



North Central Wisconsin Job Center Partner Meeting

Thursday, March 5, 2026, at 1:00 p.m.

Minutes

Present: Amber Stancher (MSTC), Brian Kalish (AWE), Brian Wolfe (FSC) Brooke Schindler (NTC), Michelle Carter (DWD), Jacelia Colla (UMOS), Dianne Sennholz (NCCAP), Ginger Keymer (AWE), Heidi Luft (Thriving Wisconsin), Kathryn Krause (NTC), Kathy Kloes (FSC), Libby Heidmann (AWE), Lisa Young (Nicolet), Matt Rice (DWD), Mitchell Rupp (DWD), Patty Noland (DVR), Peter Gelhar (AWE), and Tim Schindler (UMOS).

- 1. Welcome and OSO Overview** – Ginger Keymer opened the OSO Job Center Partner Meeting, noting technical difficulties with her camera. She outlined her role as the One Stop Operator, detailing responsibilities such as coordinating monthly meetings, supporting the implementation of the MOU, and facilitating staff development training. Mari Kay-Nabazony's team with WDA 7 will provide contract management and fiscal oversight to WDA6 in their management of the OSO. The decertification of the Wisconsin Rapids Job Center marks a significant change in service within WDA6 leading to a larger revision of our MOU in PY2026.
- 2. Presentation by Heidi Luft, PhD, RN – Executive Director of Thriving Wisconsin** – Dr. Heidi Luft discussed their mission to promote quality early childhood and family support services, highlighting their statewide networks and initiatives like the Family Friendly Workplaces program as potential for collaboration and partnership.
- 3. Economic Overview with Q & A to follow (Mitchell Rupp, DWD Regional Economist)** Mitchell Rupp presented a labor market update, noting that while regional employment decreased by 3.2% from June 2019 to June 2025, unemployment rates returned to pre-pandemic levels at 3.2%. Rupp noted the decline in labor market participation by adults ages 16 and older from a high of 68.2% in 1990 to 61.5% in 2024. We have an aging population in the North Central region of Wisconsin; our share of adults age 65 and older reached 22% in 2020 and could reach 28% in 2030, compared to state-wide average of 18% in 2020 and projection of 22.8% in 2030. Population growth is projected to decline in north central Wisconsin from 2030-2050. This is mirrored by significantly fewer births by young women ages 29 and younger.

4. Continuous Improvement of the One-Stop Delivery System

Collection of Customer Data and its use to Improve Service Delivery –

Wolfe highlighted the transition at **FSC** away from annual surveys to real time surveys with QR codes at staff members' desks. This has been new in the last month or so, but by and large has been a very positive change, in terms of catching and providing feedback more responsively and address opportunities and challenges as they happen, including passing along positive feedback more immediately with staff members.

Noland explained that the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) follows up with consumers whenever a service or product has been purchased on their behalf (e.g., job coaching, interview clothing).

- a) Follow-up calls ask consumers if they are satisfied with the vendor or service received.
- b) The focus of feedback is primarily on **vendor/service satisfaction**, not on evaluating DVR services overall.
- c) Consumers are informed of their **appeal rights** whenever purchases are made on their behalf.
- d) Negative feedback is rare and typically handled on a case-by-case basis by reviewing the consumer's case and addressing concerns.
- e) Currently, DVR **does not have a formal system, dashboard, or structured process** for reviewing or analyzing this feedback.

Kalish noted current surveys from job center visitors are generally positive but are limited to **short collection periods twice per year**. Suggested improvements:

- a) Use **QR codes or electronic surveys** accessible year-round.
- b) Gather more continuous feedback to better understand customer needs.

Stancher shared that MSTC tracks customer feedback on experiences, whether services were **virtual or in person**, follow-through rates after virtual appointments and **no-show rates** for virtual vs. in-person meetings. This data is being used to determine **which services should remain virtual vs. require in-person meetings**. Findings show:

- a) Virtual participants often do not follow through on next steps
- b) Virtual appointments may result in more **staff time lost** due to no-shows

Identifying Data Gaps and Opportunities

Heidmann noted that organizations often focus on **required reporting data**, leaving little capacity to explore additional questions that could improve services. Opportunity identified for the group to **fill gaps in cross-partner data analysis** and identify trends such as:

- a) Follow-through rates
- b) Repeat usage
- c) Service outcomes

Ideas for Unified Data Collection

Stancher suggested developing a **shared customer feedback questionnaire** for all partners.

- a) Surveys automatically sent after appointments (virtual or in-person)
- b) Shared core questions for all partners.
- c) Additional program-specific questions were routed to appropriate agencies.

This approach could support **year-round, real-time feedback collection**.

5. Round Robin of WIOA Partner Updates & Special Projects

Kalish with **AWE** reported the **WAI Grant** is nearing its June 30 completion date. Participation exceeds initial expectations. **FORWD Grant** expected to conclude in September. Potential grants included the **Restart Grant**, focused on reentry services for justice involved individuals and **Healthcare Workforce Grant**, a large initiative addressing regional healthcare workforce shortages.

Noland reported that **DVR** currently has a statewide waitlist of 4,753 individuals for services. In the local workforce development area, there are just under 300 individuals on the waitlist. DVR has requested \$11 million from the Joint Finance Committee to meet federal match requirements and reduce the waitlist through June 30 and into the next fiscal year. Other DVR initiatives are largely paused due to focus on managing the waitlist.

6. MOU Update

The MOU is required under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) to define roles, services, costs, and referral processes among partners. Changes in the Wisconsin Rapids Job Center will require a major MOU revision for Program Year 2026. State guidance on updates is expected soon. Kalish encouraged partners to use upcoming meetings to:

- a) Review MOU language
- b) Improve referral processes between partners
- c) Work towards creating a functional guide rather than a compliance exercise.

Referral Process Improvement Idea

Stancher suggested creating a **simple referral guide** for partners that includes:

(a) Program contact links, (b) Expected response timelines, (c) What participants can expect after referral. This could **1)** Simplify the current complex MOU service matrix and **2)** Improve partner coordination and customer experience.

7. Meeting adjourned at 2:22 p.m.

Next OSO Meeting – Thursday, June 4th at 1:00pm



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