemployment
        - Victim/witness of domestic violence or other abuse

    b. **Out of School Youth (see 20 CFR 681.300).**
        - Demonstrates “at risk” traits based on a qualified, professional assessment, referral or self-referral
        - Faces transportation barriers
        - Refugee/immigrant or has a parent who has immigrant or refugee status

- Is the primary caretaker of or provider for member of his/her immediate family (i.e. sibling, parent, grandparent, etc.)
- Has not worked for the same employer for longer than 6 months in the two years prior to eligibility determination
- Has not successfully completed occupational skills training or has not received a credential in occupational skills training
- Fired from a job in the last six calendar months
- Raised by someone other than biological parent
- Child of a parent offender
- Expulsion from school
- Gang affiliation
- Substance abuse, current or past
- Family history of chronic* unemployment
- Victim/witness of domestic violence or other abuse
- First generation high school graduate

*Chronic is defined as unemployed for 27 weeks (approx. 6 months) or longer

31. Describe the design framework for youth programs in the local area, and how the 14 program elements required in 20 CFR 681.460 are to be made available within that framework.

Activities and services available in the local area for youth include the required 14 youth program elements:

- Adult mentoring;
- Alternative secondary school services or high school dropout recovery services;
- Career awareness, counseling, and exploration (e.g., labor market information, assessments);
- Case management and coaching;
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling;
- Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation and training; Entrepreneurial skills training;
- Financial literacy services;
- Follow-up services;
- Leadership development opportunities;
- Occupational skills training;
- Postsecondary preparation and transition activities;
- Support services;
- Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and dropout prevention and recovery services; and,
- Work experience, both paid and unpaid (e.g., pre-apprenticeship programs, internships, on the-job training)

AWE continues to evaluate and refine the design of its youth program and how to best assist youth smoothly with the transition from secondary education to postsecondary education and/or the workforce. Career Planners work closely with the area high schools, alternative

schools, technical colleges, and adult education agencies to assist youth in the attainment of education.

As Youth are determined eligible for ISY or OSY services, an assessment of their employment and training needs are put into the Individual Service Strategy as goals. Per the ISS, support services and incentives are used to assist and motivate youth. The contracted youth service provider provides access to a comprehensive menu of the 14 program elements to support a participant's identified career pathway, postsecondary education, or workforce goals. Program elements are provided directly by the contracted youth service provider or by community organizations identified in the local Youth MOUs.

AWE, through its contracted youth service provider, is well positioned to provide each of the 14 youth program elements. It has demonstrated this through positive WIOA performance achievements for the Youth Program. The Youth Program elements will be made available to young adults, as appropriate and according to the Individualized Service Strategy (ISS). AWE, its contracted providers, and WIOA partners will implement activities to meet the 14 required program elements.

Identify successful models of such activities.
AWE has worked closely with its contracted provider to carry out several successful projects utilizing a blending of funding sources and workforce partners. In the past, AWE collaborated with DVR to carry out LifeWork$. LifeWork$ had a five-year run providing summer employability skills classes followed by a five-week paid work experience with a local employer. The goal was to introduce high school students with disabilities to career exploration and a hands-on introduction to the world of work. Some of the LifeWork$ students went on to enroll in Title I Youth Program to continue their journeys.

Another recent model was putting high school students into a Culinary Basics Boot Camp followed by a five-week paid work experience in local restaurants. This specific industry-led project was created by blending WAI and Title I Youth funds. The success was the collaborative model between WIOA Title I Youth, the Business Solutions team, the technical college and local restaurants. The project was highlighted by two of the local chefs who provided work experiences during the Winning With Wisconsin's Workforce event.

AWE will continue to explore and develop cohort-type, collaborative model opportunities as funding and employer needs continue.

Section III: Administrative Requirements

34. Briefly describe the activities and steps taken to develop this Local Plan.
Identify any stakeholders that were consulted in the development of the plan, including chief elected officials, economic development agencies, representatives of training and/or education, organizations serving youth, organizations serving individuals with barriers to employment, representatives of businesses in demand industries/sectors, and others.

AWE staff reviewed the Local Plan Guidance provided by DWD. Sections were compared to the previous plan for continued relevancy. Staff reviewed the updated regional labor market data utilizing resources from the local DWD Labor Market Analysist and LightCast.

Sections of the guidance were assigned based on staff expertise. Once completed internally, the plan was shared with the WDB's Board of Directors and Chief Elected Officials.
In consultation with the CEOs, the draft plan was posted to the public for 30-day review and comment. AWE directly emailed the draft plan to various stakeholders for review and comment. Stakeholder lists consist of those who were consulted in the development of the plan, including chief elected officials, economic development agencies, representatives of training and/or education, organizations serving youth, organizations serving individuals with barriers to employment, representatives of businesses in in-demand industries/sectors, and job center partners. The public has access on AWE's website and by public notice.

35. **Briefly describe the process used by the local WDB in this local area to provide an opportunity for public comment, including comments by representatives of businesses and representatives of labor organizations, and other public input into the development of the plan prior to its submission.**

Once it was available for public comment, the draft Plan was posted on AWE's website with instructions on how to submit comments via email. All Board members and CEOs were notified by email. Public notice was also posted in area newspapers with instructions to the website. During the 30-day review and comment period, AWE staff were available for a special one- day "public hearing" where members of the public can contact the AWE office regarding the plan. All comments made through the AWE's website, calls and/or in-person visits are documented. Any comments expressing disagreement with the plan will be included with the Local Plan when submitted to DWD.

Identify the start and end dates of the public comment period (not to exceed 30 days).

April 12th to May 12th, 2024

Include an accounting of any comments that express disagreement with the plan.

No comments were received.

36. **Include any attachments referenced throughout the Local Plan, if applicable (e.g., cooperative service agreements, memoranda of understanding, local policies, etc.)**

Job Center MOUs
Youth MOUs
ITA Policy
CEO Consortium Agreement
Youth Additional Assistance

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Local Priority of Service- 1.12.23.pdf

Section IV: Attestations and Signatures

I hereby attest that this WIOA Regional Plan was:

- Developed in partnership with the local WDB and appropriate chief elected officials;
- Put out for public comment for at least 30 days prior to submission to DWD for approval, and if comments were received that express disagreement with the Plan they are included with this submission; and
- Properly approved at the local level in accordance with the applicable local governance documents (e.g., bylaws, WDB-CEO Agreement, Consortium Agreement, or similar).

Printed name of chief elected official	Signature of chief elected official	Date
Al Chaney		
Printed name of local WDB chairperson	Signature of local WDB chairperson	Date
Brian Kalish		
Printed name of local WDB Director	Signature of local WDB Director	Date