



Advance
Central PA

Linking People & Business

Multi-year Local Plan

Effective Program Year 2025 - Program Year 2028
July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2029

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STRATEGIC PLANNING: LOCAL AREA WORKFORCE AND ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

Section 1.1: Workforce analysis

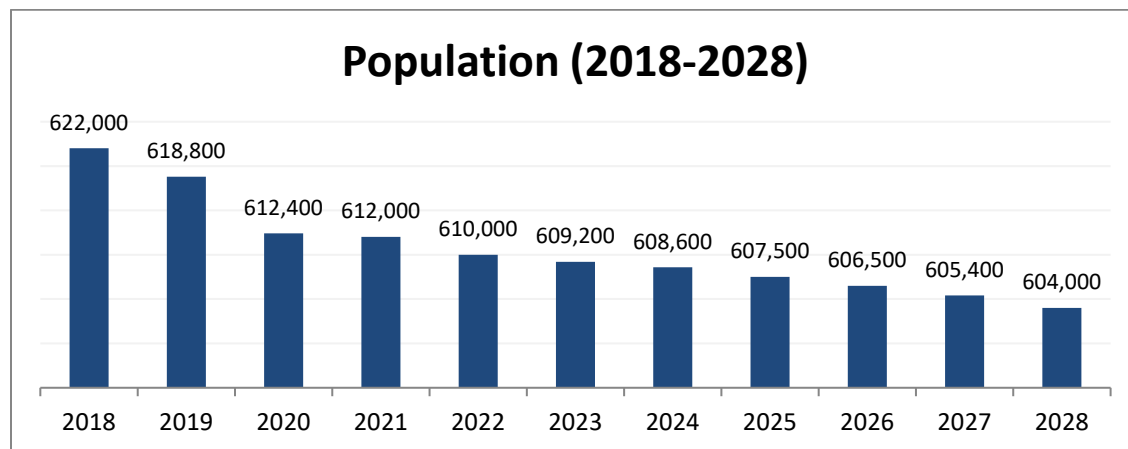
Provide an analysis of the regional workforce, including the composition of the local area's population and current labor force employment data.

The Central Workforce Development Area (WDA) is comprised of Centre, Clinton, Columbia, Lycoming, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder, and Union counties. Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corporation (D.B.A. Advance Central PA as referenced throughout the rest of the local plan) is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization designated as the local workforce development board (WDB). The Central Pennsylvania WDB governs the workforce development system for the Central WDA.

Advance Central PA oversees programs that are designed to assure that businesses in Central Pennsylvania remain competitive and create jobs, that workers have opportunities to obtain skills that will help them become or remain self-sufficient, and that our communities are economically resilient. We are committed to the development and unification of a demand-driven workforce system that will attract and grow businesses and the Central Pennsylvania economy. This local plan effective July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2029 outlines our current local workforce development system and workforce strategies to create a ready workforce to meet employer demand.

Demographics

The Central Workforce Development Area (WDA) is approximately the same size as Rhode Island and Connecticut combined with a population of 609,226 spread over 5,370 square miles, with about 13% of the population of those two states. Predominantly rural in nature with many small municipalities, there are concentrated population areas in State College, home of Pennsylvania State University, Williamsport, and other small towns in each of the 9 counties. The current (2023) population of the 9-County region decreased by 12,810 (-2.1%) since 2018 and is projected to decrease by 5,276 (-0.9%) by 2028. The Central WDA demonstrates a decreasing population, as evidenced by the following chart:



Source: Lightcast 2025.1

Over half (248,600; 59.2%) of the WDA population is found in Centre, Lycoming, and Northumberland Counties. Columbia County is the only county projected to increase in population (1,119; 2%) over the next 5 years, while all other counties in the WDA are projected to decrease. While most counties are projected to decrease by less than 2%, Union County is projected to see the largest population decrease over the next five years at 5%.

Population						
Area	2018		2023		2028	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Centre	162,895	26.2%	157,795	25.9%	157,009	26.0%
Clinton	38,647	6.2%	37,607	6.2%	37,196	6.2%
Columbia	65,278	10.5%	65,439	10.7%	66,558	11.0%
Lycoming	114,175	18.4%	112,724	18.5%	111,029	18.4%
Mifflin	46,181	7.4%	45,922	7.5%	45,757	7.6%
Montour	18,172	2.9%	17,860	2.9%	17,806	2.9%
Northumberland	91,124	14.6%	90,120	14.8%	89,320	14.8%
Snyder	40,474	6.5%	39,717	6.5%	39,332	6.5%
Union	45,090	7.2%	42,042	6.9%	39,943	6.6%
Central WDA	622,036	100.0%	609,226	100.0%	603,950	100.0%

Source: Lightcast 2025.1

The Central WDA has an aging population, with the median age increasing from 39.1 to 39.8 in the past 5 years. Projections from Lightcast suggest additional aging. From 2023 to 2028, the population under the age of 29 years is projected to decrease by a combined 2,025 individuals (-0.9%) and the population ages 40-59 years is projected to decrease by 3,432 (-2.4%). Conversely, the population ages 60 years and over is projected to increase by 3,665 (2.3%). Not only are the younger age groups declining, but the older age categories are expanding.

WDA Population by Age						
Age Group	2018		2023		2028	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Under 5 years	30,339	4.9%	28,118	4.6%	27,848	4.6%
5 to 9 years	31,483	5.1%	30,654	5.0%	28,645	4.7%
10 to 14 years	33,327	5.4%	31,803	5.2%	31,169	5.2%
15 to 19 years	46,528	7.5%	47,548	7.8%	45,251	7.5%
20 to 24 years	59,761	9.6%	58,264	9.6%	59,502	9.9%
25 to 29 years	41,096	6.6%	34,665	5.7%	36,612	6.1%
30 to 34 years	37,096	6.0%	37,498	6.2%	34,116	5.6%
35 to 39 years	35,558	5.7%	36,279	6.0%	36,177	6.0%
40 to 44 years	32,812	5.3%	35,019	5.7%	36,327	6.0%
45 to 49 years	36,904	5.9%	32,100	5.3%	34,746	5.8%
50 to 54 years	39,269	6.3%	36,245	5.9%	31,204	5.2%
55 to 59 years	42,085	6.8%	38,409	6.3%	36,064	6.0%
60 to 64 years	41,494	6.7%	40,421	6.6%	36,241	6.0%
65 to 69 years	34,950	5.6%	38,542	6.3%	38,293	6.3%
70 to 74 years	28,028	4.5%	31,212	5.1%	33,952	5.6%

75 to 79 years	20,345	3.3%	23,412	3.8%	26,146	4.3%
80 to 84 years	14,775	2.4%	15,020	2.5%	17,892	3.0%
85 years and over	16,186	2.6%	14,017	2.3%	13,764	2.3%
Total	622,036	100.0%	609,226	100.0%	603,950	100.0%

Source: Lightcast 2025.1

A majority of the population in the Central WDA is White (92%), and a majority is Non-Hispanic (96.4%). The White population shows historical and projected decreases, while all other race categories have increases. The Black population is projected to increase by 8.4% (1,809 individuals) over the next 5 years. Similarly, the Asian population shows a projected increase of 7.3% (1,046 individuals). The Hispanic population increased by 21.2% (3,825 individuals) in the past 5 years, and it is projected to increase by 23.6% (5,164 individuals) in the next 5 years. Overall, demographics in the Central WDA show a decreasing population that is aging and becoming more racially diverse.

WDA Population by Race and Ethnicity						
Race and Ethnicity	2018		2023		2028	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
White	575,484	92.5%	560,414	92.0%	549,337	91.0%
Black	20,731	3.3%	21,468	3.5%	23,277	3.9%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1,446	0.2%	1,719	0.3%	2,253	0.4%
Asian	14,672	2.4%	14,405	2.4%	15,451	2.6%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	350	0.1%	433	0.1%	726	0.1%
Two or More Races	9,353	1.5%	10,787	1.8%	12,906	2.1%
Non-Hispanic	603,987	97.1%	587,352	96.4%	576,913	95.5%
Hispanic	18,049	2.9%	21,874	3.6%	27,038	4.5%
Total	622,036	100.0%	609,226	100.0%	603,950	100.0%

Source: Lightcast 2025.1

There are 238,961 households in the Central WDA, which decreased by 0.6% from 2018 to 2023. The median household income increased by 24.5% to \$65,631. Households with an income of less than \$50,000 decreased by 19.4%, while households with an income of \$50,000 or more increased by 16.7%. Households with an income of \$150,000 or more increased a notable 87.5%. These trends indicate rising income levels across households in the Central WDA which can have a positive impact on the local economy.

WDA Population by Households and Household Income				
Income	2018		2023	
Less than \$24,999	55,332	23.0%	42,377	17.7%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	59,655	24.8%	50,343	21.1%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	76,226	31.7%	73,883	30.9%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	31,465	13.1%	39,326	16.5%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	9,707	4.0%	17,895	7.5%
\$200,000 or more	7,909	3.3%	15,137	6.3%

Total Households	240,294	100.0%	238,961	100.0%
Median Household Income	\$52,728	--	\$65,631	--

Source: 2014-2018 ("2018") and 2019-2023 ("2023") 5-Year American Community Surveys

Educational attainment is based on the highest level of education achieved by the population ages 25 years and over (412,839). Current estimates demonstrate that 9.2% of the population in the Central WDA has less than a high school education, 39.5% has a high school diploma, 13.5% have some college with no degree, 9.3% have an associate degree, and 28.5% has a bachelor's degree or higher.

WDA Population by Educational Attainment						
Level	2018		2023		2028	
Less Than 9th Grade	13,428	3.2%	11,787	2.9%	10,175	2.5%
9th Grade to 12th Grade	30,844	7.3%	26,067	6.3%	22,666	5.5%
High School Diploma	172,065	40.9%	163,238	39.5%	157,418	38.3%
Some College	59,052	14.0%	55,751	13.5%	54,448	13.2%
Associate's Degree	35,546	8.5%	38,350	9.3%	41,009	10.0%
Bachelor's Degree	64,303	15.3%	66,732	16.2%	70,351	17.1%
Graduate Degree and Higher	45,360	10.8%	50,914	12.3%	55,467	13.5%
Total	420,598	100.0%	412,839	100.0%	411,535	100.0%
High School or Lower	216,337	51.4%	201,092	48.7%	190,259	46.2%
Bachelor's or Higher	109,663	26.1%	117,646	28.5%	125,819	30.6%

Source: Lightcast 2025.1; based on population ages 25 years and over

Projected trends indicate the population with post-secondary degrees will rise over the next five years. Associate degrees holders are expected to increase by 6.9%, bachelor's degree holders by 5.4%, and holders of graduate degrees and higher by 8.9%. Conversely, lower levels of educational attainment are projected to decline, with the number of individuals holding a high school diploma or lower expected to decrease by 5.4%.

Labor Market Information

Advance Central PA continues to monitor changes in the labor market, including employment fluctuation and labor force participation, to understand future labor market trends and better serve local jobseekers and employers. The Central WDA has largely recovered from the 2020 downturn caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, though employment levels haven't fully returned to pre-pandemic highs. As of December 2024, the Central WDA has a civilian labor force of 298,000 with 287,000 employed and 11,000 unemployed, resulting in an unemployment rate of 3.7%.

The following table identifies the labor market information in the Central WDA annually from 2018-2023 and the seasonally adjusted data from December 2024:

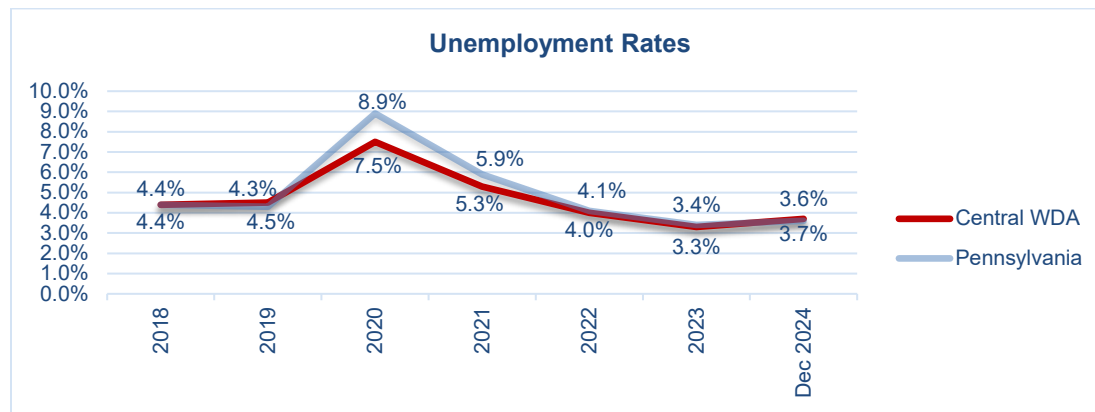
WDA Labor Market Information				
Time Period	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
2018	305,400	291,900	13,500	4.4%
2019	306,100	292,400	13,700	4.5%
2020	299,600	277,100	22,500	7.5%
2021	294,700	279,000	15,700	5.3%

2022	296,000	284,000	12,000	4.0%
2023	300,300	290,300	10,000	3.3%
December 2024*	298,000	287,000	11,000	3.7%

Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis; December 2024 data is seasonally adjusted.

The labor force peaked in 2019 at 306,100 before experiencing a decline in 2020 due to the pandemic (299,600). Since then, the labor force has shown fluctuations, reaching a high of 300,300 in 2023. This suggests a partial recovery but not a full return to pre-pandemic levels. Employment followed a similar pattern, dropping significantly to 277,100 in 2020 due to the pandemic; a loss of over 15,000 jobs from 2019. Recovery has been steady, reaching a high of 290,300 in 2023, approaching 2019 employment levels (292,400). The unemployed population decreased steadily as the local economy rebounded, falling to its lowest level in 2023 (10,000).

After a period of stability from 2018-2019, the unemployment rate spiked in 2020 to 7.5% due to the pandemic. The following graph tracks the average annual unemployment rate in the Central WDA compared to the statewide rate from 2018-2023 and the current, seasonally adjusted rate from December 2024:



Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis, based on the February 2025 dataset.

The unemployment rate also varies by educational attainment levels. According to the American Community Survey, in 2023 the unemployment rate for individuals with less than a high school education was 5.3%. This decreases to 3.9% for a high school education, 4.0% for some college or associate degree, and 2.2% for a bachelor's degree or higher indicating higher levels of education lead to lower levels of unemployment in the Central WDA.

County-specific trends reveal distinct differences in the employment landscape across the Central WDA. While all counties experienced a sharp rise in unemployment rates in 2020 due to the economic impact of COVID-19, most had recovered to or even fallen below pre-pandemic levels by 2023. Centre and Montour Counties consistently maintain the lowest unemployment rates in the region; however, their unemployed populations differ significantly due to their varying sizes. In December 2024, Montour County reported just 300 unemployed jobseekers, while Centre County had the largest unemployed population at 2,200, reflecting its larger labor force. This contrast highlights the varying economic dynamics within the region, emphasizing the need for tailored workforce development strategies to address each county's unique labor market conditions.

Unemployment Rates							
County	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Dec 2024
Centre	3.3%	3.3%	5.7%	4.3%	3.3%	2.7%	2.8%
Clinton	5.5%	5.4%	8.5%	6.2%	5.0%	4.0%	4.7%
Columbia	4.9%	4.7%	7.9%	5.4%	4.2%	3.6%	3.9%
Lycoming	4.9%	4.8%	8.6%	6.2%	4.4%	3.5%	3.8%
Mifflin	4.8%	4.6%	8.2%	5.7%	4.4%	3.5%	4.2%
Montour	3.6%	3.5%	6.1%	4.1%	3.2%	2.7%	3.1%
Northumberland	5.4%	5.5%	9.1%	6.3%	4.6%	4.0%	4.3%
Snyder	4.1%	5.4%	7.4%	4.8%	4.0%	3.4%	4.1%
Union	3.9%	4.0%	6.6%	4.4%	3.6%	2.9%	3.5%

Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis

Unemployed Population							
County	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Dec 2024
Centre	2,700	2,700	4,400	3,300	2,600	2,200	2,200
Clinton	1,000	1,000	1,500	1,100	800	700	800
Columbia	1,700	1,600	2,700	1,800	1,400	1,200	1,300
Lycoming	2,900	2,800	4,900	3,500	2,400	2,000	2,100
Mifflin	1,000	1,000	1,800	1,200	900	700	900
Montour	300	300	600	400	300	300	300
Northumberland	2,400	2,400	3,900	2,700	1,900	1,700	1,800
Snyder	800	1,100	1,500	1,000	800	700	800
Union	800	800	1,300	900	700	600	700

Source: Center for Workforce Information and Analysis

Jobs

As of 2023, the Central WDA supports 280,889 jobs, with 18.9% in goods-producing industries and 81.1% in service-providing industries. Job projections indicate a 1.8% increase (5,123 jobs) by 2028, with the majority of growth (78.3% or 4,011 jobs) occurring in service-providing sectors. Nearly half (48.7%) of all jobs are concentrated in Government (including public education), Healthcare and Social Assistance, and Manufacturing, highlighting the region's key economic drivers.

Workforce demographics reveal that 58.4% of jobs are held by prime-age workers, but with 27.4% of positions occupied by workers aged 55 and older, there will be an increasing need to upskill younger employees to fill vacancies caused by retirements. The loss of experienced workers presents a significant challenge to employers, making training and credentialing essential for companies to sustain operations and retain institutional knowledge. Addressing these workforce shifts will be critical to maintaining long-term economic stability in the region.

Workforce (Jobs) by Age Group		
Age Group	Jobs	
Under 25	41,099	14.6%
25-34	52,893	18.8%
35-44	56,585	20.1%

45-55	54,671	19.5%
55+	76,994	27.4%
Total	280,889	100.0%

Source: Lightcast, 2025.1; jobs based on 2023 estimates.

The average hourly wage for all jobs in the Central WDA is \$27.56. One-fifth of all jobs (20.9%) offer wages between \$8.50 and \$15.00 per hour, while the majority (79.9%) pay above \$15.00 per hour. This marks a notable wage shift since 2020, when 31.7% of jobs paid below \$15.00 per hour, and only 68.3% exceeded that threshold. The nearly 10% shift reflects rising wages across the region, which could be driven by an increased demand for skilled workers and the favorable jobseeker market during the pandemic which saw companies increasing wages to attract talent back to the workforce.

Estimated Jobs by Median Wage Range		
Median Wage Range	Jobs	Proportion
\$8.50 or less	118	0.04%
\$8.51-\$15.00	52,630	20.0%
\$15.01-\$25	108,910	41.5%
\$25.01-\$35.00	48,354	18.4%
More than \$35.00	52,577	20.0%
Total Jobs included in Estimate	262,588	93.5%
Occupations with "Insf. Data" for Wages	293	--
Lightcast Total	280,889	--

Source: Lightcast, 2025.1; Jobs based on 2023 estimates.

Current average hourly occupational wage estimates do not include benefits

Jobs are estimated due to lack of significant and reportable employment for various occupations

In the Central WDA, 60% of jobs typically require a high school diploma or less, while 27.4% require a bachelor's degree or higher. These figures represent the most common education levels for those occupations, highlighting the region's need for both entry-level workers and more highly educated professionals. Looking forward, projections through 2032 reflect a higher increase in occupations that typically require a Bachelor's Degree or Higher (+5.2%) compared to occupations that typically require a High School Diploma or Less (+0.4%).

Estimated Jobs by Typical Entry Level Education						
Typical Entry Education Level	2023 Jobs		2032 Jobs		2023-2032 Job Change	
	Number of Jobs	Percent of Total Jobs	Number of Jobs	Percent of Total Jobs	Volume	Percent
No formal educational credential	61,639	22.0%	61,792	21.6%	153	0.2%
High school diploma or equivalent	109,407	39.0%	109,944	38.4%	538	0.5%
Postsecondary nondegree award	20,114	7.2%	20,808	7.3%	693	3.4%
Some college, no degree	5,990	2.1%	5,761	2.0%	-229	-3.8%
Associate's degree	5,875	2.1%	6,209	2.2%	333	5.7%

Bachelor's degree	56,380	20.1%	59,137	20.7%	2,757	4.9%
Master's degree	7,035	2.5%	7,566	2.6%	531	7.5%
Doctoral or professional degree	13,593	4.8%	14,311	5.0%	718	5.3%
N/A (Military Occupations)	656	0.2%	593	0.2%	-63	-9.6%
Total Jobs included in Estimate	280,691	99.9%	286,123	100.0%	5,432	1.9%
Lightcast Total	280,889	--	286,300	--	--	--
High School or Less	171,046	60.9%	171,737	60.0%	691	0.4%
Bachelor's or Higher	77,009	27.4%	81,015	28.3%	4,007	5.2%

Source: Lightcast, 2025.1. The number of jobs are estimated due to lack of significant and reportable employment for various occupations.

In addition to education-based requirements for employment, it is important to consider on-the-job training as a pathway to attain competency in an occupation. While general standards for occupation-based on-the-job training are determined at the national level, local industries and employers may set alternative standards. As the demand for work-based training programs grow, it becomes increasingly important to track job availability that can support these alternative pathways to employment. In the Central WDA, 59.3% of occupations allow for some form of on-the-job training, with 38% of those being short-term in nature. Projections through 2032 show -0.9% decrease in occupations that allow for some form of on-the-job training. Of the occupations that allow for this type of work-based training, there is a slight increase in occupations that allow for moderate (+0.5%) and long-term (+5.2%) on-the-job training and a marginal decrease in occupations that allow for short-term (-0.1%) on-the-job training. Occupations that allow for Internships and Residency training are projected to increase 5.3%.

Estimated Jobs by Typical On-the-Job Training						
Typical On-the-Job Training	2023 Jobs		2032 Jobs		2023-2032 Job Change	
	Number of Jobs	Percent of Total Jobs	Number of Jobs	Percent of Total Jobs	Volume	Percent
Moderate-term on-the-job training	50,526	18.0%	50,790	17.8%	264	0.5%
Long-term on-the-job training	8,310	3.0%	8,741	3.1%	432	5.2%
Short-term on-the-job training	107,563	38.3%	107,500	37.6%	-63	-0.1%
Internship/Residency	3,738	1.3%	3,935	1.4%	197	5.3%
Apprenticeship	3,877	1.4%	3,872	1.4%	-5	-0.1%
None Listed	106,020	37.8%	110,691	38.7%	4,671	4.4%
N/A (Military Occupations)	656	0.2%	593	0.2%	-63	-9.6%
Total Jobs included in Estimate	280,691	99.9%	286,123	100.0%	5,432	1.9%
Lightcast Total	280,889	--	286,300	--	--	--

Source: Lightcast, 2025.1; Jobs based on 2023 estimates. Number of jobs are estimated due to lack of significant and reportable employment for various occupations.

Workers

By combining jobs data from Lightcast with Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data on the educational attainment of workers ages 25 and older by occupation, we can estimate education levels in the Central WDA workforce. Approximately 33.7% of workers have a high school diploma or less, while 35.2% hold a bachelor's degree or higher. This suggests potential underemployment, as a greater share of workers possess higher education levels than what is typically required for entry into many jobs. Additionally, 30.8% of workers have completed some college but did not earn a degree (20.5%) or hold an associate degree (10.4%). This indicates an interest in higher education credentials but also highlights potential barriers preventing workers from attaining degrees.

Estimated Workforce Composition by Educational Attainment Level		
Educational Attainment	Estimated Workers	Proportion
Less than high school diploma	19,927	8.4%
High school diploma or equivalent	60,146	25.3%
Some college, no degree	48,728	20.5%
Associate's degree	24,623	10.4%
Bachelor's degree	52,544	22.1%
Master's degree	22,779	9.6%
Doctoral or professional degree	8,423	3.5%
N/A (Military Occupations)	656	0.3%
Total Jobs included in Estimate	237,827	84.7%
Lightcast Total	280,889	--
High School or Less	80,072	33.7%
Bachelor's or Higher	83,747	35.2%

Source: Lightcast, 2025.1; jobs based on 2023 estimates. BLS Table 5.3 Educational attainment for workers 25 years and older by detailed occupation, 2021-22. Number of workers are estimated due to lack of significant and reportable employment for various occupations.

Population with Barriers

In the Central WDA, 2.1% of individuals (12,049 people) speak English less than "very well," which is significantly lower than the statewide average of 4.5%. Among the counties, Centre County (3.3%) and Union County (3.2%) have the highest percentages of individuals with limited English proficiency. In contrast, Columbia County (0.9%) and Clinton County (1.4%) report the lowest percentages, suggesting a more predominantly English-speaking population.

These variations highlight language access needs in each county of the Central WDA, particularly in those counties with higher concentrations of non-native English speakers as these individuals will have the most difficulty securing employment. It is not only important to assist job seekers who do not speak English very well, but also to prepare employers who may be recruiting these workers.

English Speaking Ability			
Area	Total Population	Speak English less than "very well"	Percentage of Individuals Speaking English less than "very well"
Centre	152,916	5,035	3.3%

Clinton	35,812	492	1.4%
Columbia	62,111	544	0.9%
Lycoming	108,006	1,243	1.2%
Mifflin	43,184	1,044	2.4%
Montour	17,107	427	2.5%
Northumberland	86,783	1,114	1.3%
Snyder	37,710	844	2.2%
Union	41,012	1,306	3.2%
Central WDA	584,641	12,049	2.1%
Pennsylvania	12,300,637	558,725	4.5%

Source: American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates; 2018-2022

Out of the 467,760 individuals aged 16 and over whose poverty status is determined, 13.3% (62,373 individuals) are classified as living below the poverty level. Among this population, 36.2% (22,572 individuals) participate in the labor force, and 3,886 of them are unemployed, resulting in an unemployment rate of 17.2%—4.3 times higher than those above the poverty level. The remaining individuals (39,801; 63.8%) are not in the labor force which may be because they are still in high school or retired. Addressing poverty requires not only equipping individuals seeking employment with the skills and resources necessary to help them secure meaningful and self-sustaining jobs but also reaching those who are not currently in the workforce.

Centre and Lycoming Counties together account for over half (31,783; 51.0%) of the population living below the poverty level in the Central WDA. Although Montour County reports a low unemployment rate of 6.4% among individuals in poverty, this figure is based on a small labor force of just 335 people, with only 39 unemployed job seekers. This underscores the importance of looking beyond unemployment rates and considering the actual size of the labor force when assessing economic challenges.

Poverty and Labor Force Status (Ages 16 and older)								
Area	Total Population Age 16 and Older	Individuals Below the Poverty Level Age 16 and Older						
		Total Individuals	Poverty Rate	Employed	Unemployed	Not in Labor Force	Unemployment Rate	Labor Force Participation Rate
Centre	118,674	21,883	18.4%	7,219	1,102	13,562	13.2%	38.0%
Clinton	29,784	3,788	12.7%	1,150	262	2,376	18.6%	37.3%
Columbia	51,029	7,515	14.7%	2,169	410	4,936	15.9%	34.3%
Lycoming	87,465	9,900	11.3%	2,729	776	6,395	22.1%	35.4%
Mifflin	36,303	4,948	13.6%	1,761	450	2,737	20.4%	44.7%
Montour	14,251	1,118	7.8%	296	39	783	11.6%	30.0%
North.	72,294	8,049	11.1%	2,086	600	5,363	22.3%	33.4%
Snyder	29,931	2,186	7.3%	574	39	1,573	6.4%	28.0%
Union	28,029	2,986	10.7%	702	208	2,076	22.9%	30.5%
Central WDA	467,760	62,373	13.3%	18,686	3,886	39,801	17.2%	36.2%
Pennsylvania	10,263,481	1,101,511	10.7%	310,199	96,715	694,597	23.8%	36.9%

Source: American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates; 2018-2022

According to the American Community Survey 2018-2022, there were 237,367 total households in the Central WDA, with 55,095 (23.3%) family households with children under 18. Of those

families, 30.8% (16,969) are single parents. Notably, more than half (9,674; 57%) of the region's single-parent households are concentrated in Centre, Lycoming, and Northumberland Counties.

This means that 16,969 individuals in the Central WDA, nearly 5% of the total population, are responsible for raising children while managing the demands of both work and family life. Limited access to affordable childcare, unpredictable work schedules, and the need for more flexible workplace policies can create barriers to stable and sustainable employment for single parents.

Single Parent Households			
Area	Total Family Households with Child/Children	Married-Couple Family with Child/Children	Single Parent with Child/Children
Centre	11,880	9,576	2,304
Clinton	3,735	2,421	1,314
Columbia	5,825	3,779	2,046
Lycoming	10,876	6,705	4,171
Mifflin	4,602	3,024	1,578
Montour	2,017	1,386	631
Northumberland	8,915	5,716	3,199
Snyder	3,751	2,760	991
Union	3,494	2,759	735
Central WDA	55,095	38,126	16,969

Source: American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates; 2018-2022

The Central WDA has 41,744 individuals of working age (18-64) with a disability, representing 11.3% of the working-age population. Disability rates vary across counties, with Centre County having the lowest rate at 7.5%, while Northumberland (14.5%) and Lycoming (14.4%) have the highest rates.

Disability Status (Working Age Population; Ages 18-64)				
Area	Population	With a Disability		No Disability
Centre	107,582	8,053	7.5%	99,529
Clinton	22,632	3,101	13.7%	19,531
Columbia	40,286	4,654	11.6%	35,632
Lycoming	66,064	9,483	14.4%	56,581
Mifflin	25,598	2,949	11.5%	22,649
Montour	10,331	1,131	10.9%	9,200
Northumberland	51,258	7,423	14.5%	43,835
Snyder	23,523	2,626	11.2%	20,897
Union	22,893	2,324	10.2%	20,569
Central WDA	370,167	41,744	11.3%	328,423
Pennsylvania	7,788,267	889,606	11.4%	6,898,661

Source: American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates; 2018-2022

The unemployment rate for individuals with a disability in the Central WDA is 12.9%, significantly higher than the 3.6% rate for those without a disability. Union County stands out with the highest unemployment rate for individuals with disabilities (20.7%), while Montour County has the lowest (4.5%). Labor force participation among individuals with disabilities in the Central WDA is 43.8%, much lower than the 76.8% participation rate for those without disabilities. Union County has the lowest participation rate for individuals with disabilities at 32.5%, while Lycoming County has the highest at 50.1%.

Providing the right resources and individualized support to individuals with disabilities is essential to improving their labor force participation and reducing unemployment disparities. Strong partnerships with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) can help connect individuals with disabilities to training, job opportunities, and workplace accommodations, ensuring they have the support needed to achieve meaningful employment.

Disability and Labor Force Status of Working Age Population (Ages 18-64)				
Area	Unemployment Rate		Labor Force Participation Rate	
	<i>With a Disability</i>	<i>No Disability</i>	<i>With a Disability</i>	<i>No Disability</i>
Centre	7.9%	3.6%	47.6%	68.6%
Clinton	19.2%	4.2%	42.6%	82.0%
Columbia	9.2%	4.2%	37.5%	76.6%
Lycoming	17.6%	4.0%	50.1%	81.4%
Mifflin	12.3%	2.9%	38.2%	82.2%
Montour	4.5%	1.8%	45.4%	83.2%
Northumberland	14.2%	4.0%	41.5%	83.4%
Snyder	4.3%	2.0%	44.1%	81.8%
Union	20.7%	2.2%	32.5%	71.8%
Central WDA	12.9%	3.6%	43.8%	76.8%
Pennsylvania	12.6%	4.8%	45.0%	82.9%

Source: American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates; 2018-2022; Based on population 18 to 64 years.

According to the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, in 2022 there were 662 individuals released from correctional facilities returning to local communities in the Central WDA. 82% of re-entrants were paroled. Targeted workforce development support is essential for re-entrants, ensuring they have access to job training, skill development, and employment opportunities that facilitate successful reintegration. Partnering with employers to leverage programs like the Federal Bonding Program and the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) can help mitigate perceived hiring risks and encourage businesses to provide second-chance employment opportunities for this population.

Re-entrant Population						
Area	Population	Releases per 10,000 County Residents	Total Releases	Completed Sentence	Paroled	Average Age at Release
Centre	158,425	3.9	62	13	49	40
Clinton	37,931	12.1	46	4	42	39
Columbia	64,926	8.2	53	11	42	40

Lycoming	113,104	16.4	186	32	154	37
Mifflin	45,988	13.7	63	12	51	40
Montour	18,091	7.7	14	4	10	35
Northumberland	90,133	10.5	95	22	73	41
Snyder	39,652	21.9	87	12	75	38
Union	42,744	13.1	56	9	47	38
Central WDA	610,994	10.8	662	119	543	39
Pennsylvania	12,972,008	8.73	11,331	1,839	9,492	39

Source: PA Department of Corrections; 2022.

Commuting Patterns

The Central WDA has a workforce of 224,652 primary job holders, with 157,973 Non-Commuters, or individuals both living and working within the region, and 66,679 In-Commuters who work in the WDA but live outside of the region. The resident labor force is comprised of the same Non-Commuters and 74,442 Out-Commuters who live in the WDA but travel outside of the region for employment. This results in a negative net flow of -7,763, indicating that more workers leave the area for employment than those who commute in.

Central WDA Commuting Patterns	
Workforce (Total Primary Jobs)	224,652
Non-Commuters	157,973
In-Commuters	66,679
Resident Labor Force	232,415
Non-Commuters	157,973
Out-Commuters	74,442
Net Flow	-7,763

Source: U.S. Census On-the-Map; 2022. Based on total primary jobs.

The commuting patterns in the Central WDA show significant variation across counties. Centre County has the highest positive net flow (+10,740), indicating more workers commute into the county than leave for jobs elsewhere. Montour County also has a strong positive net flow (+8,767). The positive net flow in these counties is likely driven by large employers – like Penn State University in Centre County and Geisinger in Montour County – that attract a diverse workforce from neighboring areas. Conversely, Northumberland County experiences the largest negative net flow (-11,378), meaning far more residents leave the county for work than those commuting in. Other counties with notable negative net flows include Mifflin (-4,495), Clinton (-3,757), and Columbia (-3,647), all of which see more workers leaving than entering for employment.

The non-commuting population also varies across counties, with Centre and Lycoming Counties having the highest numbers at 32,240 and 26,564 non-commuters, respectively, indicating a strong local employment base. In contrast, Montour County has a significantly lower non-commuting population (2,815), suggesting a higher reliance on inbound commuters for its workforce.

Commuting Pattern Data				
County	In-Commuters	Out-Commuters	Non-Commuters	Net Flow
Centre	28,388	17,648	32,240	10,740
Clinton	5,267	9,024	5,881	-3,757
Columbia	12,137	15,784	10,136	-3,647
Lycoming	18,212	20,981	26,564	-2,769
Mifflin	5,893	10,388	8,706	-4,495
Montour	13,521	4,754	2,815	8,767
Northumberland	13,848	25,226	11,257	-11,378
Snyder	9,021	10,029	5,412	-1,008
Union	9,787	10,003	5,567	-216

Source: U.S. Census On-the-Map; 2022. Based on total primary jobs.

Section 1.2: Economic Analysis

Describe strategic planning elements including a regional analysis of economic conditions.

Industry Clusters

The PA Department of Labor and Industry has defined 12 Industry Clusters for workforce strategies. In total, these targeted industry clusters account for 206,063 jobs (73.4%) in the Central WDA, with an average wage of \$61,377.

Health Care is the largest industry cluster in the region, accounting for 18.7% of total employment. While there was a slight decline of -0.5% in employment growth from 2018-2023, Health Care maintains a strong location quotient of 1.22, suggesting a workforce concentration above the national average. Education follows closely at 15.1% of total employment, experiencing minimal growth of 0.1% over the past five years. Education has the second highest location quotient among the industry clusters in the region at 1.64, highlighting its strong local presence. Both Health Care (\$68,552) and Education (\$63,911) offer wages above the regional average.

The Hospitality, Leisure, & Entertainment sector, which represents 10.3% of total employment, saw a -4.0% decline and offers the lowest average wage of \$21,271. The location quotient for this industry cluster is .87, indicating a workforce concentration slightly below the national average. Advanced Manufacturing makes up 8.4% of total employment, with employment growing 1.5% since 2018. The Building and Construction industry represents 7.2% of total employment, also experiencing growth (4.0%) over the last five years. The location quotient for Advanced Manufacturing (1.17) and Building & Construction (1.02) suggests a workforce concentration near the national average. Wages for those industry clusters, while still high, are slightly below the regional average.

Other notable industry trends include Logistics and Transportation and Agriculture and Food Production, which had the highest employment growth over the last five years at 12.7% and 9.1% respectively. Wood, Wood Products, & Publishing, despite the highest location quotient (2.64), suffered the largest employment decline (-14.5%). Additionally, Business Services declined significantly by -11.8%, despite a high average wage of \$71,860.

Statewide Targeted Industry Clusters in the Central WDA						
Industry Cluster	2023 Employment		2018-2023 Employment Growth		2023 Average Wage	2023 National Location Quotient
Advanced Manufacturing	20,749	8.4%	300	1.5%	\$60,615	1.17
Agriculture & Food Production	11,010	4.4%	914	9.1%	\$52,588	1.20
Bio-Medical	1,682	0.7%	127	8.2%	\$78,587	0.52
Building and Construction	17,845	7.2%	693	4.0%	\$59,072	1.02
Business Services	16,181	6.5%	-2,158	-11.8%	\$71,860	0.51
Education	37,456	15.1%	43	0.1%	\$63,911	1.64
Energy	5,666	2.3%	-544	-8.8%	\$78,421	1.17
Health Care	46,271	18.7%	-211	-0.5%	\$68,552	1.22
Hospitality, Leisure, & Entertainment	25,627	10.3%	-1,071	-4.0%	\$21,271	0.87
Logistics and Transportation	8,552	3.5%	962	12.7%	\$57,944	0.78
Real Estate, Finance & Insurance	7,010	2.8%	-257	-3.5%	\$66,897	0.51
Wood, Wood Products, & Publishing	8,014	3.2%	-1,360	-14.5%	\$56,808	2.64

Source: Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW).

Looking beyond these select industry clusters, the Central WDA supports 264,040 total jobs across all industries. 19.1% of jobs are found in goods producing industries, which are projected to marginally decrease (-0.2%; -100 jobs) by 2032. Manufacturing jobs comprise the majority (66.6%) of regional jobs in this category. Conversely, 75.8% of jobs are found in services-providing industries, which is projected to increase 3.7% by 2032. Education and Health Services jobs comprise the largest (38.4%) of jobs in this category. 5.2% of jobs are held by self-employed workers, which is projected to increase by 0.8% by 2032.

Central WDA for Long-Term Industry Projections (2022-32)				
Industry	2022 Employment	2032 Projected Employment	2022 - 2032 Employment Change	
			Volume	Percent
Goods Producing	50,300	50,200	-100	-0.2%
Services-Providing	200,090	207,420	7,330	3.7%

Self-Employed Workers	13,660	13,770	110	0.8%
Total Jobs	264,040	271,390	7,350	2.8%

Source: Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, Long-Term Industry Employment Projections (2022-32).

Occupational Groupings

The largest occupational cluster in the Central WDA is Protective, Food, Building & Personal Service, accounting for 15.6% of total jobs. This diverse occupational group includes law enforcement, food service workers, building maintenance and repair workers, personal care aides, hairdressers and barbers, childcare worker, and fitness trainers. With the highest annual demand (7,097 workers), this cluster is projected to grow by 3.2% by 2032. Health Care Practitioners, Technicians, and Support Workers comprise 12.5% of total jobs in the region and are projected to have the largest increase (7.7%) by 2032.

In contrast, Farming, Fishing, and Forestry occupations represent the smallest share of jobs (1.6%) and are projected to decline the most, at -1.6% by 2032, equating to a modest loss of 70 workers. Sales and Related (-1.2%) and Production (-0.5%) occupations are also expected to see slight declines. Overall, total employment in the Central WDA is projected to grow by 2.8% (7,350 jobs) by 2032.

Long-Term Occupational Projections for Central WDA (2022-32)					
Occupational Title	2022 Employment		2022-32 Projected Employment		Annual Demand
	<i>Number of Jobs</i>	<i>Percent of Total Jobs</i>	<i>Change</i>	<i>Percent Change</i>	<i>From Growth, Exits, & Transfers</i>
Protective, Food, Building & Personal Service	41,240	15.6%	1,310	3.2%	7,097
Healthcare Practitioners, Technicians & Support	33,120	12.5%	2,540	7.7%	3,283
Office & Administrative Support	31,840	12.1%	1,050	3.3%	3,787
Education, Legal, Social Service, Arts & Media	27,790	10.5%	850	3.1%	2,490
Management, Business & Finance	26,360	10.0%	880	3.3%	2,199
Transportation & Material Moving	23,320	8.8%	510	2.2%	2,985
Production	21,480	8.1%	-100	-0.5%	2,259
Sales & Related	20,990	7.9%	-260	-1.2%	2,884
Construction & Extraction	11,560	4.4%	60	0.5%	986
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	11,480	4.3%	170	1.5%	1,013
Computer, Engineering & Science	10,640	4.0%	400	3.8%	755
Farming, Fishing & Forestry	4,250	1.6%	-70	-1.6%	609

Total, All Occupations	264,040	100.0%	7,350	2.8%	30,349
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Source: Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, Long-Term Occupational Employment Projections (2022-32).

Projections for the fastest growing occupations by total number of jobs reflect strong demand in health care and service industries. Home Health and Personal Care Aides lead with a projected increase of 1,000 jobs, 3.33 times greater than the change in demand for the Registered Nurses (+300 jobs). The food service industry is projected to see a sizeable increase in employment, with Fast Food & Counter Workers (+240) and Waiters & Waitresses (+190) seeing notable growth. Additionally, Office Clerks, General are expected to grow by 190 jobs.

Fastest Growing Occupations in Central WDA (2022-32)	
Occupational Title	Employment Change (Volume)
Home Health & Personal Care Aides	1,000
Registered Nurses	300
Fast Food & Counter Workers	240
Office Clerks, General	190
Waiters & Waitresses	190

Source: Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, Long-Term Occupational Employment Projections (2022-32).

The fastest-growing occupations by percent change are concentrated in healthcare, social services, and transportation. Home Health and Personal Care Aides still represent the largest projected increase (+16.7%). School Bus Drivers follow with an 11.8% projected increase. Physician Assistants (11.5%), Child, Family & School Social Workers (11.4%), and Social & Human Service Assistants (11.2%) all show strong growth.

Fastest Growing Occupations in Central WDA (2022-32)	
Occupational Title	Employment Change (Percent)
Home Health & Personal Care Aides	16.7%
Bus Drivers, School	11.8%
Physician Assistants	11.5%
Child, Family & School Social Workers	11.4%
Social & Human Service Assistants	11.2%

Source: Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, Long-Term Occupational Employment Projections (2022-32).

Aligning with Industry Demand

Advance Central PA is committed to addressing employer needs in key industry clusters through strategic initiatives and partnerships aimed at strengthening the regional workforce, intersectoral collaboration, and career exposure for youth. These efforts are strategically targeted based on employer demand, industry relevance, and the availability of high-paying, family-sustaining jobs, ensuring that workforce development initiatives effectively support regional economic growth.

Advance Central PA strategy, programming, and investments are informed by industry cluster and occupational grouping data. Data organized by industry cluster is analyzed, including current employment, growth, average wage and concentration of economic activity to determine clusters most critical to the health of the Central WDA. In addition to hard data, Advance Central PA engages with local businesses, industry associations, labor unions, and employer serving partners to understand real-time insights into emerging needs and technologies, skill gaps, and workforce needs. Advance Central PA focuses intentionally on clusters that offer career pathways with wages that support families.

One strategy Advance Central PA utilizes to connect with priority industry clusters includes oversight of Industry Partnerships in Healthcare, Advanced Manufacturing, Building and Construction, and Agriculture, all with a national location quotient greater than 1, aligning with the region's key industries to enhance employer collaboration and regional workforce needs. To close skills gaps and create career pathways, Advance Central PA supports registered apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships in Advanced Manufacturing, Agriculture, and other critical industries. Additionally, career exposure initiatives, such as networking events with employers, help introduce youth to in-demand occupations and increases their awareness of the education or training needed for success.

Occupational data groupings provide further insight utilized in local strategy. The latest employment statistics combined with projected employment in each occupation are analyzed to reveal potential opportunities to have a positive impact on business growth in Central PA. By understanding the fastest growing occupations, Advance Central PA is able to align resources to support demand. For example, this data is used when working with secondary education and career & technical education providers so they are responsive to industry needs and anticipate upcoming needs. Incumbent worker training dollars available within the Industry Partnerships can be utilized to upskill current employees due to technological advancements and shifts. Data is also used to understand where registered apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship ecosystems may be expended or created to help meet known and projected industry demand.

Aligning workforce development with industry demand ensures that training programs effectively prepare job seekers for high-growth, in-demand careers while helping employers fill critical skill gaps. By utilizing data, Advance Central PA convenes partners and facilitates not only responsive services, but gears up for proactive approaches to service delivery to effectively address the current and future workforce needs of the region. This approach strengthens the regional economy by creating a pipeline of qualified workers for industries offering stable, family-sustaining wages.

Key initiatives and partnerships include:

- Industry Partnerships: agriculture, building & construction, healthcare and manufacturing
- Registered apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship partnerships and expansion initiatives: agriculture, building & construction, healthcare, and manufacturing
- Education partnerships: secondary education and post-secondary education and career & technology centers, and other higher education entities including Eligible Training Provider List training providers
- On-the-Job Training: providing immediate transition into occupations for which training is needed and local employers have immediate workforce needs

- Business Solutions Team (BST): outreach and service delivery

Section 1.3: Skill Gap Analysis

How are skills gaps defined in the local area? Provide a description of the skills that are required to meet the needs of employers in region and local area?

Identification of current skill gaps is an important data point Advance Central PA utilizes to assure local workforce programming is meeting the demands of businesses and people. In 2023, the WDB and LEO Board directed staff to competitively procure a third-party evaluator to complete an un-biased and comprehensive training and skill gap analysis of the Central WDA. Advance Central PA procured a provider who began work in November 2023.

The third-party evaluator conducted desktop research to map existing infrastructure and services, identified training needs and unmet demands according to industry leaders, and gauged interest in trainings from the public. The existing training offerings in the Central WDA were found to encompass a diverse array of programs provided by multiple institutions, targeting various industries and skill sets. The inventory of training programs were found to address the educational and vocational needs of the region. With a strong emphasis on healthcare, technical trades, manufacturing, and other top occupations in the area, these programs are designed to equip the local workforce with the necessary skills and qualifications in these fields. With robust programs available from career & technical education providers, technical colleges, and universities, there are a variety of post-secondary education programs available, and training providers who were interviewed revealed great interest in and capacity for developing new programs to meet changing demands.

According to the analysis, the biggest challenge for the workforce according to business is in attracting new talent to Central PA, followed closely by a lack of communication skills, alignment of education to industry needs, and affordable childcare. Other challenges include a lack of technical skills and leadership skills.

Opportunities include expansion of partnerships to continuously improve programming to meet workforce needs and collaborating with stakeholders to address barriers and promote the skilled trades which Advance Central PA is well poised to do. The largest discrepancy identified in the analysis is that there is mixed satisfaction among businesses and the public in regard to available training, however, a plethora of training is indeed available. The procured provider hosted a presentation of the analysis for Advance Central PA and stakeholders including a working session to kick-start ways to improve knowledge of the training that is available to people and businesses and enhance coordination so that training providers can adapt and develop courses to meet business needs. Advance Central PA will continue with initiatives for improvement in these areas so that people can access the occupational skills training they need to obtain and persist in good jobs in the local area.

In regard to employability skills, the PA CareerLink® already includes a variety of offerings including workshops open to the public and intensive case management for eligible participants all designed to help them increase baseline skills important to success in any job, including communication skills, problem-solving, leadership skills, and reliability.

Overall, Advance Central PA looks forward to using the analysis and data to direct strategy and programming that will address skill gaps in the coming years. Of equal value will be intelligence gathered in real time by the BST.

Additionally, the PA CareerLink® BST in Central PA use a consultative interviewing approach. This prioritizes the businesses experiences and allows the BST to learn about comprehensive needs, including those related to skill gaps in the workforce. The collaborative BST shares intelligence with Advance Central PA so that overall strategy and program development can address local needs.

According to the BST, employer partners currently report the following positions are difficult to fill: CNA, LPN, RN, Direct Care Worker, Teachers, Early Childhood Education, Corrections Officers, Bookkeeping/Accounting, Medical Billing & Coding, IT related positions, CDL, HVAC, Electrical, Plumbing, Carpentry, Construction, Auto Mechanic, Welders, Housekeeping, Manufacturing positions.

Positions are difficult to fill for numerous reasons, including the low unemployment rate and available workforce less than open positions. For those in the workforce, employers share with the BST that the following employability skills are critical to success. PA CareerLink® partners are experts in coaching participants in improving these skills and public workshops at the PA CareerLink® are designed to support learning in many of these areas.

- Communication and Listening
- Critical Thinking/Problem Solving
- Professionalism
- Emotional Intelligence/Self-Awareness
- Accountability
- Punctuality and Time Management
- Work Ethic/Motivation and Initiative
- Demonstrating a Positive Attitude
- Dependability
- Adaptability/Resilience
- Digital Literacy

Trainings and certifications often cited by employers to the BST that they frequently seek in candidates or pursue for employees are often the same as those Advance Central PA hears from the Manufacturing and Healthcare Industry Partnership business leaders. The below list of most frequently cited needs includes many which Advance Central PA has been able to support with incumbent worker training funds, Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), or for which WEDnet funds were utilized by the businesses.

- CDL
- Certified Nurse Aide
- Cloud Computing
- Diesel Technology
- EMT
- Forklift Train the Trainer
- Innovation Engineering
- Introduction to Financial Management
- IRC5 Programming
- ISO 9001:2015 ISO Internal Auditor Training
- IT/Cybersecurity
- Lean/Lean Six Sigma
- Licensed Practical Nurse
- Mechatronics & CNC Apprenticeship
- Medical Billing & Coding Specialist
- Mid-Level Manager Program
- OSHA
- Project Management
- Registered Nurse
- Renewable Energy Technologies - Green Technologies
- Responding to Conflict in the Workplace
- Robotics
- Root Cause Analysis/A3 Thinking
- Sales / Customer Service
- Supervisory Training
- Supply Chain Dynamics/Logistics
- Technology Skills -including AI & Machine Learning
- Time Management for Supervisors

- Value Stream Mapping & Standard Work
- Wastewater Maintenance
- Workplace Violence

Intelligence from the BST and Industry Partnerships is critical to staying current with strategies and solution development, as is data. Section 1.1 includes charts and narratives related to jobs by typical level of education, for example. Job postings analytics from Lightcast identify the most in-demand requirements (skills and certifications) of employers in the Central WDA, which in turn represents the occupational skills of the workforce. The following table identifies the top 20 hard or specialized skills, foundational or common skills, and qualifications advertised through online job postings by local employers for all occupations in the Central WDA:

Skills and Certifications for All Occupations		
Top Hard Skills (Specialized)	Top Common Skills (Foundational)	Top Qualifications
Auditing	Communication	Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (ACLS) Certification
Cash Register	Computer Literacy	American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP) Certification
Crime Prevention	Cooperation	Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification
Direct Patient Care	Coordinating	Board Certified/Board Eligible
Food Services	Customer Service	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification
Home Health Care	Detail Oriented	CDL Class A License
Housekeeping	Interpersonal Communications	Certified Medical Assistant (CMA)
Inventory Management	Leadership	Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)
Marketing	Lifting Ability	Commercial Driver's License (CDL)
Medical Records	Management	First Aid Certification
Medication Administration	Operations	Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)
Merchandising	Planning	Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)
Nursing	Problem Solving	Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC)
Patient Safety	Professionalism	National Affordable Housing Professional

Project Management	Research	NHA Certified
Psychology	Sales	Nurse Practitioner (APRN-CNP)
Selling Techniques	Scheduling	Physician Assistant - Certified (PA-C)
Statistics	Teaching	Registered Nurse (RN)
Treatment Planning	Troubleshooting (Problem Solving)	Top Secret-Sensitive Compartmented Information (TS/SCI Clearance)
Vital Signs	Writing	Valid Driver's License

Source: Lightcast Q1 2025; January 2024-December 2024 Online Job Postings Data.

Section 1.4: Workforce Development Activities Analysis

Provide an analysis of local area workforce development activities, including education and training.

Workforce Analysis

The workforce service delivery model in the Central WDA is strong. With the PA CareerLink® network of core partners plus leveraged community and other partners, the system is positioned to provide best-in-class, responsive, relevant, and effective services to businesses, job seekers, young people, Veterans, and learners.

Top Strengths

1. *Engaged and Passionate WDB Members and Staff:* WDB members bring their combined experiences and expertise to the workforce system in Central PA and the Advance Central PA staff carry out their vision while remaining compliant with unquestioned fiscal accountability, meaningful oversight of the PA CareerLink® network and its continuous improvement, and innovative approaches to support people and businesses in alignment with the Governor's goals. The WDB and their expert staff work diligently so that Central Pennsylvania businesses want to stay here and grow here, new businesses see the opportunities and qualified workforce and want to put roots here, and job seekers and young people have the skills and supports they need to put their talents to use in meaningful, family sustaining careers.
2. *Business Solutions and Economic Development Partnerships:* The PA CareerLink® Business Solutions Teams use consultative techniques to serve as an extension of human resources for businesses, match businesses with jobseekers and training providers for recruitment and talent pipeline development, link businesses to their future pipeline, and connect businesses with economic development entities and other partners to meet their comprehensive needs. With training from Advance Central PA and the vast resources of the PA Apprenticeship & Training Office (ATO), the BST has the foundational knowledge to successfully discuss and promote registered apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship as part of their toolbox of services and solutions for talent pipeline development and retention. In alignment with Advance Central PA's Apprenticeship Strategic Plan outlines promotion of apprenticeship to employers who have the need for, and demonstrate an aptitude and interest in, work-based learning.

The BST provides information about apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship, such as the ATO's Quick Guides, conducts needs assessments, explains the role of the ATO, and makes referrals to Advance Central PA and/or the ATO for technical support regarding apprenticeable occupations and next steps.

Advance Central PA works and shares information with economic development in a collaborative spirit in the best interests of the region. Examples include Advance Central PA's membership on the Focus Central PA board and active participation in SEDA-COG's Engage! program which have brought success through new industrial development and stabilization of existing businesses thanks to collaboration and shared data.

3. *Comprehensive and Holistic PA CareerLink® Program Services for Individuals:* PA CareerLink® Staff are equipped to effectively assess an individual's social indicators of health and needs, and create an employment plan that aligns with their interest, abilities, and local job market with goals to remediate barriers for long-term success, increase skills, and obtain and retain sustaining employment in the desired career pathway. The comprehensive services include connections to registered apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeship programs in alignment with Advance Central PA's Apprenticeship Strategic Plan; work-based learning will enable these individuals (including those with barriers) to earn a paycheck while learning and working in a new occupation. Advance Central PA's Individual Training Account Policy and On-the-Job Training Policy has registered apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship integrated within it to further support individual success.

Advance Central PA's PA CareerLink® programs have won a Governor's Achievement Award for eight (8) consecutive years due to the staff's passion and program design that effectively help customers achieve their goals.

4. *Data-driven Strategies:* The WDB and PA CareerLink® network of partners use data for continuous improvement in serving the community. This includes using data to adjust policy and service delivery models. Additionally, data is shared with our partners, including economic development partners who need the most current available data and workforce intelligence to attract businesses. An example includes Advance Central PA's partnership with Focus Central PA resulting in new industrial development thanks to shared data.
5. *Maximum Accessibility:* The Central WDA has six brick and mortar PA CareerLink® offices and The Link mobile workforce unit. Each physical location is strategically located so that customers can receive in person services with a maximum drive time of 45 minutes. The Link extends services to various communities without a PA CareerLink® office increasing access to services. Additionally, service delivery is available in person and virtual providing maximum access to services and offerings that fit the needs of rural Central PA.
6. *Variety of Training Opportunities and ETPL:* The Central PA Workforce Development Area has a strong ETPL, with opportunities for enhancement given the wealth of training providers in the region. The inventory of training programs mapped as part of our Skills Gap Analysis includes more than 500 programs and 50 registered apprenticeship programs offered by more than 30 training providers including universities, community colleges, career and technical education centers, and specialized training institutes.

The inventory of training programs in Central Pennsylvania demonstrates a robust framework aimed at addressing the educational and vocational needs of the region. With a strong emphasis on healthcare, technical trades, manufacturing, and other top occupations in the area, these programs are designed to equip the local workforce with the necessary skills and qualifications in these fields.

Training providers across the region have a strong willingness to develop curriculum, programming, and Registered Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeships for secondary students and adults to meet employer demands.

Weaknesses

1. *Shrinking Workforce*: The Central WDA has a shrinking workforce with underlying issues that include a lack of early childhood education slots, barriers to transportation, and decreasing and aging population. Advance Central PA will continue to work with partners to develop and recommend solutions to these large-scale issues so that businesses have talent to operate and grow.
2. *Under-utilization of PA CareerLink®*: There continues to be a lack of awareness of the wealth of workforce services offered through the PA CareerLink® and workforce development. While Advance Central PA boasts large numbers of customers served, we know there are people who could benefit from partner services that are unaware of what is available to them. Advance Central PA will build on momentum gained and lessons learned from a successful PA CareerLink® Awareness Day campaign in late 2024 during this Plan cycle. Most importantly, Advance Central PA has hired a Communications Coordinator on staff to support the overall network of partners in increasing the visibility of their programming and the PA CareerLink®.
3. *Limited Resources and Capacity to Pursue New Resources*: Reliance on limited, federal resources prevent Advance Central PA and the PA CareerLink® network of partners from making the full impact to businesses and people that we want to. Advance Central PA serves a large geography which requires us to spread resources as thin as possible to reach businesses and people across the whole region. Advance Central PA has previously reduced the number of PA CareerLink® offices within the region from 9 to 6 due to reduced and stagnant funding while operating costs for rent, utilities, salaries, benefits, etc. continue to increase. The number of staff in the region has also decreased, limiting Advance Central PA's ability to apply for new grants and diversify our funding. WIOA needs re-authorized with increased funding to keep up with inflation and without restrictions on where funds must be spent, so services can be provided based on local economic conditions. Significant changes to WIOA or TANF EARN and TANF Youth Development funding would disrupt the local workforce system.
4. *Minimal Active Registered Apprenticeship*: There are minimal Registered Apprenticeship programs from which to develop a sustaining Pre-Apprenticeship ecosystem. Advance Central PA has mapped available programs utilizing the resources made available by the ATO and is combatting this with competitive funds and initiatives to educate local businesses on Registered Apprenticeship as a workforce strategy that benefits them for the long-term; however, businesses are not always receptive to developing Registered Apprenticeship programs for various reasons. Advance Central PA's Apprenticeship Strategic Plan maps the local registered programs and ecosystems and serves as a guide to increasing apprenticeship opportunities in the region.

5. *Limited Resources for People to Access Mental Health Services:* PA CareerLink® staff are often being faced with serving participants and customers who are facing immediate crisis, long-term sustained stress and trauma, and intellectual disabilities. Stability is necessary before one can persist in training, workforce education, or employment, and resources in the local area are maxed out. Building on a proven model of hiring Wellness Coaches within the EARN program funded by the PA Dept. of Human Services, Advance Central PA is seeking other funds to hire additional Wellness Coaches to serve the partners, including new hires under the National Health Emergency Grant to Address the Opioid Crisis. Wellness Coaches are licensed or expert in social work or counseling and can assist the main program staff in serving people who would benefit from additional one to one mental health support, peer groups, and liaison with outside agencies who offer mental and behavioral health services. People with disabilities are referred to OVR for their extensive expert resources.
6. *Staff Turnover:* Staff turnover has a negative impact to the PA CareerLink® services as they take years of knowledge and experience with them to the private sector where salaries are higher and, in some cases, the emotional toll is lower. The WDB has negotiated with Title I providers supporting the introduction of salary-scale analysis and increased wages to better compete; this has stabilized some turnover, but private sector salaries cannot be matched with the public resources available.

Section 1.5: Alignment Challenges

What are the local area challenges in aligning existing labor force skills and education, and training activities with the needs of regional employers?

Aligning the skills and education of the labor force with business needs is critical to the health of Central PA.

Training and Skill Gap Analysis

In 2023, the WDB and LEO Board directed staff to competitively procure a third-party evaluator to complete an un-biased and comprehensive training and skill gap analysis of the Central WDA. Advance Central PA procured a provider who began work in November 2023 with a completed report published in 2024. Among the key takeaways from the report is that a robust training infrastructure does exist in the Central WDA, however, awareness of the programs offered and awareness of training provider willingness to develop new trainings is lacking. In July 2024, Advance Central PA convened a group of stakeholders in a working session to review the results of the study and begin the work of addressing opportunities for improvement, including increased awareness and communication strategies with WDB members and other stakeholders at the forefront.

There remains opportunities for greater alignment of education to workforce development. Advance Central PA is poised to continue to bridge the gap and utilizes opportunities such as Business Education Partnership (BEP) grants to do this important work. For example, Advance Central PA has a goal to engage 500 students and 25 educators in “student/teacher in the workplace” initiatives that are vital to showing teachers the opportunities available and the training concepts they should be contextualizing in their curriculum while showing students the exciting and interesting well-paying jobs in the area.

With robust programs available from career & technical education providers, as affirmed by the study, Advance Central PA will continue to promote CTE education as a pathway for any student and adult offerings at the CTE as an affordable high-quality education opportunity leading to

family-sustaining jobs. Additionally, the CTE providers and Advance Central PA regularly communicate about opportunities to expand their programs through the development of new pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships, and certified programs. These partnerships are key to helping students acquire industry recognized credentials with little to no cost.

Advance Central PA also has regular communications with accredited post-secondary education institutions. Advance Central PA shares information about industry needs, and training providers are able to share changes in their programs. An example of the adaptations that are occurring in the region as a result of local industry's needs is the development of new, shorter term and lower cost trainings through the Commonwealth University's Workforce Development Office. Traditionally, Commonwealth University's Lock Haven and Bloomsburg campuses offered bachelor's degrees and higher; however they are adapting programming to better meet the demands of current jobseekers and businesses alike by offering non-degree trainings for a variety of industries. Many of the local colleges and universities, like Pennsylvania College of Technology, The Pennsylvania State University, and Commonwealth University also offer customized training for businesses to help stay current with industry needs.

Other unique opportunities and partnerships exist between local businesses and schools like Bucknell University and Susquehanna University in which students assist local businesses and community organizations as part of their coursework. For example, students from Bucknell's statistics class have assisted Advance Central PA and the United Way in surveying local businesses about the impact of the opioid epidemic and doing statistical analyses on the results. Another example is IT students developing websites for local businesses. These are win-win opportunities allowing students to get hands on experience while benefiting local businesses and creating relationships between faculty and the local community.

Advance Central PA also remains a committed member of Career Ready Central PA, a group with a mission is to implement a comprehensive career education strategy to create and share resources and opportunities for schools, students, families and businesses that will produce a skilled, sustainable workforce. Because of the alignment of Career Ready Central PA and the goals of the Path to Careers website, Career Ready Central PA's resources are housed on Path to Careers.

Limited Workforce

The unemployment rate, and the trend it has been following is of great concern to the WDB. With a workforce that is not large enough to fill available posted job openings, it is critical to examine underlying causes and develop effective solutions.

Population Decline

Population decline is at the forefront. Advance Central PA works with economic development partners and other community organizations to discuss and brainstorm solutions; we need people to come to Central PA, we need the people who live here now to see abundant opportunities and stay here, and we need to address why the population is declining.

Further, by working with economic development partners, Advance Central PA supports their mission to attract and retain businesses. We do this by providing labor market information showcasing the highly skilled talent our region boasts, partnering on projects to create materials that showcase the region as a place people and businesses want to live and work, and being a good partner on other economic development projects.

In addition to the overall population decline, the workforce is aging and as long-time employees retire, years of institutional knowledge are lost without a sufficient pipeline at the ready to

replace them. Advance Central PA addresses these combined challenges in a number of ways in addition to attracting talent as mentioned above. These include: investment in the current workforce via Industry Partnerships and including incumbent worker training where possible; upskilling and developing a talent pipeline via intentional collaboration and with secondary education to increase career pathway development in impactful ways and promote career & technical education programs; utilization of labor market information to inform businesses of wages they need to offer to compete; and a focus on developing the a comprehensive talent pipeline, including populations such as those with disabilities, older workers, and people who are justice-involved.

Early Childhood Education Crisis

Lack of early childhood education slots are an underlying factor to a declining population and the overall limited workforce as parents are forced to stay home rather than work. In late 2023, Advance Central PA staff worked with the LEO Board in releasing an Op-Ed on the workforce crisis that this issue is causing now and is projected to negatively continue to impact for the long-term. Advance Central PA will continue to advocate that childcare is a workforce issue that requires bi-partisan policy that will make early childhood education accessible and affordable while also paying these trusted employees a wage more comparable to the impact they have.

Transportation

Transportation is also a persistent underlying cause to the limited number of people in the workforce. With a large rural geographic area, Advance Central PA works diligently to make services accessible, including remote options for service delivery at the PA CareerLink®.

STRATEGIC PLANNING: VISION AND GOALS

Section 2.1: Local Board's Strategic Vision and Alignment with the Governor's Strategic Vision

What are the local board's strategic vision and goals for preparing its workforce and its strategy for achieving the vision and goals? How will the local board's vision and goals align with, support, and contribute to the governor's vision and goals for the state's workforce development system, as well as any of the goals and strategies articulated in the regional plan?

Advance Central PA's Strategic Goals

Advance Central PA's mission centers on the philosophy that workforce development matters to individuals, communities and regions. The effectiveness of workforce development strategies contributes toward the economic stability and growth of a region. Advance Central PA recognizes that workforce solutions cannot be devised, delivered and evaluated in a vacuum, but must reflect and respond to the realities of the economy. Advance Central PA recognizes the workforce system serves two customers, businesses and individuals. It is only through the understanding of immediate and future business needs that the workforce system can appropriately educate and prepare individuals entering or participating in the labor force with in-demand, business-relevant skills, experience, credentials and attitudes.

Advance Central PA's Mission

To be the leading vehicle for the regional unification, coordination, integration and alignment of workforce activities, resources and initiatives to support economic sustainability, improve education systems and develop and retain a quality labor force in Central Pennsylvania.

Advance Central PA's Vision

To be recognized as the premiere agency for workforce development strategies and activities and to build the capacity of the workforce system through systematic change, integration of resources and continuous improvement in the Central Region.

To achieve its vision, Advance Central PA strives to:

- Act as a visible leader cultivating regional understanding of workforce issues.
- Partner with business, education and economic development to deliver strategic, yet practical workforce solutions.
- Apply business principles to the operation of the region's PA CareerLink® infrastructure
- Rethink service delivery to enhance efficiency, continuous improvement, customer satisfaction and results.
- Demonstrate measurable outcomes while holding service providers accountable for results.

Strategic Goal 1: Advance Central PA will administer a high-performing workforce development system through investment in high quality technologies, programs, providers and infrastructure to enhance the system's ability to develop jobseeker skills, match talent with employment opportunities and improve the customer experience.

Advance Central PA's Desired State:

- A robust RFP and performance-based contracting process for services and PA CareerLink® operations is in place.
- The region exceeds mandated performance across partners, not just those funded through the Advance Central PA, because services are integrated and seamless.
- A system of performance benchmarks, including customer satisfaction, exists to support continuous improvement assessment.
- The region's physical PA CareerLink® sites are bolstered by a network of community-based access points and supplemented with virtual tools and resources.
- The PA CareerLink® system is consistently recognized as the place to go when seeking employment or career changes and the source of qualified workers for businesses.

Strategic Goal 2: Advance Central PA will increase employer engagement, so we can be more responsive to and forward thinking about workforce challenges facing the region's key industries.

Desired State:

- Advance Central PA regularly engages business leaders to identify workforce challenges and opportunities.
- Advance Central PA supports, directly or through partnership, sector-strategies to provide a ready supply of qualified talent for the region's key industries and small business community.
- Advance Central PA uses labor market data to develop career pathways with industry, educational partners and apprenticeship programs.
- Services provided to employers through the PA CareerLink® system are relevant, valuable and of the highest quality.

Strategic Goal 3: Advance Central PA will build a career pathway network that is easy to navigate and accessible by all job seekers through partnerships with K-12 education providers, post-secondary training providers, businesses, and other community partners.

Desired State:

- Youth, young adults, and other jobseekers, including individuals with barriers to employment will have the resources and information necessary to select an appropriate career that leads to a family-sustaining wage.
- Local career pathways are easy to understand so individuals can see the education necessary to start and grow their career.
- Affordable training and scholarship opportunities are available in the region to reduce barriers for individuals to participate in training.
- Multiple apprenticeship eco-systems exist in varying industries within the region. The eco-systems will include local school districts, career and technical education providers, and post-secondary training providers that partner with businesses to create a registered pre-apprenticeship to registered apprenticeship pathway. Access to services will be improved via enrollment in PA CareerLink® programming, including but not limited to Title I; needs are assessed and plans are put in place to mitigate them so that people can access apprenticeships and other trainings and persist in them to meet their career goals.

Strategic Goal 4: Advance Central PA will enhance career and college readiness outcomes for youth through education, training, and employment programs.

Desired State:

- The region's youth have greater opportunities to participate in career awareness activities and gain work experience through summer work and internships, regardless of their income eligibility.
- Youth graduate having the foundational employability skills sought by local employers.
- Competitively procured youth service providers exceed mandated performance through evidence-based models for serving in school and out of school youth.
- Youth select their post-secondary path based on their personal career goals, which may or may not require advanced degrees.

Strategic Goal 5: Advance Central PA will responsibly manage and purposefully enhance available public and private resources to support and grow workforce solutions.

Desired State:

- Advance Central PA will pursue private funding sources and competitive grants to supplement WIOA and TANF funding to make sure youth, job seekers, and businesses have access to innovative and necessary services.
- Advance Central PA will continue to offer our wage analysis product and continue to look for other fee for service strategies.
- Advance Central PA will continue to diversify our funding streams and leverage local funding to attract outside and private funding sources.

Strategic Goal 6: Advance Central PA will be the regional catalyst for workforce innovation through a robust call to action and impact-based communication strategy.

Desired State:

- Advance Central PA is recognized as the visible leader cultivating regional conversations about workforce issues.
- Advance Central PA has open lines of communication with stakeholder groups for awareness and action about data, initiatives, policy, outcomes and impacts to increase the economic stability of the region.
- Advance Central PA is a key contributor to critical workforce discussions and policy analysis at the state and national levels.
- Advance Central PA is in continual communication with key elected officials about workforce policy at the local, state and national levels.

Alignment with the WIOA Combined State Plan

Advance Central PA's goals and strategies are intentionally aligned with the governor's vision and goals as articulated in the Commonwealth's WIOA Combined State Plan, designed to promote coordination across all systems and partners in the state and local systems to effectively serve workers and businesses. The Commonwealth's six (6) broad goals and a description of how Advance Central PA is aligned with them are as follow.

1. Apprenticeship and Career & Technical Education: Expand opportunities for individuals to enter into Registered Apprenticeship and Registered Pre-Apprenticeship programs, assist employers in building Registered Pre-Apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship programs, and increase the coordination with Career & Technical Education in these efforts. (Aligned with Advance Central PA Strategic Goal 3)
 - Advance Central PA will continue to educate local employers about the benefits of Registered Apprenticeship and a Pre-Apprenticeship eco-system so they understand how this can be a premiere workforce strategy for their long-term productivity and competitiveness with a goal to increase the number of Registered Apprenticeship opportunities in the Central WDA.
 - Advance Central PA will continue to work intentionally and collaboratively with the CTE providers to promote their programming to students and their families, support them in their missions to align training with industry demands and expand programming to include post-secondary education, and in developing high-quality Pre-Apprenticeship programs creating a pipeline of skilled talent who are prepared to transition to Registered Apprenticeships.
 - Advance Central PA fully supports CTE providers as a premiere pathway to industry recognized credentials and registered apprenticeship, and equally supports other pathways with an Apprenticeship Strategic Plan that maps existing programs and opportunities to partner with any eligible sponsor and training program.
 - Advance Central PA has training policies in place that intentionally incorporate support for registered apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships including OJT and ITA funding intended to support the employers/sponsors on top of the personalized support for apprentices and pre-apprentices via the full array of case management and services of Title I and other PA CareerLink® partner programs.
2. Sector Strategies and Employer Engagement: Engage employers and industry clusters through innovative strategies to improve the connection and responsiveness of workforce

programs and services to labor market demand, including recruiting, training, and retaining talent. (Aligned with Advance Central PA Strategic Goal 2)

- Advance Central PA will continue to support existing Industry Partnerships in key sectors of Advanced Manufacturing and Healthcare and kick-off new partnerships for Agriculture and Building & Construction. With leveraged funding from critical grants made available by the Commonwealth, Advance Central PA will provide and facilitate the ability for these key industries to coordinate, define challenges, brainstorm solutions, and improve their ability to recruit, train, and retain talent.
 - Advance Central PA will continuously improve the outcomes and effectiveness of the PA CareerLink® BST. In addition to goals to improve Common Measure performance and local metrics, it is imperative that the BST is relevant and aligned with business needs. Advance Central PA will utilize the Employer Engagement Strategic Planning analysis provided by the PA Dept. of Labor & Industry as a basis to prioritize and made immediate and sustainable impact. Additionally, Advance Central PA will use EconoVue™ to help identify companies that are poised for growth or alternatively appear they may be in financial difficulty.
 - Advance Central PA will continue to foster a region of excellence in partner collaboration so that industry is served in a unified way that works.
 - Advance Central PA will promote the PA CareerLink® as the premiere place for workforce solutions. Our on-staff Communications Coordinator will play a significant role in creating content that effectively resonates with businesses so they see “what’s in it for them” to access the available services.
 - Advance Central PA and the PA CareerLink® will continue to actively collaborate with SEDA-COG on their successful DCED Engage! program to learn about business needs, share data and information, and make connections and referrals to partners.
3. Youth: Increase opportunities for all youth to experience work-based learning through summer employment, pre-apprenticeship, Registered Apprenticeship, internships, job shadowing, mentoring, and other experiences in the workplace, including developing employability skills. (Aligned with Advance Central PA Strategic Goals 3 and 4)
- Advance Central PA has an engaged Youth Committee with members who will stay apprised of program performance and bring their expertise and experiences to the PA CareerLink® programs to foster increased opportunities for young people to have access to career exploration and work-based learning critical to long-term success.
 - Advance Central PA will continue to promote work-based learning activities as hallmark services available to ISY and OSY. Competitively procured providers have contracted goals in placing youth in paid internships, job shadows, and OJTs (OSY only). Summer employment and placement in Registered Apprenticeships are emphasized.
 - Advance Central PA will continue to require individualized services that result in co-enrollments in the best interest of the young people being served. This includes co-enrollments in Adult, Title II, Title IV, and EARN so that young people can access all of the program offerings they need to successfully develop and meet their goals and enter a desired career pathway.

- Advance Central PA's local career awareness website, Path to Careers (<https://pathtocareers.org>) will provide students more opportunities to participate in work-based learning and career exploration experiences such as internships, job-shadows, company tours, and co-ops by requesting them from their school who vets them according to industry defined guidelines, thereby strengthening relationships with the K-12 system and businesses while making these activities more accessible to students.
4. Continuous Improvement of the PA CareerLink® System: Identify and enact system changes and improvements that enhance the collaboration and partnership between agencies and partners in the workforce development system. (Aligned with Advance Central PA's Strategic Goal 1 and 6)
- Advance Central PA will increase the utilization of PA CareerLink® services by both businesses and individuals. This will be accomplished through demonstrated performance showing value, intentional communications highlighting the comprehensive array of available workforce services from the core partners, and activities to promote meaningful increased foot-traffic. The PA CareerLink® has valuable offerings for anyone no matter where they are in their career journey and any business whether large or small and we intend to get that message out into the community.
 - Advance Central PA will continue to work with the Operator and Site Administrators so that opportunities for collaboration are developed and enhanced, operational processes are made efficient and effective, the customer service experience is of the highest level, and Common Measure performance is met and exceeded.
 - Working with the Operator, Advance Central PA will identify opportunities for relevant events, employer seminars, and activities to drive individuals and businesses to the PA CareerLink®.
5. Barrier Remediation: Develop strategies to ensure the workforce development system is equipped to support individuals with barriers to employment in finding and maintaining self- and family-sustaining employment. (Aligned with Advance Central PA Strategic Goal 3)
- Advance Central PA will continue to promote both in-person and virtual services. It remains critically important to have brick and mortar sites where core partners are in-office and available to customers in person. It is just as important that services are accessible through technology in a remote way in order to reach customers where they are.
 - Advance Central PA will use data to determine how best to utilize The Link so we are reaching pockets of the community that need services the most; priorities will include deployment to serve dislocated workers at Rapid Response events, under-served communities where transportation and technology barriers are abundant, and re-entrants.
 - Advance Central PA promotes an assessment of family needs covering social determinants of health within Title I, EARN, and TANF programs. Best practices will be shared with core partners who can implement similar processes to serve individuals with barriers, so they are stabilized and ready for success in increasing their skills, obtaining employment, and persisting in employment.

- Advance Central PA will explore and implement opportunities for individuals to receive help navigating the pardons process. This initiative was sparked by the PA Dept. of Labor & Industry's regularly scheduled interval trainings; one of which was about the pardons process and available assistance and partnership with LWDBs.
6. Addressing Workforce Shortages in Critical Industries: Prioritizing investment in industries that are critical to the economic prosperity of the Commonwealth. (Aligned with Advance Central PA Strategic Goal 2)
- Advance Central PA will continue to promote and increase business engagement with the PA CareerLink® BST and collaborate meaningfully with economic development partners.
 - Advance Central PA will promote OJT and Registered Apprenticeship as workforce strategies to recruit, train, and retain talent.
 - Advance Central PA will support critical sectors via Industry Partnership, this includes partnerships for Manufacturing, Healthcare, Agriculture, and Building & Construction.
 - Advance Central PA and the PA CareerLink® partners will promote career pathways in critical industries and the HPO list with young people and job seekers, creating a talent pipeline.
 - Advance Central PA will liaise with businesses, CTEs, K-12, and post-secondary education providers so that educational offerings meet the rigor and demands of industry, setting individuals up for successful and family-sustaining careers in critical industries.

Section 2.2: Negotiated Levels of Performance

What are the local levels of performance that have been negotiated with the governor and chief elected officials? How will the local board's goals relate to the achievement of these measures?

The negotiated performance levels for program year 2024 and 2025 are outlined in **Attachment 1: WIOA Title I Programs Performance Accountability Tables**.

Advance Central PA's goals relate to the achievement of Common Measures which are indicators of successful delivery of necessary services to job seekers and businesses in the local area. Advance Central PA plans to achieve and exceed the negotiated performance indicators in WIOA with actions that include the following.

- Inclusion of minimum performance standards in all contracts with Title I service providers
- Implementation of active grant management concepts developed as part of a Harvard Kennedy Governance Performance Lab training
- Provision of training and technical assistance to the program providers, including direct support to program supervisors. Program supervisors are equipped to provide ongoing training to frontline staff, so they have the necessary skills to serve individuals and businesses
- Monitor the performance of contracted providers at least quarterly to ensure desired results are being achieved. If results do not meet expectations, Advance Central PA works with service providers and partners to develop appropriate corrective-action plans and makes recommendations for improvement.

- Competitively procuring new service provider(s) if performance would not meet the goals after providing technical assistance and allowing the provider(s) to implement corrective actions.

OPERATIONAL PLANNING: LOCAL AREA WORKFORCE SYSTEM AND INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

Section 3.1: Local workforce system structure

Provide a descriptive overview of the workforce system structure, including key stakeholders and entities in the local area.

The local workforce development system is an extensive network of organizations and relationships working together to support workforce development efforts across the 5,300+ square miles that make up the Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Area. Under the authority of the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania established the Central Region Local Workforce Area to include **Centre, Clinton, Columbia, Lycoming, Montour, Mifflin, Northumberland, Snyder and Union counties**. The Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board, incorporated as the 501(c)(3) non-profit Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corporation (CPWDC), doing business as Advance Central PA, operates the workforce development system in this region.

An Organization Chart that depicts the structure of the Central PA Local Workforce Development network is included as **Attachment 2- WIOA Local Workforce Development System Organizational Chart**.

The appropriate agreements and boards have been established in the region to respect the individual roles of policy vs. program. The roles and relationships of each stakeholder are described below.

Chief Local Elected Official (LEO)

The twenty-seven (27) County Commissioners serve as members of the 501c3 non-profit, Advance Central PA. Each of the nine counties has three commissioners. Because it was not practical to assume that all twenty-seven commissioners could be engaged routinely through the course of a fiscal year, each county designates one member to serve on the Local Elected Official (LEO) Board.

The LEO Board elects a Chief Elected Official (CEO) from among the members who is authorized to sign agreements and contracts on behalf of the LEO Board, delegate tasks and authority, and work closely with the Chair of the LWDB on routine business. The CEO is a member of the LWDB's Executive Committee. The LEO Board- elected Vice Chair serves in the absence of the CEO.

All 27 County Commissioners, as members, hold an annual meeting to conduct both the corporate business as required by members, per the Advance Central PA Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, to fill a vacancy or re-appoint one-third of the LWDB and ratify the selection of the auditor.

The LEO Board meets at least four (4) times a year and, with the exception of its annual meeting, holds its meetings jointly with the LWDB to ensure a collaborative partnership. It is at these joint meetings that the LEO Board approves budgets and budget modifications, operational and

strategic plans. The LEO Board also meets immediately prior to the joint meeting to fill any vacancies that occur on the LWDB.

In addition to the regular responsibilities above, the LEO Board reserves the right to review LWDB decisions that do not require LEO approval and with a majority vote, can send those decisions back to Advance Central PA for additional review. While these provisions do not provide the LEO with a veto, they do provide a balance of authority. In matters where the LWDB and the LEO Board cannot reach agreement, there are formal resolution processes in place. Since the inception of Advance Central PA, the resolution process has never been put into use due to the Advance Central PA efforts to routinely seek input and council of the LEO Board.

Members of the LEO Board with contact information are as follow.

County	Commissioner	Email
Centre	Steven Dershem	sdershem@centrecountypa.gov
Clinton	Angela Harding	aharding@clintoncountypa.com
Columbia	David Kovach	dkovach@columbiapa.org
Lycoming	Mark Mussina	MMussina@lyco.org
Mifflin	Robert Postal (CEO)	rpostal@mifflinco.org
Montour	Rebecca Dressler	rdressler@montourcounty.gov
Northumberland	Joe Klebon	joe.klebon@norrycopa.net
Snyder	Chuck Steininger	csteininger@snydercounty.org
Union	Stacy Richards	srichards@unionco.org

Fiscal Agent and Administrative Entity

The County Commissioners designated Advance Central PA as the Fiscal Agent for Title I funds and Advance Central PA became the employer of record for staff to support the LWDB or Board of Directors appointed by the County Commissioners. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) establishes Advance Central PA as the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB). Advance Central PA is the grant recipient and administrator of WIOA Title I funds and other employment and training funds received for programs operated throughout the Central Local Workforce Development Area (WDA).

Five documents assure Advance Central PA functions in a compliant and effective way with adequate oversight:

- **LEO Agreement:** This Agreement documents the selection process of one Commissioner from each of the nine counties to serve on the LEO Board and the manner in which the LEOs from the nine (9) counties will work collaboratively to address the needs of the region.
- **LEO Bylaws:** The members of the LEO Board approved bylaws to guide their decision-making process, including LEO Board leadership, voting and meeting protocols.
- **Advance Central PA Articles of Incorporation:** The Articles of Incorporation outline Advance Central PA's function as a non-profit corporation.

- ***Advance Central PA Bylaws:*** The directors of the LWDB approved bylaws guide the decision-making process, including board leadership, voting, committee structure and meeting protocols.
- ***WDB-LEO Agreement:*** This Agreement ensures that the LEO Board serves, along with the WDB, as the oversight body and ensures accountability in complying with the requirements of WIOA. Advance Central PA is the primary policy-making body of the LWDA and the LEO Board is liable for WIOA funds received and therefore approves the budgets. While it is the role of Advance Central PA to establish budgets and plans and initially approve these items, the LEO Board must concur with all mandated items prior to implementation. The WDB-LEO Agreement outlines the roles and responsibilities assigned separately and jointly to the boards.

Workforce Development Board

Currently, the LWDB's 23 seats comply with the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry Local Governance Policy. This includes a minimum of 51% of seats designated for private sector business leaders and at least 20% workforce representatives consisting of organized labor and community-based organizations, as well as workforce, education, economic development and required one-stop partners. To ensure that each county in the workforce development area is represented, each county has one county-specific private sector seat to fill and the remaining seats are filled by regional private sector representatives.

In 2012, the LWDB created a Governance Committee to provide support to the LEO Board in areas of recruitment, screening, and orienting new members. The Governance Committee approved a standard membership application, which is used to collect data on all prospective LWDB members, regardless of the source of referral. The Governance Committee reviews the application and provides information to the LEO Board on the qualifications, membership category, geographic and industry representation, etc. for consideration in making appointments. Members are nominated by authorized agencies as described in WIOA. The LEO considers each recommendation and once an affirmative decision is made, an appointment letter is sent to the prospect confirming the appointment and the applicable term from the CEO. For reappointments, the LEO agrees and then signs a reappointment letter. These documents are kept on file at the Advance Central PA corporate office.

In addition to its responsibilities as outlined in WIOA, the LWDB, as the Board of Directors for Advance Central PA, assumes other oversight responsibilities as necessary to manage the day-to-day operations. Advance Central PA's Executive Director employs a staff to carry out the directives of the LWDB, provide LWDB support, operations management, and fiscal management for the broad workforce system and provide staff support to the LEO Board. The staff is also responsible for implementation of a communication strategy to keep key stakeholders informed including: WDB/Committee members; elected officials; state and federal legislators and policymakers; key stakeholders (economic development, education, businesses, Chambers of Commerce) and the general public.

Advance Central PA ensures representatives from state and federal agencies, other LWDBs and stakeholders in the local workforce development system have a primary point of contact within Advance Central PA who facilitates open and timely communication of information. Advance Central PA staff is actively involved with Pennsylvania Workforce Development Association and its various committees as well as the National Association of Workforce Boards and National Association of Workforce Development Partnerships in an effort to share best practices for improving workforce development operations.

There are currently fourteen Advance Central PA employees; twelve (12) board staff positions and two (2) PA CareerLink® Administrators who functionally report to the Operator. The mailing address for all of the following staff as well as telephone and fax numbers are the same.

Advance Central PA Board Staff

1. Erica Mulberger, Executive Director
2. Brooke Gessner, Finance Manager
3. Allison Grose, Youth Coordinator
4. Amy Keefer, Fiscal Coordinator
5. Korrie Lucas, Assistant Director
6. Jamie Mercaldo, Business Engagement Coordinator
7. Marca O'Hargan, Compliance Monitor and Equal Opportunity Officer
8. Patrick O'Connor, Adult Programs Coordinator
9. Gabrielle Randall, Research and Grants Coordinator
10. Cheryl Reish, Senior Accounting Coordinator
11. Kelly Walter, Office/Board Coordinator
12. Morgan Whitteker, Communications Coordinator

Advance Central PA Site Administrator Staff

13. Jamison Bond, PA CareerLink® Administrator for Northumberland/Snyder/Union and Columbia/Montour Counties
14. Rachael Ulmer, PA CareerLink® Administrator for Lycoming and Clinton Counties

Address/Phone:

130 Kelly Square, Suite 1, Lewisburg, PA 17837

(P) 570.568.6868 (F) 570.568.6867

Noted above, Advance Central PA has a staff member designated as an Equal Opportunity Officer. There are Equal Opportunity Liaisons in each PA CareerLink® office as well. It is the responsibility of everyone within the workforce system to ensure equal employment opportunities are afforded to all employees and workforce customers and that civil rights protections are not violated. In an instance where someone does feel they have been discriminated against, the Advance Central PA Equal Opportunity Officer and Liaisons will assist in ensuring the appropriate procedures are followed to address the claim. Additionally, the Equal Opportunity Officer will provide regular trainings to Advance Central PA and workforce partner staff on various equal opportunity topics in accordance with WIOA.

Standing Committees of the WDB

There are seven committees of the Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Board as described below.

Meetings are often conducted with the use of technology such as email and conference calls being sensitive to time and travel demands on Board members. Members are asked to volunteer for the committee to which they can bring their expertise and experience. The Standing Committees are as follow.

Governance Committee

Frequency of Meetings: Quarterly in accordance with the WDB meetings, or as needed.

Membership: Committee consists of members from the LWDB and LEO Board.

Responsibility and Activities:

- Reviews the application and provides information to the LEO Board on the qualifications of prospective members, membership category, geographic and industry representation, etc. for consideration in making appointments.
- Oversees membership development strategies, including recruitment and orientation and governance and membership compliance issues.
- Reviews and recommends updates to the Advance Central PA and LEO by-laws and agreements as necessary

Executive Committee

Frequency of Meetings: Monthly except when the full board meets.

Membership: The Executive Committee consists of WDB leadership, Committee Chairs, the CEO and at large members approved by the WDB Chair.

Responsibilities and Activities:

- Acts on behalf of the WDB on all matters that need approval prior to the next full WDB meeting.
- Reviews all motions approved by other Committees if they meet prior to a WDB meeting.

Policy and Performance Committee

Frequency of Meetings: Quarterly in accordance with the WDB meetings, or as needed

Membership: WDB members and WIOA required partners in the Workforce Delivery System, as well as other members requesting to serve on the committee and as approved by the WDB Chair.

Responsibilities and Activities:

- Guides and directs PA CareerLink® operations and ensures quality of service
- Develops policies and procedures, establishes goals and performance measures for the PA CareerLink® plus the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs
- Provide guidance regarding provision of training funds

Audit/Finance Committee

Frequency of Meetings: Quarterly in accordance with the WDB meetings, or as needed.

Membership: WDB members and two LEO

Responsibilities and Activities:

- Ensures that internal controls established and put into practice for Advance Central PA and all sub-recipients are compliant with federal administrative requirements for all contracted funds passed through Advance Central PA.
- Develops an annual budget
- Oversight and monitoring of activities to comply with administrative requirements
- Review and approval of Advance Central PA's Single Audit
- Procurement and awarding of contracts for goods and services;
- Payment of Advance Central PA's operational costs and preparing monthly/quarterly budgeted and actual expenditures
- Acting as the liaison between the PA CareerLink® and the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry regarding operating costs of a PA CareerLink®
- Invoicing and collection of costs in accordance with Agreements

Youth Committee

Frequency of Meetings: Quarterly in accordance with the WDB meetings, or as needed.

Membership: WDB members and other members requesting to serve on the committee and as approved by the WDB Chair.

Responsibilities and Activities:

- Identifies initiatives focused on preparing students and young adults for education and employment
- Provides direction and develops policy regarding WIOA Youth programming
- Recommends the selection of WIOA Youth providers
- Develops benchmarks to measure the success of WIOA Youth programs and other youth initiatives.

EARN Committee

Frequency of Meetings: Quarterly, or as needed.

Membership: The EARN Committee consists of the County Assistance Office Executive Directors of the nine Central Region counties, the BWPO ARD, other WDB members requesting to serve on the Committee as approved by the WDB Chair, and Fiscal Agent.

Responsibilities and Activities:

- Oversees the Department of Human Services EARN program design and performance measures in the nine-county region.

Personnel Committee

Frequency of meetings: As needed.

Membership: The immediate past chair of the WDB, the current WDB chair, and other board members who have HR background that wish to participate.

Responsibilities and Activities: Oversees policy and procedures affecting staff employed by the 501(c)3.

Operator

Advance Central PA competitively procures the Operator in accordance with all federal, state, and local policies and in alignment with the PA Dept. of Labor & Industry PA CareerLink® System Operator Workforce System Policy. The procurement process includes the public announcement of an RFP which has been carefully crafted by staff and well informed by assessments and partner surveys. An Evaluation Committee is formed to objectively rate each proposal using a standardized tool. Recommendations are ratified by the full WDB. The most recent RFP was released in December 2024 with WDB action to award a contract in March 2025 with a begin date of July 1, 2025. Contracts are awarded on an annual basis with the ability to extend for two additional years based on the annual evaluation of Operator performance, partner surveys, and other measures. The contract includes a six-month assessment and annual assessments that include partner feedback thereafter.

The Operator selected in the recent procurement is a consortium with members and their roles shown in the chart below.

Entity/Contact	Role in PA CareerLink®	Role in Operator
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Central Susquehanna Opportunities, Inc. Megan Bair, CEO	Title I A/DW, ISY TANF YD, EARN	Lead Fiscal Agency/Consortium Member
BWPO Bruce Jones, Assistant Regional Director	Wagner-Peyser, JVSG, RESEA, Title II BST, Rapid Response	Consortium Member
Penn State Career Pathways Robert Getz, Director	Title II	Consortium Member
Tuscarora Intermediate Unit II Karin Knode, Director	Title I BST	Consortium Member
Private Industry Council of the Central Corridor Cheryl Johnson, Executive Director	Economic Development Partner	Subcontracted Lead/Point of Contact/Firewall

The Operator is required to coordinate the delivery of partner programs in the PA CareerLink® ensuring seamless distribution of services. In collaboration with the Advance Central PA staff, the Operator assists in selection of a PA CareerLink® Administrator for each site when vacancies occur. The Operator then serves as the functional supervisor of the Site Administrators. Responsibilities critical to the operations of the PA CareerLink® are the responsibility of the Operator, including: administration, coordination, management, and public relations/advocacy.

The PA CareerLink® Operator agrees to manage, integrate, coordinate and conduct oversight of all services and resources in the LWDA in cooperation with the Advance Central PA, LEO Board and in accordance with this Local Plan. Each PA CareerLink® Consortium member and future Operator will act as a liaison and ensure that partners are informed of all policies and procedures, address service delivery issues, resolve conflict, secure and organize outcome and performance measures, provide financial and budgetary information for the Advance Central PA and make certain that systems comply with all agreements.

Advance Central PA works closely with the Operator, so they understand the strategies and policies of the WDB. Meetings are held each month to discuss goal progress, challenges, and continuous improvement of the workforce network.

PA CareerLink® Operator representatives are expected to attend Standing Committee meetings as requested and quarterly joint meetings of the WDB/LEO Board where they have space on the agenda to provide an overview of PA CareerLink® activities from all partners and to answer questions.

Core Partners

The core partners are key stakeholders in the workforce system all of whom are served by the Operator. Section 3.2 provides details about each partner.

Of note, HUD is not a required partner, rather the partnership comes when funding is available, such as when organizations and/or municipalities receive grant funds from HUD thereby expanding potential available partners.

Section 3.2: Programs included in local workforce delivery system

What programs are included in the local workforce delivery system and how will the local board work with the entities carrying out all workforce programs to support service alignment?

There are six physical PA CareerLink® locations and one mobile unit, The Link, in the Central WDA. Addresses, certifications, and hours of operation are as follows.

PA CareerLink®	Certification	Address
Centre County	Affiliate	240 Match Factory Place Bellefonte, PA 16823
Clinton County	Affiliate	8 N. Grove Street, Suite F/C Lock Haven, PA 17745
Columbia/Montour Counties	Affiliate	421 Central Road, Suite 1 Bloomsburg, PA 17815
Lycoming County	Comprehensive	329 Pine Street Williamsport, PA 17701
Mifflin County	Comprehensive	6395 SR 103 North MCIDC Plaza, Building 58 Lewistown, PA 17044
Northumberland/Snyder/Union Counties	Comprehensive	225 Market Street Sunbury, PA 17801
The Link	Specialized	N/A

Comprehensive sites are certified with access to all partner programs, on-site Title I staff and required functions in place including: welcome, skills/career development services, access to training services, access to programs carried out by the one-stop partners, workforce and labor market information, and business solutions.

Affiliate sites are each connected to a Comprehensive site and offer the same functions, though in a smaller foot-print, with fewer staff, and appointments that may be necessary as all staff are not on-site each day. Functions in place include: welcome, skills/career development services, access to training services, access to programs carried out by the one-stop partners, workforce and labor market information, and business solutions. An example of the difference between a Comprehensive site and an Affiliate site can be demonstrated via Title I Out-of-School Youth programming which has dedicated full-time employees in the Comprehensive sites, and partial employees with split time in some Affiliate sites.

As a Specialized site, The Link is connected to the Comprehensive sites. Services immediately available include the full array of Basic Career Services with connection and intentional referral to the Comprehensive and/or Affiliate sites for more intensive access to partner programming and services. The Link is also available to provide services to employers, such as to be available at recruitment events where prospective employees can complete on-line applications, print their resumes, and receive the expert guidance of the on-board staff while doing so.

PA CareerLink® Partners

A list of program service partners and their contact information can be found in Attachment 3: WIOA Local Workforce Development Delivery System Program Partner-Provider List.

Following is detailed information about the partners authorized under WIOA. These partners operate within a cohesive and integrated PA CareerLink® network while carrying out the provisions of their specific programs and the strategic vision of the WDB as directed by Advance Central PA.

Title I- Workforce Development Activities

Advance Central PA holds competitive procurement processes to identify the Title I providers across the region. Title I includes: Job Seeker Services, including Adult, Dislocated Worker, and basic career services programming; Youth, including Out-of-School Youth; and Business Solutions. As part of these programs, Title I staff provide welcome/intake, eligibility, assessment, individualized career services, IEP/ISS development and comprehensive case management for all WIOA eligible customers, training services, PA CareerLink® workshops, support with Rapid Response and other partner initiatives, and are the employers of record for shared CRA and Welcome services staff.

Title I procurements carefully comply with all federal, state, and local requirements. A request for proposal (RFP) is the basis of the procurement process for Title I. The RFP is announced publicly and provides all information necessary to ensure a competitive procurement. Respondents submit their proposals electronically to staff who then review for basic compliance with RFP requirements for submittal, such as whether it was received by an eligible entity, submitted by deadline, and includes all required responses and attachments. Proposals are then presented to an Evaluation Committee, which can be comprised of volunteer WDB members and/or LEO Board members and Standing Committee members. Each evaluator reviews each proposal individually using a standardized rating tool. Following individual review, staff facilitates a meeting of the committee with a goal of leaving the meeting with directives to seek more information from providers and/or commence negotiations or when able, make a recommendation for contracting. Recommendations are considered by the Executive Committee or full WDB and final once fully ratified.

The current providers of Title I services are as shown in the chart below. Each is responsible for services across the entire region.

Title I Programming	Competitively Procured Provider Organization
Adult/Dislocated Worker, Basic Career Services	Central Susquehanna Opportunities, Inc.
Out-of-School Youth	Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit
Business Solutions	Tuscarora Intermediate Unit

Additionally, service provision on The Link is competitively procured as a separate contract. The current provider is Central Susquehanna Opportunities, Inc.

Advance Central PA's Title I funding currently provides 30% of the financial resources required to operate the PA CareerLink® sites in the region, exclusive of program personnel costs.

Title II- Adult Education and Literacy

Adult Education programming is administered by the PA Dept. of Education. Title II is represented on the WDB and the Operator. Services provided by all programs in the Central WDA include the following:

- Adult basic education, English as a Second Language (ESL), and High School Equivalency (HSE) classes
- Digital literacy instruction
- Transition services/classes to employment & postsecondary education
- Career exploration and workforce preparation
- Wrap around support services

Additional programs include: family literacy and programs in correctional institutions. In serving businesses, Title II providers offer contextualized and specialized programming in math, reading, language, and ESL. Learners have the support of a Student Support Coordinator who assists them in addressing barriers to attendance and success as well as their eventual transition to employment or post-secondary education.

The current providers of Title II services are shown in the chart below.

Title II Provider	Service Area- by County
Central Intermediate Unit 10	Centre and Clinton
Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit	Columbia, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder, and Union
Penn State Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy	Centre and Lycoming
Tuscarora Intermediate Unit	Mifflin

Title II providers in the Central PA Region provide financial support to operate the PA CareerLink® with funding that varies based on if they have a physical presence in a PA CareerLink® or if they provide services at another location in the community and connect to the workforce system through referrals. In addition to the financial support, Title II provides TABE assessments for all PA CareerLink® programs upon request as an in-kind contribution.

Title III- Programs authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.)

BWPO staff are present in all the PA CareerLink® centers in the region and have representation on the WDB. Bureau of Workforce Development Partnership & Operations (BWPO) is the State Workforce Agency (SWA) responsible for administering Wagner-Peyser Act services in accordance with federal regulations.

Wagner-Peyser staff provide employment services to job seekers and employers through PA CareerLink®. Services to job seekers include but are not limited to: job search and job placement assistance, career counseling, needs and interest assessments, proficiency testing, workshops, development of an individual employment plan, and case management. The services offered to employers, in addition to referring job seekers to available job openings, include help developing job-order requirements, matching job seekers' experience with job requirements, skills and other attributes, helping employers with special recruitment needs, arranging job fairs, helping employers analyze hard-to-fill job orders, helping restructure jobs and helping employers deal with layoffs. Both job seekers and employers are also provided with labor market information to help inform their activities.

The H2A (Temporary Agricultural Program) and H2B (Temporary Non- Agricultural Program) help U.S employers fill jobs while protecting U.S. and foreign workers. Access to H2A Foreign Labor Certification services will be provided within the local workforce development system through the Bureau of Workforce Partnership & Operations. BWPO is the State Workforce Agency (SWA) responsible for helping Pennsylvania employers hire foreign workers in accordance with federal regulations.

BWPO staff also provide Rapid Response services, an early intervention business service that assists workers and employers during the entire business cycle. Rapid Response coordinates layoff aversion and outplacement services for employers and workers affected by layoffs, plant closures, or natural disasters. It is not always event-driven; it is a proactive approach to planning for and managing economic transitions. At its best, Rapid Response assist employers with their layoffs by coordinating outplacement services prior to layoff, while supporting the business by working with other state and local stakeholders who can then assist in job expansion. Rapid Response provides an introduction to the Workforce and Economic Development Systems and helps workers and employers navigate the Commonwealth's system of user-friendly resources and information to help transition workers into reemployment and assist businesses.

Wagner-Peyser provides financial support for the PA CareerLink® based on the Wagner-Peyser staff/full-time equivalent at each PA CareerLink® center.

Title IV- Vocational Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.)

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) staff are present in the PA CareerLink® and have representation on the WDB. OVR provides services to individuals with disabilities to help them secure and maintain employment and independence. These services are designed to prepare OVR customers to become qualified trained members of the workforce.

OVR provides multiple services to the business community designed to assist them with onboarding pre-screened qualified employees with disabilities. OVR on-boarding support for a qualified new hire can include reasonable accommodation consultation, On-the-Job Training (OJT) wage reimbursement, referral on tax credits or deductions. OVR also offers no-cost consultation on the Americans with Disability Act (ADA), accessibility standards and helping a business to retain current employees following an accident, injury or disability.

OVR provides financial support for the PA CareerLink® based on the OVR staff/full-time equivalent at each PA CareerLink® center which is a minimum of 0.5 FTE per site.

Senior community service employment activities authorized under Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.)

The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is a United States Department of Labor program funded through the Older American Act with a dual-purpose mission of jobs training and community service. The SCSEP delivers occupational skills training to unemployed, income-eligible people aged 55 and over through paid internships at local nonprofit organizations. It is a transitional program that helps people get back on their feet and move into unsubsidized jobs to reach economic independence.

The program is administered in this Central PA by Associates for Training and Development (A4TD), a private 501c3 nonprofit corporation. PA CareerLink® centers in the Central LWDA collaborate with A4TD, who utilize space in the PA CareerLink® when needed.

Applicants receive a comprehensive assessment to determine their program eligibility and identify their career goals. Once enrolled, participants receive individualized services including

case management, the development of an IEP, and in some cases additional training such as computer skills classes, and assistance achieving industry-recognized credentials and certifications. The program partners with 501c3 nonprofits and public agencies that serve as “Host Agencies” including the PA CareerLink® centers. By partnering with SCSEP, agencies are able to increase and improve program offerings while benefiting from the talents and time of older workers assigned to them.

A4TD provides financial support towards the PA CareerLink® operating budget which is negotiated annually.

Postsecondary vocational education activities under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act of 2006(20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq)

Post-secondary training providers utilize the PA’s workforce development system of record system and www.pacareerlink.pa.gov, ensuring that job seekers have access to all programs that have been approved on this list for our local area. Staff in the PA CareerLink® assist job seekers in accessing this list. In addition, Advance Central PA staff work with post-secondary providers (including Vocational Technical Schools) to ensure that their career programs and services meet the criteria for approval. In addition, job seekers have access to all of the training programs.

Resources provided by technical education programs in support of the workforce development system will be negotiated annually and may include in-kind and/or financial assistance.

Activities authorized under chapter 2 of Title 2 of the Trade Act of 1974

Adjustment Assistance and NAFTA Transitional Adjustment Assistance activities authorized under Chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974, as amended (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.) and Section 123(c)(2) of the Trade Adjustment Assistance Reform Act of 2002 (Pub. L. 107-210), respectively.

Trade Act programs are focused on helping participants become reemployed and ensuring those individuals maintain employment. Individuals who are members of the certified worker group apply for benefits and services at PA CareerLink®. Individual workers who meet the qualifying criteria may receive: job training; income support in the form of Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA); job-search and relocation allowances; Health Coverage Tax Credit (HCTC) as determined by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS); and for workers age 50 and older, a wage supplement in the form of Re-Employment Trade Adjustment Assistance (RTAA; (ATAA)). Additionally, all workers covered by a certification are eligible for employment and case-management services, including basic and individualized career services either through the TAA program or through and in coordination with the WIOA and the Wagner-Peyser Act.

While BWPO staff administer and coordinate the case management and training proposals for eligible job seekers, other staff including Title I staff assist in the assessment process to identify transferable skills as well as identify the employers looking for these skills thus ensuring employers have access to a skilled and educated workforce. As the fiscal agent, Advance Central PA manages OJT contracts for Trade Act participants.

Access to Trade Act Services are provided within the local workforce development system through physical and programmatic resources. The Commonwealth emphasizes and reinforces case management services to maintain performance levels for Trade Act participants. Re-employment services are enhanced as a component of case management services for participants who have completed Trade Act training prior to exiting the program. This will ensure that participants receive the necessary assistance to enter the workforce with suitable

employment in place. These services are provided by the Bureau of Workforce Development & Operations Trade staff located in Central office and PA CareerLink® staff located throughout the state.

The commonwealth implemented an online application for TAA training, job-search and relocation allowances, the Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance (ATAA) and Reemployment Trade Adjustment Assistance (RTAA) programs. BWPO staff help trade-affected workers complete their applications and assess workers' skills and experience.

The commonwealth uses Wagner-Peyser resources to provide career services for all job seekers. Pennsylvania co-enrolls all TAA-eligible workers in Title I to ensure that all Trade participants receive the full range of assistance available to dislocated workers.

Trade Act provides financial support for the PA CareerLink® based on the Trade Act staff/full-time equivalent at each PA CareerLink® center.

Activities authorized under chapter 41 of title 38, United States Code

(local veterans' employment representatives and disabled veterans outreach programs)

Veteran's Representatives are available in all the PA CareerLink® centers in the Central WDA and have representation on the WDB through BWPO. Services to Veterans include case management, job development and referrals and ensure our employers have a skilled and educated workforce. The skills of Veterans are recognized by employers as highly transferrable.

JVSG is a BWPO administered program which assures the commonwealth will be able to provide special individualized services to disabled veterans. Veterans are advised of their priority of service status when they connect with the PA CareerLink® system by staff and through signs and documentation posted throughout PA CareerLink® centers. Veterans qualifying for priority of service designation who require services and/or training are ensured the next available spot as a result of their priority of service status. Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERs) and Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) staff work in conjunction with PA CareerLink® partners to identify veterans and establish an appropriate plan to meet the individuals' needs.

Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) staff work in conjunction with PA CareerLink® partners to identify veterans and establish an appropriate plan to meet the individuals' employment and training needs. These specialized counselors work directly with disabled veterans in the provision of labor exchange services, securing appropriate training services and obtaining appropriate employment at a family sustaining wage. In addition, the JVSG allows Local Veterans Employment Representatives to do employer outreach and promote veterans as job seekers who have highly marketable skills and experience. DVOP specialists coordinate supportive services with applicable providers, deliver technical assistance to community-based organizations for employment and training services to veterans, and assist PA CareerLink® partners in providing services to veterans on a priority basis.

Veterans, ages 18-24 and transitional service members are eligible to meet with the DVOP to receive one-on-one case management services.

LVERS will conduct face-to-face contact with employers, plan and participate in job and career fairs and conduct job development with employers. LVERs will facilitate employment, training, and placement services furnished to veterans, promote the benefits of employing veterans, and facilitate employer training. LVER's will work with other partners and workforce development provided to communicate employer outreach and job openings Veterans with significant

barriers to employment such as, but not limited to, long-term unemployment, previous incarceration, and low-income status are able to see the DVOP. A DVOP will be able to provide one-on-one assistance and develop an Individual Employment Plan that will address the specific barriers for the eligible veteran.

BWPO is the State Workforce Agency (SWA) responsible for administering and staffing the JVSG grant positions in accordance with federal regulations and provides financial support to the local PA CareerLink® system based on the number of staff/full-time equivalents in each site.

Employment and Training programs carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.)

The Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) is the main source of federal funding for Community Action. Community Action agency partners provide a full range of in-kind services and activities having a measurable impact on the causes of poverty in the community that are leveraged with services the PA CareerLink® can provide. Ameliorating the causes and conditions of poverty requires a variety of community engagement activities and collaborative activism to remove obstacles that block the achievement of self-sufficiency: i.e. employment and training, community stakeholder collaboration, literacy activities, obtaining adequate housing, grassroots activities that provide intervention to the causes of poverty and increased engagement in community planning and improvement.

Initiatives include: Community Needs Assessment, neighborhood linkages, leverage of community resources, conduction of the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program and sites, housing, family self-sufficiency, and support services which includes: utilities, phones, hygiene products, food, gas cards, financial literacy, obtainment of vital records and intensive case management. Community Action Agencies also conduct workshops for customers at the PA CareerLink® centers in areas such as budgeting, dress for success, managing household expenses, personal finance, etc.

Providers include STEP in Lycoming and Clinton counties, Union-Snyder Community Action Agency (Union-Snyder CAA) in Union and Snyder counties, Central Susquehanna Opportunities, Inc. (CSO) in Northumberland, Columbia, and Montour counties, and Center for Community Action in Mifflin County.

In-kind and program resources include service coordination, skill training, strengths-based case management, goal setting, and basic needs support. CAA provides information on local resources, through compiling service directories including the Union-Snyder Human Services, Substance Use, and Housing Services Directories, and posting them on their website and offering them at the PA CareerLink®. Volunteers provide free income tax preparation. Staff provide direct service worker skill training and support through the annual Family Services Conference, and community workshops such as motivational interviewing, understanding addiction, understanding issues of poverty, and the strengths-based helper approach. Information about issues and concerns of low-income individuals is provided through community needs assessments, forums, and specialized task forces.

Programs authorized by State Unemployment Compensation (UC) Laws

All PA CareerLink® sites have computers that individuals can use to file a claim online, printers to create hard copies of important information, and email access to provide information to the UC service centers as needed. UC supports customers on-site at the PA CareerLink® via expert UC agents equipped to help handle issues; they are invaluable to the staff and the customers

they serve. Shared greeter staff help to develop the schedules for these UC agents to meet with the customers who need their assistance.

There is also a dedicated phone line and space for UC use.

UC provides financial support to the local PA CareerLink® system based on the number of staff/full-time equivalents in each site.

Programs authorized under part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act

Section 6(d)(4) of the Food Stamp Act of 1977, Block Grants to States for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

The PA Department of Human Services is represented on the WDB via the chair of the EARN Committee, always a director from a County Assistance Office. Advance Central PA receives EARN and TANF Youth Development (TANF YD) funding. TANF YD is used to support In-School-Youth programming to TANF eligible youth as well as to supplement Title I Out-of-School Youth programming to serve young adults who are not WIOA eligible but are TANF YD eligible. The EARN funding is subcontracted in a separate procurement to provide these services in the PA CareerLink®. EARN and TANF YD funding are integrated with the Title I approach. This “one-stop” process assists in assuring that job seekers are provided with the most efficient and effective services available to them.

PA Department of Human Services Employment & Training Programs authorized under part A of Title IV of the social Security Act and the Federal TANF Legislation and US Dept. of Agriculture Family & Nutrition Services includes Advance Central PA’s **Employment Advancement and Retention Network (EARN) program** which is integrated within the PA CareerLink®.

EARN is a vital program serving individuals who receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. The primary objective of EARN is to help these individuals overcome barriers to employment and achieve long-term economic stability. By providing a structured pathway to employment that incorporates individualized career and wellness coaching, EARN empowers participants to transition from public assistance to self-sufficiency, fostering a more stable and prosperous future for themselves and their families. Key services include personalized case management, assessment of family needs and social determinants of health, skills training, incentive services, job development, and placement and retention services while utilizing the whole network of available PA CareerLink® resources from public workshops to one-on-one assistance from the Business Solutions Team

Collaboration is a key element of the EARN program, as it works closely with the Department of Human Services, local agencies, and other program partners to provide holistic support to participants, including utilizing county coalitions as the local management committees. By leveraging the expertise and resources of these organizations, EARN ensures that participants receive comprehensive and coordinated assistance tailored to their unique circumstances.

WorkReady is a PA. Dept. of Human Services employment & training program which operates in two Central Region counties. Keystone Education Yields Success (KEYS) is a PA Dept. of Human Services program that operates within community colleges. Advance Central PA’s EARN provider partners with WorkReady, including at Direct Service Team meetings, and with KEYS to help bring credentialing opportunities to EARN participants.

EARN provides financial support for the PA CareerLink® based on the EARN staff/full-time equivalent at each PA CareerLink® center.

The **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Youth Development** program provides key funding to serve youth program participants. WIOA dollars are prioritized for Out-of-School Youth (OSY) to maintain the required 75% expenditure rate requirement. TANF Youth Development funding is essential to serving In-School Youth (ISY), in addition to OSY who do not meet WIOA eligibility requirements. Enrollment in TANF Youth Development for ISY allows flexibility to provide all 14 WIOA program elements and hallmark services to program participants. Additionally, TANF OSY receive programming side by side with WIOA out-of-school eligible youth.

The supports and services youth receive through TANF YD funding benefit the whole family and aim to break the cycle of poverty by helping the youth or young adult prepare for a successful career that offers self-sustaining wages. Participants have the opportunity to participate in career exploration activities and paid internships, along with personalized case management. Expert youth programming staff collaborate with program participants to identify the program elements best suited for each participant and their goals.

Integration within the PA CareerLink® along with positive relationships with other partners is key to youth receiving the most out of their program enrollment.

TANF YD provides financial support for the PA CareerLink® by funding a portion of the salaries/benefits/operating expenses of the ISY, OSY, and Title I BST staff who are contributing to the success of the participants served in TANF YD programming which provides overall support for costs in the PA CareerLink®.

Rapid Response

Rapid Response services are available throughout the Central Region. Led by expert staff within the Bureau of Workforce Development & Operations, the partner staff support the delivery of Rapid Response services in a coordinated manner. Together the team takes a proactive, customized approach in assisting businesses at risk of closing, downsizing, and/or laying off employees and notifies the BWPO Rapid Response staff immediately if there are rumors of any of the aforementioned. High quality professional services help businesses sustain and retain their employees. In the event a layoff is unavoidable, a team of workforce and community professionals is coordinated to help employees cope, including to equip them with information they'll need to sustain their families and ultimately find new employment. Further, if a business is impacted by foreign competition or trade, Rapid Response provides services through a collaborative approach with local, state, and federal partners to build global competitiveness while offering training that employees may need.

Other Programs authorized by WIOA

- **Job Corps:** Currently, there is not a Jobs Corps program location in our region, however we do make referrals to Job Corps and they refer to the PA CareerLink®. Job Corps has a representative onsite periodically in Lycoming County and provides presentations to staff and youth throughout the region.
- **Native American Programs:** There are no Native American programs in the region, however staff at the PA CareerLink® provide referrals as appropriate. See Attachment 3 for contact information.

- YouthBuild: There currently is not a YouthBuild program in the region. Youth interested in this type of programming would be referred to the WIOA Out-of-School Youth program, because YouthBuild programs are location specific.
- Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker: There are currently no H2A (Temporary Agricultural Program) or H2B (Temporary Non-Agricultural Program) programs in the region, however staff at the PA CareerLink® centers provide referrals as appropriate using the State contact.
- Second Chance Act of 2007: There are currently no Second Chance Act funding programs in the region, however individuals and their families who may have been eligible for Second Chance Act employment and training programs are referred to other WIOA programs for services to assist in achieving their employment and training goals.

While our region has no active Second Chance Act funded programs, PA CareerLink® staff are active in all counties supporting the ex-offender population with a range of support activities, depending on the re-entry coalition(s) within each county. For example, in several counties, pre-release workshops are conducted which explain the services and resources available through the workforce development system. In other counties, we receive direct referrals from the county prison and/or probation staff. There are currently no programs operating in the region that offer financial or in-kind resources/ support to the workforce system.

- Of note, HUD is not a required partner, rather the partnership comes when funding is available, such as when organizations and/or municipalities receive grant funds from HUD thereby expanding potential available partners. Current grantees of the Family Self-Sufficiency initiative include Housing Authority of Centre County, Housing Authority of County of Lycoming, and Housing Authority of Northumberland County. Jobseekers can receive employment and training services through other WIOA programs in lieu of a HUD training program since HUD programs are location specific. Referrals are made to the CAO regarding housing needs to help customers overcome barriers. Additionally, referrals are made to the county-based Housing Authorities for assistance.

Other Partners

Advance Central PA works with other critical partners like economic development, K-12 schools, post-secondary training providers, and community-serving organizations to help expand the focus on workforce development across Central's large region. **Economic development** partners provide direction on job creation and expansion, so the workforce system can respond to rising employment opportunities. Advance Central PA works with economic development partners to provide labor market information and wage analysis that businesses can use to make well-informed decisions and locate in the Central WDA. Economic development partners also work with Advance Central PA and the PA CareerLink® Business Solutions Team to understand employer needs and develop solutions with increased collaboration through our participation in DCED's Engage! program.

Educational providers from **K-12** provide opportunities for the emerging workforce to learn about and explore career expectations. School districts host the In-School Youth staff so students and educators can take full advantage of the expert workforce resources of the PA CareerLink®. Advance Central PA works with schools to apply for strategic grants to increase career awareness and preparation activities for students. We also partner to connect students to career pathways via initiatives such as developing pre-apprenticeship to apprenticeship

programs, www.PathtoCareers.org, Dinner & Dessert events with local businesses, and coordinating industry tours.

Post-secondary providers deliver industry relevant short-term and traditional classroom training opportunities. These opportunities combined with WIOA Title I funds help job seekers increase their skills to get the good jobs their families need and our businesses need to fill.

Community-serving organizations are partners that provide wrap around and support services job seekers and youth so often need to stabilize and move forward with their workforce development goals. This can range from supports for housing, childcare, food security, clothing, etc.

Service Alignment

Advance Central PA works to continuously improve the system and to ensure satisfaction for both our employers and job seekers. PA CareerLink® staff in our region work collaboratively to ensure the programs offered align with the intent of WIOA and Advance Central PA's vision to ensure customers are provided seamless services from the intake process and throughout their involvement with the workforce system.

Partners and their programs are aware of and part of the strategic planning of the Board. Regular updates are provided to staff. It is expected the programs offered through the PA CareerLink® align with the strategic vision of the Board. This is evaluated on a regular basis both informally and formally. The PA CareerLink® Operator with oversight of the PA CareerLink® network ensures the vision is being realized.

Advance Central PA endeavors to have a workforce system where the core WIOA programs work together with each other and with the Department of Human Services EARN program, school districts including career and technical education centers, post-secondary training providers, economic development, and community and faith-based organizations. The result of this collaboration is comprehensive, high-quality services to job-seekers, businesses, and young people.

By working together in an integrated fashion, the core WIOA programs and DHS EARN program are able to ensure jobseekers receive all of the services needed to: remediate and overcome barriers, define a career pathway, obtain soft skill training and supports necessary to get and keep a job, access secondary and post-secondary training and transition assistance, career services, and placement assistance and opportunities. Co-enrollment is strongly encouraged when beneficial opportunities exist for individuals within more than one program. Communication across programs happens daily as staff draw on expertise from partners. It is also essential that all parties involved have a basic understanding of partner services, making the referral process more efficient.

By working together, the programs are able to present as one cohesive system under the PA CareerLink® and therefore most effectively serve local employers. The Business Solutions Team (BST) in each site include staff from multiple core programs. Duties are shared and not duplicated with critical assistance from the Site Administrators. Businesses have a main point of contact and information is readily shared with the entire BST with the best interests of the business and jobseeker participants at the forefront.

Strategies and expectations for alignment of services begin with expertise and insight from the WDB and Standing Committee members, including members from the private sector. The WDB includes members from all core programs who are active participants on committees that align

with their respective areas of expertise. Through these committees and the PA CareerLink®, Advance Central PA collects and analyzes quantitative and qualitative data revealing where the gaps are in various programs and which core and community partners can fill in those gaps, so we can bring parties together and implement solutions.

Continuous improvement to integration efforts within the entire PA CareerLink® system is critically important. Each program offers specialized services, and it is through ease of access that jobseekers and businesses benefit the most. Advance Central PA envisions a system where regardless of which core partner is their first point of contact, an individual or employer results in seamless access to all available services. To support integration and avoid duplication of services, the PA CareerLink® sites are managed in a functional way under Site Administrators with oversight by the Operator.

Shared functions include the welcome process and triage of new jobseeker customers, basic career services, and business solutions as detailed above. Initiatives such as developing career pathways for local businesses and jobseekers and strategizing to ensure a pipeline of talented workers are available and ready to meet employer demand are also undertaken through integration.

Operational Alignment Supporting the State Plan and Local Strategy

Advance Central PA's approach to overall operational alignment within the PA CareerLink® aligns directly with the six goals outlined in the state plan as well as the local strategy of the WDB.

With Advance Central PA's intentional work to be well informed about Registered Apprenticeship, pre-apprenticeship opportunities for Registered Apprenticeship programs have been expanded and will continue to be thanks to staff expertise and effective partnerships with and the local career & technical education providers. Advance Central PA has integrated and leveraged funds to support apprenticeship initiatives, train the PA CareerLink® staff, and incorporated policy that supports apprenticeship as a workforce strategy that works for businesses and job seekers.

The integrated PA CareerLink® also supports sector strategies and employer engagement as fundamental. Through the cross-partner operations of the Business Solutions Team, Advance Central PA staffing, leveraged industry partnership grants, and connections to other key partners such as economic development, the PA CareerLink® in the Central WDA is poised to continuously improve services to businesses so they can recruit, train, and retain the talent they need to thrive in Central PA.

Advance Central PA values the opportunity for young people to experience various career pathways first-hand so they can make informed decisions about their futures and pursue the training they need for the jobs they want in Central PA. The In-School Youth program is focused on sophomores through seniors in high school, intentionally connecting them to career exposure experiences such as job shadows and paid internships that are then reflected on and developed to shape goals, overcome barriers, and increase employability skills needed to persist.

Continuous improvement of the PA CareerLink® system is critical and Advance Central PA takes this seriously. Our goal is that businesses and job seekers know the PA CareerLink® is the premiere place for comprehensive, relevant workforce services. This is accomplished through: collaboration with partners, the Operator, and Site Administrator; formal monitoring, surveys,

and technical assistance; open communication; and active grant management techniques, keeping a pulse on overall performance with an eye for improvement. Offering services in the manner that works best for the business or individual is a key component of the strategy, this includes access to in-person and remote services of equal value and effectiveness.

Job seekers and young people need to be stabilized in order to obtain and persist in employment. Advance Central PA has supported training and learning so that staff are best in class when it comes to serving a person as they are and helping them get to where they want to be. Businesses need a workforce they can rely on, and job seekers sometimes need help navigating resources they need to stabilize their families so they can get and keep jobs. One hallmark service Advance Central PA programs offer is a family needs assessment that informs the IEP/ISS and goals toward sustained employment.

Aligned with the Commonwealth's goal to address worker shortages in critical industries, Advance Central PA will continue to promote OJT as a key strategy that supports both businesses and individuals in an effective, relevant way. OJT increases an employer's capacity to provide training to individuals who need it to be successful in their long-term career pathway. Similarly, Registered Apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship are promoted. Additionally, Advance Central PA will continue to grow and develop industry partnerships with local businesses in critical need, such as healthcare, manufacturing, building and construction, and agriculture.

Section 3.3: Adult and Dislocated Worker training activities

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

Adult/Dislocated Worker Activities

There are robust services available to eligible Adult and Dislocated Worker (A/DW) participants including individualized career services, training services including on-the-job training and occupational training through the Eligible Training Provider List, and follow-up services, in addition to basic career services. The Board reviews the type of services available through an analysis of the WIOA, a review of current activities related to performance, intelligence from local employers regarding their talent qualifications and skill needs as communicated to Advance Central PA, the Business Solutions Team, and economic development partners, feedback from regional partner and industry partnership meetings, feedback from participants, and a comparison of program delivery type/availability to peer best-in-class local workforce development areas. The Board identifies service gaps, confirms the need for specific services with employer and sector groups, and adjusts policies and programming to address identified needs as may be required. Expectations for innovative and new ideas to address the need for services are outlined in the competitive procurement processes for programming. Access to services are individualized and driven by the IEP. An overview of the menu categories in alignment with WIOA follow.

Basic Career Services

- Welcome
- Information about services available through the PA CareerLink®
- Initial assessment of individual and family needs
- Referral to appropriate services
- Self-directed or staff-assisted job search
- Workshops, such as resume writing, interviewing skills, and job search

- Information about: labor market, training providers, support services, unemployment, financial aid, relocation assistance

Individualized Career Services

- Eligibility determination
- Comprehensive family needs assessment
- Individual Employment Plan (IEP) defining the customer's specific goals and pathway for achievement
- Career counseling and planning
- Short-term prevocational services
- Workforce preparation activities
- Financial literacy services

Training Services

- On-the-job Training (OJT)
- Individual Training Account (ITA)
- Pre-apprenticeship / Apprenticeship

Follow-Up Services

- 12-months of proactive and relevant delivery of services designed to be sure the individual persists in placement.

A/DW and EARN Co-enrollments

The Board streamlines and facilitates co-enrollment and braiding of funds between A/DW with other programs, including the Department of Human Services (DHS) EARN program. EARN is co-located and fully integrated into the PA CareerLink® in the region; a strategy that allows participants to leverage the full resources of the PA CareerLink® as programs work together in a unified way benefiting the individuals served, businesses, and all programs within the overall network. As an integrated partner, services are not duplicated. The Board expects A/DW and EARN programs to proactively review participant cases to determine, identify, and refer individuals for co-enrollment. A unified case management approach for co-enrolled individuals is required by the Board, thus creating a holistic and uninterrupted service strategy. Staff members from A/DW program and the DHS EARN program receive cross-training to understand the eligibility criteria, services, and benefits of each program. This enables them to provide comprehensive guidance to participants, ensuring they receive the services they are eligible for and streamlines enrollments. An example of a co-enrollment that begins in EARN would be for someone who desires to enter training that can be funded by A/DW. An example of a co-enrollment that begins with A/DW is for someone identified as a SNAP recipient who could volunteer for EARN and receive access to specialized services such as with the EARN wellness coach.

The Board leverages funds that benefit the participant while maintaining a clear and compliant budget. This means that while each funding stream maintains its identity, they are used in a coordinated manner to provide comprehensive services. By leveraging resources from multiple funding streams, the Board can offer a wider range of services without duplicating efforts. For example, DHS EARN incentive funds might cover needed supports like childcare and transportation, while A/DW funds focus on training. Ultimately, co-enrollment and braiding of funds will provide participants with a more comprehensive support system and a wider net of resources. They will have access to a broader range of services, including job training,

education, supportive services, and case management that prepare them for success in employment with local businesses.

Partnership with DHS programs extend beyond the EARN/EARN SNAP programs for which Advance Central PA has a contract with DHS to locally procure and oversee. EARN participants who develop a plan to enroll in training with a DHS Keystone Education Yields Success (KEYS) program are appropriately transferred from EARN to KEYS, with warm hand-offs once the participant successfully enrolls with a DHS partner community college. The DHS Education Leading to Employment and Career Training (ELECT) program helps pregnant and parenting teens obtain a high school diploma or equivalency, become better parents and transition to employment, career training or higher education. Referrals are made before participants reach the age of 22. SNAP Job Experience Training and Support (SNAP JETS) is a program offered by DHS that Advance Central PA would look forward to partnering with DHS on if the opportunity arises for Central Pennsylvania.

Procurement

Procurement for A/DW programming is competitive and in compliance with all regulations and local policy. A request for proposal (RFP) is written and publicly announced on Advance Central PA's website including all pertinent information and timelines. Evaluation committees that can include WDB members, staff, and Standing Committee members carefully read and score proposals using a standardized rating tool developed for each RFP and aligned with the questions asked. Requests for proposals require respondents to include comprehensive answers about performance, implementation strategies, anticipated challenges and how they'll overcome them, plans to collaborate as a full partner in the PA CareerLink®, etc. all of which allow the Evaluation Committee to make well-informed choices when completing the rating tool. Recommendations of the Evaluation Committee are considered for ratification by the WDB. Feedback is also provided upon request to those organizations that were not selected during the procurement.

Continuous Improvement of Assessment Criteria and Processes

The Board is committed to continuous improvement in all aspects so that A/DW receive the highest quality, relevant services they need to move into a desired career pathway and persist.

Advance Central PA staff readily applied to participate in *Request for Proposal Development Training* with the Harvard Kennedy School Government Performance Lab as offered by the PA Dept. of Labor & Industry in 2024. The knowledge, resources, and hands-on practice staff received in that training has been applied to the most recent procurement for A/DW services that will be effective July 1, 2025. Advance Central PA re-designed the RFP template with new language, emphasis on problems and an ask for innovative solutions, and specified goals to assist in evaluating the effectiveness of the proposed program while encouraging multiple respondents. For example, new goals in the RFP included: the percentage of job placements that meet or exceed the participant's self-sufficiency wage based on family composition and county; the percentage of ITA and OJT participants who complete their training program; the number of participants who attend workshops along with metrics regarding workshop satisfaction; and qualitative data measuring customer satisfaction with case management services.

Quality and Quantity of Training Services Offerings

ITAs are allowable only through the providers and programs on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). The Board has a staff person who is expert in the ETPL and assisting providers with understanding the requirements and successfully applying for inclusion. The Board expects the

ETPL to be robust and include offerings linked to HPOs, so employers who need skilled talent will have a pipeline through the PA CareerLink®. The ETPL for Central typically boasts 17-18 providers and 85-90 programs. When participant career pathway development results in a need for training that's not on the ETPL, Advance Central PA reaches out to the local network of training providers to assist them with application to be on the ETPL. Advance Central PA encourages a diverse range of providers to apply, ensuring a broad selection of training options for participants, as long as those trainings programs align with the current HPO list and state requirements.

OJT is the key training strategy implemented by the Board as it results in immediate employment that so many A/DW participants are seeking and simultaneously results in hires that businesses demand. Advance Central PA places no limits on OJT industry and reviews each potential contract for compliance with WIOA as well as local policy.

Apprenticeships may be funded by OJT, ITA, or both according to local policy. As a key strategy to serving businesses and job seekers, the Board emphasizes that leveraging WIOA Title I funds in support of Apprenticeship is important.

Continuous Improvement of A/DW Services

The most recent discrepancy Advance Central PA has been tracking with A/DW is in regard to Common Measure Performance, particularly Credential Attainment and Measurable Skill Gain. Advance Central PA has closely monitored Common Measure denominator reports and worked with the service delivery staff to understand underlying issues preventing improved performance. Staff determined that increased use of SkillUP PA with A/DW who desire training is one way to improve this measure and has directed the Title I providers to increase their efforts in this regard.

As the needs of A/DW participants change, Advance Central PA in coordination with the Operator, as needed, and Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker providers adjust service delivery methods and the services available.

Advance Central PA staff closely monitor Common Measure performance and other locally defined performance targets for quality and compliance. This includes formal monitoring at least annually, but also intentionally monitoring each month. This active grant management oversight results in provision of technical assistance, formal trainings, and continuous re-adjustment of service delivery in order to meet the Board's expectations and provide best in class activities and services at the PA CareerLink®. Basic career services, individualized career services, training services, and follow-up services are all provided.

Priority of Service

Priority of service (POS) is in effect for Veterans, Spouses of Veterans, and other statutory priority of service target groups: Recipients of public assistance, Low-Income Individuals, Basic Skills Deficient Individuals, and those that are Underemployed (while meeting the low-income threshold). Discretionary (local) priority of service groups include: Parent of a child who receives a free or reduced price lunch, Ex offenders, Older individuals who are not self-sufficient, Individuals with a disability who are not self-sufficient, and Other individuals who are not self-sufficient (but do not meet the low income threshold).

POS determination begins with a person's responses to Digital Intake questions. Title I Adult staff validate documentation to prove POS and upload information into CWDS as required, making the data readily available to analyze the percentage of Adults who meet a level of POS.

Advance Central PA evaluates compliance with the local Priority of Service Policy and performance of the Adult program to ensure at least 51% of Adults accessing individualized careers services and training services are priority of service and to evaluate compliance with training fund requirements. Training funds are budgeted for Adults in general and Adults who meet priority of service. In the event funds become limited, funds are held for priority of service Adults. If by January of each program year Advance Central PA determines the percentage of POS Adults served represent an average of less than 30% of all Adults served, Advance Central PA will require a written action plan from the Title I Adult subcontractor regarding how outreach and registration of POS customers will be increased.

POS Data

Advance Central PA tracks and monitors the priority of service through CWDS Ad Hoc reporting, fiscal obligation sheets, and individual case file review. Advance Central PA has historically met the POS thresholds for Adults. Most recently in program year 2023, 86% of Adults served met priority of service criteria broken down as follows:

- 5% were Veterans/Eligible Spouses
- 70% were otherwise statutory POS: low income/public assistance recipient/basic skills deficient individuals
- 11% were local/discretionary priority of service individuals

Comprehensive Outreach

Outreach to POS groups is conducted via community events, partnerships with local organizations, local providers, social service organizations, and county coalitions (locally leveraged as EARN Local Management Committees.) All outreach materials that are developed are vetted by Advance Central PA on templates approved by the PA Dept. of Labor & Industry. Outreach includes constant contact emails, flyers/posters in community partner and other locations, and discourse with the public. Outreach efforts are used to educate and promote awareness of available services and identify who to contact at their local PA CareerLink® to learn more and enroll.

Advance Central PA conducts regular analysis of labor market trends, unemployment rates, and in-demand occupations while collaborating with local employers, educational institutions, and community organizations to identify emerging workforce needs and how they relate to priority of service groups.

The PA CareerLink® informs customers of POS such as through posters and information posted in public areas of the sites as well as via intentional conversations and operational policies. For example, a Veteran will be connected with the specialized Veteran staff on-site.

Assessment and IEP

A/DW staff are responsible for determining eligibility and maintaining expert understanding of validation processes. Through eligibility determination individuals are also determined as POS or not. Veterans and their spouses are POS in both programs, which Adult has other levels of statutory POS described herein. Advance Central PA provides career services to all Adult participants and designs budgets to ensure that no less than 51% of POS Adults access ITA and OJTs. Upon eligibility for A/DW, the Title I staff facilitates the completion of a Family and Household Needs Assessment that investigates both individual and household barriers and supports, such as access to childcare, transportation, clothing, past employment, drug/alcohol use, mental health issues, and other social determinants of health. This assessment will then be reviewed, along with results from career development assessments such as the O*NET Interest

Profiler and the TORQ, in collaboration with the participant. The data collected will then be used to create the participant's Individual Employment Plan, again in tandem with the participant.

Once a completed Individual Employment Plan is in place, career coaches will help participants determine which small term, actionable goals should be undertaken to eliminate any barriers or obstacles that would prohibit career planning or training activities. Advance Central PA stresses the importance of removing barriers and accessing supports before moving individuals into placements or trainings that would otherwise be unsuccessful without relevant resources.

Service Delivery, including for English Language Learners (ELL)

All POS customers receive equal access and opportunity. Specialized services are deployed as necessary to support their full participation in programming and ultimate success. For instance, individuals that are English language learners (ELL) are referred to Title II providers for an ESL class enrollment while staff utilize approved translation services to aid in case management. When other specialized expertise is required, participants are referred to appropriate agencies that can provide the necessary services, such as mental health counseling, disability services, or legal assistance, while A/DW staff maintain consistent communication and engagement with the participant.

Provision of Services to Individuals with Barriers

Addressing the needs of individuals with barriers to employment requires a comprehensive and collaborative approach that begins with initial assessment and personalized career planning assessments. The Family and Household Needs Assessment is used to identify an individual's unique barriers to employment and social determinants of health. Once these barriers are determined, staff will develop tailored services that outline specific goals, required skills, and steps to overcome identified barriers. This includes setting short-term and long-term career objectives. Upon removal of barriers (or sufficient reduction of barriers) staff provide ongoing career counseling to help individuals navigate their career paths, make informed decisions, and stay motivated.

Advance Central PA and the PA CareerLink® sites collaborate with agencies that have expertise in areas where the LWDB or PA CareerLink® office may lack. For example, partnering with mental health services and community organizations provide a continuum of support. This might include joint case management, shared resources, and regular communication to track progress.

Advance Central PA promotes and arranges for participation in training programs that focus on developing in-demand skills through the Eligible Training Provider List. This can include technical training, soft skills development, and certifications. If a participant does enroll in a training program, staff maintain consistent contact with the participant to monitor progress and make necessary adjustments to an individual's career plan. This ensures that individuals remain on track and receive the support they need.

Staff Training in POS

Staff remain educated and trained on priority of service requirements/eligibility and have access to policies and resources provided by Advance Central PA, the state, and USDOL. New staff members receive comprehensive training on the eligibility criteria for priority of service and how those groups are served under WIOA while incumbent staff receive regular updates on any changes in policies or eligibility criteria. This includes understanding the specific groups entitled to priority of service and the types of supports that they might commonly need. Advance Central PA provides training and technical assistance throughout the year, whether it is in

response to state monitoring, local monitoring, or feedback that would indicate its necessity. Title I staff supervisors conduct quarterly case reviews and continually review priority of service policies with staff as new validation and verification guidance is released.

As Advance Central PA emphasizes and expects case management practices to be holistic, family-centric, and proactive, A/DW staff are trained to be responsive to every individual's needs. Staff approach each participant interaction with empathy and a customer-focused mindset while understanding the unique challenges faced by priority of service individuals, whether they are low income or a veteran, and leverage assessments, IEPs, and participant interviews to develop a road map for needed services. Available resources and supports in the region are continuously explored and archived to ensure uninterrupted service delivery for participants who may need referrals to external organizations or access to services beyond the PA CareerLink®.

Transfer of Funds

If it is determined additional funds are needed to serve Adults, the Board will approve staff to make a request to transfer Dislocated Worker Funds to Adult as needed. Advance Central PA fiscal staff then prepare the Dislocated Worker to Adult transfer request and submit it to L&I's Bureau of Workforce Development Administration for a final determination. This strategy assures that adult individuals who seek services from the PA CareerLink® will have access.

Career Pathways, Co-Enrollment, Work-Based Trainings

Advance Central PA supports the development of career pathways for A/DW participants using labor market information and intelligence directly from the Business Solutions Team, along with assessments such as TORQ®, and the goals and information outlined in the individual employment plan.

Co-enrollment is strongly encouraged to support the comprehensive and specialized needs of each individual, and in some cases mandated, such as with Trade. This strategy leverages the resources and strengths of the entire PA CareerLink® network so that A/DW participants receive the services they need to obtain and sustain good jobs with local businesses.

OJT is a key strategy to help A/DW participants connect with family-sustaining employment, and Advance Central PA includes a budget to support OJT each year. Apprenticeships are also a strategy and Advance Central PA has a number of efforts underway to help increase access to apprenticeships, including within the Apprenticeship Building America grant awarded under the PA Dept. of Labor & Industry's larger grant project.

Section 3.4: Youth workforce investment activities

Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local area.

Youth Committee

Advance Central PA's Youth Committee helps Advance Central PA coordinate youth services by assisting with planning, oversight, and strategy related to youth workforce activities, including Title I out-of-school youth and TANF Youth Development in-school youth and out-of-school youth. The Committee helps to identify needs and strategies to meet them, oversees youth related policy, ensures quality and compliant services, provides connections and resources, and participates in and provides oversight of competitive procurement to ensure the Central Region has youth providers who can meet and exceed expectations and requirements. Program design also falls under the purview of the Youth Committee, therefore

oversight related to easy access to the 14 program elements for Title I out-of-school youth and TANF Youth Development qualified youth, who are either in-school or out-of-school, does as well. One way this is accomplished is via Advance Central PA's competitive procurement process which requires prospective providers to explain their strategy to make all 14 program elements readily available to all youth.

The Youth Committee is led by a workforce development member with interest and expertise in service provision for youth. Membership includes representatives from the WDB and non-WDB members who have related expertise. Membership is open to individuals from youth serving community-based organizations, education/training providers, philanthropic organizations, mental health, foster care, vocational rehabilitation, housing, juvenile justice, economic and community development, businesses, parents, participants, and youth. As a standing committee of the LWDB, Youth Committee actions are considered and ratified by the LWDB.

OSY Priority

Advance Central PA prioritizes services for out-of-school youth (OSY) by fully allocating the WIOA Title I Youth budget to OSY. A portion of TANF Youth Development funding is also allocated to support the OSY demographic who do not meet WIOA eligibility, while a majority of TANF YD monies are leveraged to serve in-school youth (ISY) which the WDB deems as critical to serve as well. Advance Central PA has competitively procured providers for OSY and ISY. The OSY program is locally named YES to the Future. Participants receive the same level of services whether they are made eligible for WIOA Title I or TANF YD.

YES to the Future staff have built solid partnerships with referring agencies and organizations, including but not limited to: Children & Youth, the DHS Education Leading to Employment and Career Training program (ELECT), Migrant Education, Head Start/Pre-K Counts (young parents), Title II partners, courts, treatment centers, prisons, school districts, and County Assistance Offices. Recruitment strategies for OSY don't rely on referrals alone; outreach directly to the targeted population is accomplished via social media, yard signs, billboards, radio spots, and perhaps most importantly, word of mouth. Termed "peer ambassadors" OSY participants assist in recruitment by speaking to others about their personal experience in the program. These recruitment strategies ensure that young adults who are eligible for and would benefit from the OSY program are being recruited, and not just youth who are still connected to secondary education institutions or other community agencies.

YES to the Future is a holistic program and one of the hallmark first services is a two-generation needs assessment kicking off the case management. Services include the development of an individual service strategy, goal setting, referrals, support services, and developing a service delivery plan including access to the 14 program elements. YES's case management is grounded in trauma-informed care, engaging activities, barrier remediation, soft skills development, and practical hands-on work experience via a paid work experience, termed locally as paid internship (PI).

Emphasis on Work Experience

Paid internships are a key component of Advance Central PA's OSY program design. The 20% expenditure requirement is met through a variety of key strategies starting with not only collaboration with the PA CareerLink® Business Solutions Team (BST) and partnerships with local businesses, but importantly by working with the young adult participants to identify their goals illustrated on their individual services strategy. To ensure a minimum of 20% of WIOA Title I funds is expended on allowable paid work experience activities, all YES to the Future young

adult participants understand they have an opportunity for job shadowing, paid internships, and on-the-job training.

In addition, all YES to the Future staff are trained on what qualifies as work experience activities which includes more than wages paid to youth. Other qualifying activities include, but are not limited to: staff time working to identify a work experience opportunity; staff time working with employers to ensure a successful work experience; staff time spent evaluating the work experience, participant work experience orientation session; staff meeting with employers to review the PI handbook to ensure compliance and success; and employability skills or job readiness training for participants. YES to the Future staff are required to complete time and effort reports tracking their time.

Many young adults entering the YES to the Future program cite needing employment immediately, however, they often lack previous work history and are unsure of their interests and where they might excel. For young adults who identify PI as a way to meet their goals, case management includes interest inventories and learning style assessments to help guide employment interests. YES to the Future works with the BST to clearly identify the skillset and needs of young adults who are current candidates for PI, OJT, and unsubsidized employment. The PA CareerLink® team works together to match the young adults with businesses who could meet the OSY's individualized goals.

Career Pathways

Many youth and young adults struggle to envision a future beyond the present. As a solution, the development of a Career Pathway plan assists them in establishing a career goal and understanding the type and length of training and/or education needed. Advance Central PA's youth providers are required to integrate and leverage career pathway plans with youth and young adult participants to guide them in their future pursuits.

Young adults in the YES to the Future program develop a Career Pathway plan which also utilizes labor market information to illustrate a realistic assessment of how much they can earn in various occupations of interest, the demand for specific positions, and the required skills and education. Advance Central PA and the PA CareerLink® work with local businesses to identify career pathways that are then shared with participants.

Job shadows are often the first tangible step for a young adult once they indicate an interest in a career, as this is a way for the young person to learn what a "day in the life" is truly like for particular occupations and employers. Once a job shadow is conducted, young adults with interest can be interviewed and hired for a Paid Internship. Young adults are able to capitalize on open doors with employers who not only recognize the talent and skills of those young adults but have an interest in helping our young adults enter and progress along a career path.

ISY who participate in the locally named Bridges to the Future program have 2 program models to choose from based on their goals. They can enroll in comprehensive services, which typically start their sophomore year of high school and continue through graduation. This program option provides the highest level of support and guidance in developing and achieving their goals. Participants enrolled in comprehensive services have access to the 14 WIOA youth program elements, and typically start with career exploration activities, working their way to completing some paid work experiences in fields of interest their junior or senior years. Alternatively, participants can enroll in specialized services, which are short-term, and allow participants to complete activities and experiences such as paid internships, job shadows, and career exploration activities without receiving long-term comprehensive services. Participants

enrolled in specialized services also have access to the 14 WIOA youth program elements. Career pathway planning is integrated within the multi-year comprehensive programming. The first step of the Career Pathway Plan is exploratory in nature as it allows for youth to identify their skills, strengths, interests, ideal working environments, and careers they might be interested in and want to learn more about. As involvement in the program progresses and youth learn more about their post-secondary goals, the career pathway plan becomes more specific by keying in on labor market information, related careers, investigation of what a typical working day for the chosen occupation might look like, learning about the required education and training, and pinpointing the types of classes they can take their senior year that might be aligned with the career. Additionally, work-based learning opportunities are identified. The final piece comes together during their senior year where they identify additional opportunities to advance in the selected career, back up plans, extra support they may need, and next steps. Youth who choose to participate in the specialized level of services still have access to career development planning.

Co-enrollment Strategies

Co-enrollment into partner programming is encouraged in alignment with participant individual service strategies and goals. Out-of-school youth participants whose goals include training are co-enrolled in Title I Adult programming where both Adult and OSY service providers coordinate and leverage services to provide the most holistic services available including funding for post-secondary training where possible. OSY are referred and co-enrolled in Title II programming when a basic skill deficiency is identified. Collaboration with classroom-based and distance learning Title II providers helps out-of-school youth increase basic skills, learn English language skills, pass the GED® or HiSET®, and/or provide transition services to enter postsecondary education or training. Co-enrollment in EARN allows for leveraging of specialized services such as special allowances and the wellness coach. Referrals also come to OSY from partners such as Adult, Title II, and EARN.

TANF Youth Development Funding (YDF)

In collaboration with the PA Department of Human Services (DHS) Bureau of Employment Programs (BEP), TANF Youth Development Funding (YDF) supports the delivery of workforce services to ISY program participants, along with OSY who would otherwise be considered ineligible for Title I programming. All 14 WIOA Youth Program Elements are provided as needed and appropriate. The following describes the 14 WIOA Youth Program Elements that are available with local provider organization, activity time and goals for the total number of TANF youth anticipated to receive a WIOA Youth Program Element per year.

WIOA Youth Program Element	Local Provider Organization	Activity Time	Annual Goal-TANF YDP Participants
Tutoring, study skills training, and instruction leading to secondary school completion, including dropout prevention strategies	Central Susquehanna Opportunities, Inc. (CSO) (Advance Central PA's ISY Provider) Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit (CSIU) (Advance Central PA's OSY Provider)	Year-round	225

Alternative secondary school offerings or dropout recovery services.	CSO Alternative Secondary School facilities across the region	Year-round	10
Paid and unpaid work experiences with an academic and occupational education component.	CSO CSIU Tuscarora Intermediate Unit 11 (TIU) (Advance Central PA's Business Solutions Team Provider)	Year-round, a majority of them during summer	120
Occupational skills training, with a focus on recognized postsecondary credentials and in-demand occupations	ETPL training providers Title I Adult Dislocated Worker partners	Year-round	10
Leadership development activities, e.g., community service, peer-centered activities.	CSO CSIU	Year-round	100
Supportive services.	CSO CSIU Leveraged supports from other community agencies	Year-round	200
Adult mentoring.	Community members	Year-round	20
Comprehensive guidance and counseling, including drug and alcohol abuse counseling	CSO CSIU Local counseling and drug & alcohol agencies	Year-round	20
Integrated education and training for a specific occupation or cluster.	Title II Partners	Year-round	0
Financial literacy education	CSO CSIU	Year-round	150
Entrepreneurial skills training.	CSO CSIU Other community partners and employers	Year-round	150
Services that provide labor market information about in-demand industry sectors and occupations.	CSO CSIU	Year-round	225

Postsecondary preparation and transition activities.	CSO CSIU Title II partners	Year-round	180
Follow-up services for at least 12 months after program completion	CSO CSIU	Year-round	100

Advance Central PA's TANF Youth Development model often serves youth who are parents themselves or are youth from low-income families with income at or below 235% federal poverty income guidelines. The supports and services offered by youth programming staff benefit the whole family and break the cycle of TANF by focusing on the youth or young adult and helping them prepare for a successful career pathway that offers self-sustaining wages. TANF Youth Development participants complete a family needs assessment upon enrollment, which helps program staff identify immediate and long-term needs of the youth or young adult and their family. The results of this assessment and the conversations that follow allow staff to identify individual and family needs and refer parents or other members of the household to the PA CareerLink®, or to other community agencies as needed.

Advance Central PA's subcontractors are responsible for recruiting youth participants. They are required to ensure a presence in the PA CareerLink®, schools, and communities served. Youth are recruited in a variety of ways, including but not limited to referrals that result from outreach to local agencies and organizations. Referrals are received from: school districts, homeless shelters, probation offices, Children and Youth offices, foster care agencies, County Assistance Offices, WIC offices, Transition Consultants, Project ELECT, Title II, OVR, groups that serve veterans, Migrant Education, Head Start/Pre-K Counts (young parents), courts, treatment centers and prisons. Recruitment strategies for TANF YD also leverage recruitment strategies through social media, yard signs, billboards, radio spots, and perhaps most importantly, word of mouth.

Providers ensure staff understands the selling points of the program and they use a "what's in it for them?" strategy to convey benefits. Recruitment activities include promoting success stories demonstrating what others who might have faced similar challenges have accomplished with assistance of TANF youth programming. Additionally, the PA CareerLink® Academy, a ten-part series including interactive and engaging modules such as Intro to PA CareerLink®, Skill and Interest Inventories, My Career Pathways 101, Resume Builders, and What Employers Want, is used to recruit TANF Youth within the school districts throughout our region.

When recruiting new TANF Youth, the County Assistance Offices (CAOs) are a valuable referral partner. Advance Central PA's procured providers directly recruit from County Assistance Offices and have done so by sharing information directly with CAO staff at Direct Service Team meetings. PA CareerLink® partners, including EARN and WIOA partners are made aware of the TANF Youth Development programming by TANF Youth Development providers who actively recruit and accept referrals from them. EARN participants may have children interested in programming, so special emphasis will be placed on serving them.

Advance Central PA's TANF YD ISY program provides year-round services based on WIOA core program elements and the Pennsylvania Career Guide. The year-round programming helps youth explore careers and become aware of their potential. Goals of each youth are used to find relevant, meaningful placements for paid work experiences in the summer between junior

and senior year, and/or during the school year as necessary. The experience is then used to help direct further exploration and planning during the senior year. Providers are responsible for enrolling ISY from the broad spectrum of eligibility outlined in TANF YD. Recruitment efforts seek TANF eligible low-income youth. The schools from which we enroll are those that are highest priority based on risk factors including number of low-income households. We intentionally recruit TANF eligible youth to provide them with paid work experiences critical to their futures.

Youth in paid work experiences are paid \$10.35 per hour for in-school youth, and between \$12 and \$15 per hour for out-of-school youth and also receive financial literacy education to help them use it wisely. The OSY paid work experience wage was most recently raised in 2024 based on participant need, unsubsidized wages being paid for similar roles, and in accordance with the Governor's priorities. Advance Central PA's Youth Committee will continue to monitor paid work experience wages to ensure they continue to be suitable and in accordance with the Governor's priorities. Work experiences are scheduled to last for 240 hours. While most work experiences occur in summer over an 8-week period, experiences are also offered on an as-needed basis to TANF eligible youth year-round. These youth are supported as staff assist them in managing schoolwork and improving grades as a main focus even as they work after school.

Additionally, paid work experience is offered to out-of-school youth who are TANF Youth eligible but not eligible for WIOA. As with all TANF enrolled youth, these out-of-school youth have the full complement of WIOA services made available to them. TANF out-of-school youth receive programming side by side with WIOA out-of-school eligible youth.

Advance Central PA utilizes the full resources of the PA CareerLink® network in Central PA to recruit employers and maintain meaningful connections with them. Tuscarora Intermediate Unit 11 (TIU) is Advance Central PA's competitively procured provider of business solutions. TIU connects with employers on behalf of youth programs to initiate their participation in summer paid work experiences, Camp STEAM tours, guest speaking, and other career experiences such as mock interviewing. Advance Central PA launched Path to Careers, a website designed to strengthen connections between businesses, schools, and young people. It will be leveraged by TANF Youth staff to help the young people they're working with engage and connect with employers in meaningful ways. (www.pathtocareers.org)

Advance Central PA has a solid history of developing and maintaining positive relationships with businesses and other partners to the benefit of TANF Youth. Between 2022 and 2024, 48 unique local businesses presented information about their industries and careers to Camp STEAM participants and spoke to groups of eligible youth throughout year-round programming to help them link academics to work and have awareness of careers in the local area. County Commissioners in our region also connect with students in Camp STEAM to help them understand local government and build leadership skills. Staff expertise is leveraged in providing the full complement of youth services where applicable. School districts provide space to offer Camp STEAM throughout the summer when ISY staff typically are housed in the PA CareerLink® sites over the summer months when school is not in session. Regional Career and Technology Centers host tours for TANF youth and young adults to understand more about the programs they offer.

In-school youth who participate and complete Camp STEAM receive a stipend in the amount of \$250. The \$250 is earned at the conclusion of the two-week intensive career exploration experience and funded by TANF YD. Advance Central PA's ISY provider makes all participating youth aware of the incentive prior to the start of each camp and convey requirements in a clear

and understandable way. Additional incentives may be considered by Advance Central PA and incorporated into policy as opportunities to increase performance and reward participation are identified.

The following is contact information for LWDB staff responsible for implementation, tracking and reporting TANF YDF activities and expenditures along with the TANF YDP provider information:

LWDB Staff Contacts:

- Erica Mulberger, Advance Central PA Executive Director, emulberger@advancecentralpa.org, (570) 568-6868
- Korrie Lucas, Advance Central PA Assistant Director, klucas@advancecentralpa.org, (570) 568-6868
- Allison Grose, Advance Central PA Youth Programs Coordinator, agrose@advancecentralpa.org (570) 568-6868

TANF Provider Staff Contacts:

- Megan Bair, Central Susquehanna Opportunities, Inc., mbair@censop.com, (570) 274-2440: *Serving in-school TANF Youth in 31 school districts and communities in all 9 counties of the Central WDA*
- Katherine Vastine, Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit, kvastine@csiu.org, (570) 523-1155: *Serving out-of-school TANF Youth at the six PA CareerLink® sites in Mifflin, Centre, Clinton, Lycoming, Columbia, and Northumberland counties, and in communities in all 9 counties of the Central WDA*

Advance Central PA employs a dedicated Compliance Monitor who intentionally monitors both the Title I WIOA and TANF programming. The Compliance Monitor analyzes compliance and quality related to eligibility validation, timeliness and accuracy of data entry, individual service strategy development and planning, and case management. In addition, providers are responsible for self-monitoring on a quarterly basis and reporting findings. Advance Central PA also employs a dedicated Youth Programs Coordinator who monitors many of the same things that the monitor does but in real time as part of daily duties in addition to providing technical assistance as needed and ensuring the program design is meeting needs.

Advance Central PA follows the regulations regarding WIOA Title I Youth eligibility requirements. Advance Central PA defined WIOA "requires additional assistance to complete an education program or to secure and hold employment" as follows for Title I out-of-school youth:

- Part of a family who has received medical assistance, LIHEAP assistance or public housing/rent subsidy within the past 6 months; or
- Lacks a significant work history, defined as meeting one of the following: Has no unsubsidized work history
 - Has been unable to maintain unsubsidized employment with the same employer for 6 months or more
 - Has been fired from one or more jobs within the last six months
 - Has a history of sporadic employment
 - Has been actively seeking employment for at least 2 months but remains unemployed

The “additional assistance” criteria for Title I in-school youth is defined as follows:

- Youth at risk of dropping out of school (as certified by school counselor); or
- Is part of a family who has received medical assistance, LIHEAP assistance or public housing/rent subsidy within the past 6 months; or
- Youth who lacks a significant work history, defined as meeting one of the following:
 - Has no unsubsidized work history
 - Has been unemployed for more than 15 weeks of the last 6 months
 - Lacks meaningful work experience and/or general job search, basic entry level or employment readiness skills

Advance Central PA serves youth with disabilities through our Title I funding stream for OSY, and TANF Youth Development funding streams for both ISY and OSY. Youth with disabilities are granted equal access to programming including the 14 program elements defined in WIOA. Collaborations with OVR frequently occur when serving ISY as staff works with each school district’s Transitions team and staff to empower youth with disabilities and assist in their goal development and achievement. Collaborations also occur when serving OSY. As a core partner, co-enrollment is encouraged to give young adults with disabilities access to the comprehensive services they need to thrive.

Advance Central PA expects providers to participate and actively seek collaborations with other youth serving programs such as YouthBuild, Job Corps and AmeriCorps. One example of this is consistent participation in Job Corps events. Advance Central PA’s Title I and TANF OSY and TANF ISY providers participate in regular overviews provided by Job Corps as we have a relationship with Job Corps Admissions Counselors who cover counties in our region. If providers are working with youth and young adults who have identified interests in the program offerings of Job Corps (Advanced Manufacturing, Automotive & Machine Repair, Construction, Finance & Business, Healthcare, Homeland Security, Hospitality, IT, Renewable Resources & Energy, and Transportation), further information can be acquired, and next steps can be investigated for program participation.

Section 3.5: Coordination between Title I and Title II

How will the local board coordinate WIOA title I workforce investment activities with adult education literacy activities under WIOA title II?

Coordination of services starts with a member of the Central PA Adult Education Coalition representing Title II serving as a director on the WDB. Additionally, a member of the Adult Education Coalition is part of the PA CareerLink® One-Stop Operator Consortium whose minimum responsibility per WIOA is “to coordinate the service delivery of required one-stop partners and service providers.”

Title II program managers are members of an active Adult Education Coalition that meets at least quarterly. The coalition meetings provide a platform for Advance Central PA to share the goals of the local plan and the Central WDB. Advance Central PA staff attend meetings and contribute information and ideas to discussions and problem-solving sessions. Annually, the coalition makes a presentation to the WDB to share trends in participants served, provide updates on service delivery changes, and share success stories.

The Adult Education Coalition invites Title I program managers (both job seeker and business services) and PA CareerLink® site administrators to meetings to answer questions about Title II procedures and services; adult educators gain a better understanding of Title I services and initiatives; and, together, solve problems. Adult Education Coalition members will continue to invite partner staff to future meetings.

When Title II staff identify areas where a change to processes or procedures will improve overall services to customers, Title II administrators reach out to Title I counterparts to work together to increase understanding, solve problems, or improve services. This collaboration happens as soon as a need is identified.

Title II program supervisors participate in quarterly Regional Supervisor Meetings that bring together supervisors from all PA CareerLink® partners. Title II program managers provide input into decisions made at the PA CareerLink® sites.

Title II staff participate in weekly PA CareerLink® meetings to learn about new developments in the PA CareerLink®; share program updates and procedural changes; and hear the same information from other partners. Title II instructors and case managers working in PA CareerLink® offices are treated as staff and are supported in the same way staff of Title I partners are supported. Title II staff working in PA CareerLink® offices contribute to the development of office procedures and referral processes and track customer data in a monthly report shared with the site administrator.

Title II staff participate in training offered to Title I programs; Title I staff complete professional development offered by the Division of Adult Education's Professional Development System. Title II program managers will invite Title I program staff to participate in adult education networking and learning events on topics of mutual interest (distance learning and digital literacy, case management, etc.). Title II adult education staff will continue to provide assessment services to all partner programs, including the in-school youth program, when needed.

Title I and II staff will continue to co-present at state adult education and workforce development conferences on innovative strategies implemented locally, as appropriate. Title II adult educators invite Title I program peers to attend state-level adult education conferences as well.

Title I and II staff work together to refer customers to all program services and to co-enroll customers. Title II instructors share attendance data and keep Title I Workforce Specialists apprised of student progress. Often Title I and II staff work together to help solve customer barriers and develop strategies to help co-enrolled customers reach their goals. Title I and II program administrators and staff collaborate to improve referrals and coordinate services. Title II providers encourage students to participate in PA CareerLink® services such as workshops, employer events, and virtual job fairs.

When customers are co-enrolled, Title I Workforce Specialists and other partner case managers coordinate career coaching and counseling services with Title II Student Support Coordinators who are tasked with offering similar services. This ensures that customers do not repeat the same activities in both programs and that they see the various case managers as a support team. Information sharing between case managers, with the permission of the customer, results in

better overall support and use of resources. Sharing data allows Title II programs to complete career pathway reports and keep student records updated.

Local boards are not directly involved in WIOA Title II solicitation and procurement; the Title II competition is run solely by PDE, and all funding decisions are made solely by the PA Department of Education (PDE). To aid in the process, Advance Central PA will establish an ad-hoc review committee consisting of Advance Central PA staff and non-staff with no perceived or actual conflict of interest to review Title II applications submitted to PDE for WIOA Title II funds. This committee will review the applications for alignment with the goals and strategies of the local plan and then provide recommendations to PDE on ways to improve alignment, if applicable.

Section 3.6: Wagner-Peyser Act

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

Advance Central PA recognizes that to best serve jobseekers and businesses, all partners need to work together in a way that maximizes coordination of services and areas of expertise, continuously improves services, and avoids duplication. Title I service providers and Wagner-Peyser merit staff have a history of working well together in the Central region, and Advance Central PA implements plans and strategies to continuously improve.

Advance Central PA's goal for the PA CareerLink® is that every jobseeker who walks in is warmly welcomed and quickly connected to desired services. Advance Central PA implemented a welcome/ process designed to accomplish this goal utilizing the information collected in Digital Intake and assuring outstanding customer service. Originally developed with input from both Title I and Title III merit staff, welcome services in each site may vary slightly, but the goal is the same: welcome new jobseekers, ask brief questions to help assess the services they may need, provide an overview of services, and connect them to the appropriate PA CareerLink® staff or schedule services. Welcome is staffed by Title I, but in the event a line forms, other staff are called in so that jobseekers can flow through the process quickly; merit staff contribute to the process by lending a hand when needed.

As a result of Welcome, individuals are shown to the career resource area (CRA) if their immediate needs may be met with access to basic career services. CRA coverage staff are a shared cost in the sites with a Title I employer of record, however, merit staff and other Title I staff pitch in as needed to ensure adequate coverage and assist customers with basic career service needs. Basic career services are considered a shared responsibility in Central region sites.

In other cases, individuals may express interest in individualized or training services and the person staffing Welcome connects them to Title I program staff or merit staff, or both as appropriate. For example, if an individual identifies themselves as a Veteran, a connection to the appropriate merit staff will be made along with connection to the Adult program staff if beneficial to the individual.

Some jobseekers enter the workforce system for the first time when they become unemployed and are called to RESEA sessions managed by merit staff. In the sessions, merit staff discuss all of the services available and connections are made to Title I programming as desired by an

individual. Further, merit staff works with Title I program staff for participants registered with the Trade program, so they have access to the full array of resources available.

Advance Central PA specifically expects the Business Solutions team (BST) comprised of Title I funded staff and Wagner-Peyser staff and other partners to work together in the best interests of businesses and the PA CareerLink® as a whole. Title I and Title III BST members work side-by-side and communicate informally each day and formally in scheduled meetings in order to make sure all are up to date on news regarding local businesses and the economy. Duties are shared, not duplicated, as Advance Central PA feels strongly the PA CareerLink® must present to businesses as one entity working together to meet their needs. Further, program providers coordinate with all members of the BST in an effort to match program participants with employers the BST is working with; it is ideal if a business has a need that can be met with a program participant in the system, and the BST staff must work together with program providers for that to effectively happen.

Cross-training is a critical strategy that strengthens professional skills and furthers the expectation that the PA CareerLink® is a collaborative network with “no wrong door”, that is no matter how a business or individual first accesses services, they will receive relevant and high-quality customer service that guides them to the program(s) right for their needs. Advance Central PA requires the Operator to keep a pulse on cross-training needs; the Site Administrators play a critical role in understanding needs on the front-line and coordinating staff development and training to that end.

Overall staff development initiatives help staff maintain confidence and professionalism in their work which reflects on the quality and compliance of collaborative PA CareerLink® service delivery. Advance Central PA pursues funding to support professional development in areas where there is need. The Site Administrators are again key in helping to identify opportunities for improvement and are expected to discuss solutions with the Operator so that training in areas such as customer service, employer engagement, and motivational interviewing to mitigate barriers can be secured and deployed. Further, Advance Central PA pursues specific trainings as opportunities present.

Section 3.7: Core program facilitation

How will the local board work with the entities carrying out core programs to:

- Expand access to employment, training, education supportive services, and co-enrollment for eligible individuals, particularly individuals with barriers to employment.
- Facilitate the development of Career Pathways in core programs (specify on-ramps from adult education).
- Improve access to activities leading to recognized postsecondary credential (industry-recognized certifications or portable and stackable certifications).

Expanding Access to Employment, Training, Education Support Services and Co-Enrollments

The core programs, Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Adult Basic Education, Wagner-Peyser, and Vocational Rehabilitation and other key partners including TANF (EARN and TANF YD) work in collaboration to provide and expand access to employment, training, and education support services to all individuals across the broad spectrum of eligibility in the PA CareerLink®. Advance Central PA requires that all integrated partners work together so that individuals receive best in class relevant services with co-enrollments to promote access to specialized services that will

support development and attainment of goals ultimately leading to sustained employment along a career pathway.

Advance Central PA requires the Central workforce network to be a seamless system of programs with service delivery and co-enrollments in the best interest of the individual participants, presented as one unified entity working together: PA CareerLink®. Advance Central PA does this via direct contracts and outlined expectations with the procured Title I and TANF partners, communication and partnership with Title II and Title III, and via expectations of the WDB carried out by the Operator responsible for oversight and implementation of partnerships that leverage one another without duplication.

Eligibility to receive services under WIOA Title IV may only be determined by a qualified OVR Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. Vocational rehabilitation counselors determine eligibility for and work with customers to develop an Individual Plan for Employment, providing services necessary to meet their specific vocational goal. As a core partner, OVR provides Vocational Rehabilitation services for people with disabilities. Eligible OVR customers receive multiple services that may include but not be limited to, diagnostic, vocational counseling and guidance, vocational evaluation, restoration, training, job placement and preemployment training services for eligible and potentially eligible high school students with disabilities. These individualized services are designed to prepare OVR customers to become qualified trained members of the workforce. OVR recognizes the value of customer access to various services and resources and encourages co-enrollment across programs as appropriate.

Advance Central PA recognizes the intent of Congress through WIOA to utilize funding to better serve those with barriers to employment. While we have historically served this population, services will continue to be refined to best meet their needs and to collaborate with partner agencies on the removal of barriers.

Advance Central PA follows statutory priority of service and additionally has specified discretionary priority of service for Adults with target groups as follow.

- Parent of a child who is eligible or receives free or reduced-price lunch
- Ex-offenders
- Individuals age 55+ who are not self-sufficient
- Individuals with disabilities who are not self-sufficient
- Others who are not self-sufficient

In addition to recruiting from the broad spectrum of eligibility related to Dislocated Worker status, and barriers for ISY and OSY, Advance Central PA emphasizes services to TANF Youth Development eligible youth, and the long-term unemployed and will focus on serving SNAP recipients as well.

The Link mobile career center expands access to employment, training, and support services to all eligible individuals, particularly individuals with barriers to employment by giving Advance Central PA the ability to take workforce services and expert staff from the PA CareerLink® to the locations where these customers are already going for services. Partners that host *The Link* include a wide variety of community organizations already serving those with barriers to employment that have agreed to be a location where the mobile workforce center can park and provide services. These partners include:

- **Probation Offices:** The Link regularly visits correctional facilities to provide services such as job readiness workshops and mock interviews to inmates who are preparing to rejoin the workforce.
- **County Assistance Offices:** Partnering with County Assistance Offices provides increased access to jobseekers with barriers to employment including low-income individuals, homeless individuals, TANF recipients, SNAP recipients, and the long-term unemployed.
- **Community Action Agencies:** Community Action Agencies serve unemployed jobseekers who face barriers to employment. *The Link* presents the opportunity to provide WIOA basic career services at their locations.
- **Charitable Organizations:** Community organizations that provide emergency services to low-income or unemployed individuals, such as food pantries or soup kitchens, are targeted locations for *The Link* to engage with jobseekers. Likewise, organizations that cater to low-income customers, like Goodwill Industries and Salvation Army, provide access to potential clients in well-known and frequented public locations.
- **Libraries:** Partnering with libraries expands the reach of PA CareerLink® into communities where the expert workforce development staff can have an impact on those who may already be using the resources of the library.

Career Pathways

Career Pathways and high priority occupation information is used with job seekers to help them set goals and assist them in their job search, help job seekers connect to adult education, community action agencies and other resources to eliminate barriers to employment. BWPO and Title I staff match job seekers with employers in need of their skills by providing basic job search skills and information to entry level job seekers. For those job seekers who have been referred to training as part of their entry into a career pathway, staff will help connect those job seekers to employers' career pathways once they have completed their education and/or developed the skills that will match employers' needs.

The MOU underscores the need for connected, seamless services. Co-enrollment is encouraged wherever it is in the best interests of the individual. For example, out-of-school youth interested in classroom training are co-enrolled as Adult to access ITA funds; Trade participants are co-enrolled in Title I so they are supported throughout their training endeavors through placement and 12-months of follow-up; EARN participants are co-enrolled in Title II to gain access to high school equivalency prep courses. Co-enrollment scenarios are as various as the people we serve. Advance Central PA views the specialized services of the PA CareerLink® as a strength and expects partners to work together and co-enroll participants in a seamless process, never working in silos.

It is essential that all partners have a basic understanding of all other partner services, making the referral process more efficient. Co-enrollment begins with discussion with the participant about the partner program and its benefits relevant to their needs. The co-enrollment process is formally initiated using the referral module in CWDS so that referrals are accurately collected. Advance Central PA promotes customer-centric services, so in addition, a warm hand-off is provided with the current program staff introducing the customer to the staff from the partner program.

The Central Region has a Title II Coalition that meets quarterly with Advance Central PA staff as well as various PA CareerLink® partners. In these meetings, information on initiatives and

progress is readily shared as are challenges. These solutions-based partnership meetings have focused on how to increase awareness of Title II services in the past and it will continue to be on the agenda. The services Title II offers are invaluable to success of customers who need to increase basic skills, enhance their English language fluency, increase soft skills, earn their high school equivalency diploma, and open up entry ramps to career pathways. Similarly, Title II co-enrolls individuals who begin their journey in Title II but can benefit from partner programs, including to access ITAs and OJTs and other individualized career and follow-up services. Strategies to increase awareness of Title II services include: Coalition presentation to the LEO and WDB once per year at the quarterly public meetings, presentations to PA CareerLink® partner staff in site meetings, and presentations to Title I and EARN participants.

As a core partner, Title IV staff are also welcome to take part in weekly staff meetings at the PA CareerLink® to strengthen partnerships and share information about available services. Eligibility to receive services under WIOA Title IV may only be determined by a qualified OVR Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors determine eligibility for and work with customers to develop an Individual Plan for Employment, providing services necessary to meet their specific vocational goal.

Career pathways are individualized, and everyone is at different on-ramps. Advance Central PA supports upskilling and credentialing as a means to enter the desired career at a higher level with a higher way and improved mobility. In accordance with regulations, Advance Central PA does not require a sequence of services, therefore individuals interested in earning recognized post-secondary credentials are connected to Adult or Dislocated Worker services to access an ITA. Additionally, Advance Central PA has partnered with Title II in the past to pilot trainings to help improve one's viability along a career pathway and will continue to partner in innovative ways going forward.

All Title I participants receive assistance in the development of their career paths. Starting with assessment and career exploration, career goals are developed within the IEP/ISS and then career pathway planning develops from there. With consideration of strengths, transitional skills, and areas for improvement, individuals map out a plan that includes opportunities for training to move along the career pathway, and goals beyond initial placement. PA CareerLink® staff discuss multiple training opportunities with jobseekers as they prepare their IEP/ISS which can include ITA, OJT, and apprenticeship training which combines an ITA and OJT.

Improved access to activities leading to recognized postsecondary credentials

The structure of the PA CareerLink® and partners are aligned functionally, not by employer of record, and all partners remain abreast of other partner offerings through intentional presentations and communication overseen by the Operator as required by Advance Central PA. This contributes to improved access to all services, including activities leading to post-secondary credentials and certifications. For example, partners know that Title I offers funding for ITAs and referrals are readily made for existing and new participants. The use of an effective facilitation of a customer's IEP/ISS development across partners helps identify someone's desire and need for training so that referrals can be made, trainings on the ETPL can be explored, and ITAs can be initiated. Further, referrals are made to Title II when a participant requires an increase in basic skills to be accepted into/persist in training; the approach to credentialing is partnership in the sites.

Advance Central PA has a staff person who is expert in the ETPL. With a wealth of training providers in the Central WDA, Advance Central PA staff assists training providers in understanding and navigating approval on the ETPL which opens up opportunities for

individuals to access Title I funding to overcome cost barriers that would otherwise prevent them for accessing the training they need for the job they want.

Outside of traditional ITAs, certifications may be earned on the Commonwealth's SkillUP™ PA platform. Advance Central PA promotes use of these free online courses so that participants can learn new skills, brush up on skills, and earn certificates that will help them meet their employment and career pathway goals.

Advance Central PA focuses on access to work-based activities as a key strategy leading to recognized post-secondary credentials. On-the-Job Training (OJT) starts an individual on their career pathway in the desired field. Once they learn the skills and successfully complete their OJT, they remain an employee with the company and can continue to grow in their career pathway, with some employers offering post-secondary funding opportunities that lead to promotion.

Key to overall strategy, Advance Central PA will continue to assist businesses, secondary, and post-secondary institutions in registering pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs creating career pathways that allow participants to earn while they learn. Title I programs are available and positioned to support registered apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs. Apprentices eligible as WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker programs are eligible for ITA and or OJT monies which benefit the participating businesses responsible for those costs, and the apprentices themselves as they receive the full case management support of the PA CareerLink® program staff to help them obtain their positions as apprentices and persist in them. Out-of-School Youth may also be directly eligible for OJT funding and as with any partner, may be eligible for ITA and OJT with co-enrollment as Adult or Dislocated Worker as well. The BST is trained and positioned to discuss apprenticeship ecosystems as a proven workforce solution when providing consultative services to businesses; interested businesses are referred to Advance Central PA staff and/or the Apprenticeship & Training Office for support in registering programs.

Registered apprenticeship programs include attainment of one or more interim occupational credentials that may be attained by apprentices throughout their program. These support credential attainment performance measures and indicate increased occupational skills and successful progression in the program as the apprentice continues in their program toward earning Journeyworker status.

Section 3.8: ITA Accounts

How will training services be provided through the use of ITAs, fund programs of study, or through the use of contracts for training services that fund work-based trainings.

Individual Training Account (ITA) Caps and Methodology

Funding limits are based on the length of the ITA and residency. If training costs exceed the established ITA funding limit, the participant must make arrangements to pay the additional costs prior to using ITA funding. Participants who reside outside of the Central Region are eligible for an ITA with funding limits capped according to the ITA Policy of the WDA in which they permanently reside or Advance Central PA's Policy, whichever is lower. The Policy & Performance Committee of the WDB determined the caps for funding by analyzing program costs, out-of-pocket expenses, the length of trainings tied to HPOs, and strategies to fund as many individuals as possible in a meaningful way that reduces their barriers to entering the training. The third and fourth year of a 4-year training program are eligible for ITA, but not the first and second. With maximum funding of \$7,000 available, spreading the funding over the

last two years rather than four years is more effective and an efficient use of funds allowing the workforce system to serve more individuals in shorter time spans of two years versus four.

Program Type	Maximum Funding
Short Term	\$3,500
1 Year	\$4,500
2 Year	\$7,000
3 or 4 Year (only the last 2 years are eligible for an ITA)	\$7,000

Customized Contracts versus ITAs

In rare cases, the training that's needed is not available in the LWDA, even after reaching out to potential training providers and offering assistance in being added to the ETPL. In these cases, Advance Central PA would explore the use of contracts rather than ITA. The training provider would be fully vetted, costs evaluated to determine whether reasonable, and justification as to the cause for the contract would be documented.

Informed Customer Choice

Advance Central PA's ITA policy is designed to help participants make informed choices when selecting a training program and provider. Training must be directly connected to a high priority occupation and all programs and providers must be approved according to the Eligible Training Provider List status on CWDS. The contract process begins at the PA CareerLink® where Title I program providers ensure interested individuals are eligible, assess priority of service status, help individuals develop an Individualized Employment Plan, provide labor market information, assess interests and skills, and assess probability of success in training and the defined career goal.

Customers always receive information about available trainings, including but not limited to cost, location, and performance outcomes. Customers are never told to attend training with one provider over another. High priority occupations and the Eligible Training Provider List are always available and utilized with customers.

To access an ITA, individuals must meet Adult or Dislocated Worker eligibility requirements and must also be identified as unlikely to obtain or retain self-sufficient employment or higher wages, need training to obtain or retain self-sufficient employment or higher wages, and have the skills and qualifications to participate in training (i.e., appropriateness for training). As always, reasonable accommodations are made for individuals with disabilities. Co-enrollments are encouraged to give individuals receiving services from other programs access to ITAs.

Proposed ITA contracts are submitted to Advance Central PA and go through a program and fiscal approval process at Advance Central PA before they are funded. As part of the program approval process, a participant's intended occupation is reviewed to ensure it matches a Central Region High Priority Occupation (HPO). Clearances and background checks are reviewed against industry standards to help ensure training related employment outcomes.

Advance Central PA also emphasizes continuous improvement and quality assurance of ITAs and other contracts. The LWDB (in conjunction with the state) regularly reviews and updates the list of eligible training providers as they are submitted to ensure that the programs meet high

standards and align with the employment needs of the local workforce. By maintaining a dynamic and responsive training provider list, Advance Central PA ensures that customers have access to the most current and effective training options available.

ITAs for Registered Apprenticeship

ITAs are available to apprentices for the related technical instruction (RTI) component of the Registered Apprenticeship program based on the individual's eligibility for WIOA Adult or Dislocated Worker, or other grant funded program terms. The amount of the award is based on the same criteria as all other ITAs and the training must be on the ETPL.

Additionally, on-the-job training (OJT) is a funding option used to support Registered Apprenticeship in the Central PA Region. OJT is available to new employees who are eligible for WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, or other grant funded program terms. For Apprenticeship, an ITA can be "stacked" as a funding option after completion of an OJT.

By allowing a combination of ITA and OJT funding, Advance Central PA offers flexible comprehensive support for businesses that participate in Registered Apprenticeships with tailored funding solutions promoting successful outcomes.

Section 3.9: Coordination with education programs

How will the local board coordinate relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities with workforce investment activities to support strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of service(s).

By engaging relevant stakeholders from Adult Basic Education and the secondary and post-secondary education programs, Advance Central PA has ensured strategies are well informed, coordinated, and enhance existing services rather than duplicate services. Administrators from local schools and organizations and representatives from Title II provide valuable information regarding needs and gaps in service as well as successes and initiatives being planned or underway.

Additionally, in 2024, Advance Central PA contracted with a third-party vendor to complete a training gap analysis and inventory of existing CTE, post-secondary education programs (private, public, and community colleges), and Registered Apprenticeships in the region. The inventory was put in Tableau, so it can be filtered by training provider, occupations by NAICS, and/or training program name allowing Advance Central PA and our training providers to quickly identify which schools in the region offer similar programs starting at the secondary level with CTE programs. During this Plan cycle, Advance Central PA will utilize this tool and Gap Analysis in partnership with local training providers to identify new training opportunities based on gaps and identify if there are any areas of duplication that could be eliminated. As local training providers are seeing reduced enrollments due to an aging and decreasing population, it's critical that they identify training gaps and areas of possible duplication and adapt their programming to remain competitive and sustainable.

Advance Central PA has a vision for all 31 public school districts in the Central region, including guidance counselors, administration, and teachers to regard Advance Central PA and the PA CareerLink® as a vital resource in career planning, workforce preparation activities, and drop-out prevention services. This is accomplished as follows.

Advance Central PA maintains an active role with secondary and post-secondary providers as members of local advisory committees and Perkins Occupational Advisory Boards whereby Advance Central PA is actively involved in decision-making processes by providing local up-to-

date labor market information and other relevant workforce data and knowledge. Advance Central PA will provide input for the Perkins Act Section 134 biennial “CTE comprehensive needs assessment” through these meetings and will provide labor market information to inform the assessment.

Advance Central PA has an in-school-youth (ISY) program that is embedded into eighteen (18) high schools and career and technology centers. Enrolled youth are qualified as TANF Youth Development allowing for provision of the fourteen (14) WIOA program elements, including an emphasis on paid work experience, and focus on career development, career exploration, self-exploration, and career pathways planning.

Within Advance Central PA’s embedded ISY program, the service provider works in partnership with other school staff and OVR counselors across the region which maximizes resources and opportunities while avoiding duplication of services. In addition, ISY staff maintain active roles on the Transition Councils. Because the Transition Councils are comprised of many partners and stakeholders, resources and information that is shared can be utilized by all who are working together within the school district, including the ISY service provider.

ISY service providers are tasked with outreach to all districts and to offer job-preparedness workshops, employer panels, and mock-interview sessions through leveraged Business Education Partnership grants. Additionally, as part of the effort to be the workforce resource for all districts, service providers are tasked with assisting guidance departments to develop and revise their Chapter 339 plans by providing labor market information and expertise in planning meetings.

The Central Region boasts seven cutting-edge CTE providers. Advance Central PA supports them by serving on Local Advisory Committee meetings as voting members that help assure programming is aligned with industry demand. Advance Central PA views CTE as imperatively important to preparing students for family-sustaining career pathways and developing a talent pipeline that local businesses need to be competitive and thrive in the region. Advance Central PA supports CTE by working closely with programs to develop and implement strategies that educate parents and youth on the benefits of participating in CTE curriculum; whether the student plans to graduate and directly enter the workforce, transition to post-secondary, or enter the military, CTE can set students up for success. Advance Central PA has partnered with CTE providers in the region to develop outreach materials, including highly professional videos to this end, for example. Further, Advance Central PA has worked with numerous CTE providers to develop and register Pre-Apprenticeship programs that give their graduates a leg-up when applying for stable and rewarding local careers. With their expert instructors who have experience in industry, the industry aligned curriculum and equipment, and their proactive approach to providing best in class training, CTE providers are well poised to develop and sponsor Registered Apprenticeship and other adult education offerings, including incumbent worker training, as well; Advance Central PA will continue to support them in their efforts to grow the existing offerings of these accredited institutions.

Advance Central PA has strong relationships with the numerous postsecondary institutions in the region, including technical schools, universities, community colleges, and privately licensed schools. Many of these institutions view Advance Central PA as an important resource for their students and often provide their students with information about WIOA programs and activities. Institutions who wish to post their programs on the ETPL receive guidance from Advance Central PA through the approval process. In addition, postsecondary institutions rely on

Advance Central PA to guide their decisions when deciding to add new training programs based on labor market data provided by Advance Central PA.

Advance Central PA is also building relationships with post-secondary training providers specifically in support of EARN participants obtaining credentials. Credentials are a key strategy to help move individuals out of poverty and Advance Central PA embraces the opportunities to help individuals pursue them. Participants without high school diplomas are introduced to Title II services and encouraged to co-enroll. Industry-recognized credentials are strongly encouraged as they can lead to skilled employment on a career pathway that offers family-sustaining wages and Advance Central PA and the procured providers are partnering with training providers so that EARN participants understand the training available and can make informed decisions.

Advance Central PA maintains a strong partnership with the Title II providers in the region and recognizes their expertise in helping individuals increase their basic skills. The Adult Basic Education providers offer a multitude of services ranging from English language learning, high school equivalency preparation courses and testing, bridge programs that help learners transition to post-secondary endeavors, digital literacy, transferable skills training, and basic skill improvement in math and literacy. To avoid duplication of services, Advance Central PA relies on the expertise of the Title II partners to provide these services and encourages co-enrollment across programs.

One of the ways Advance Central PA brings the partners from secondary and post-secondary education, and workforce programs is through the Industry Partnerships as public support partners. The public support partners consist of representatives from these categories, along with economic development, who assist businesses in achieving their goals. The whole intent of the Industry Partnership model is to eliminate duplication of services and we have embraced that in the Central Area.

Advance Central PA coordinates registered apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs to maximize their impact, enhance services, and avoid duplication. The Registered Apprenticeship Strategic Plan outlines Advance Central PA's map of program across industries to develop unified apprenticeship ecosystem strategy that brings together employers and training providers. With the unmatched leveraged support of PA CareerLink® programming, apprenticeships are enhanced via case management and supports for the apprentice, and funding support for the employer. Advance Central PA serves as a support to prospective program sponsors by convening stakeholders, providing technical assistance with program development, and serving as a liaison with the ATO leading to registration. Duplication is avoided with Advance Central PA staff prioritizing expansion of existing programs where possible and connecting employers to those established programs in addition to convening stakeholders to developing new programs. Advance Central PA also utilizes its relationships with training providers who currently offer apprenticeship training to discuss what's on the horizon so that we do not duplicate efforts.

Additionally, all education and workforce stakeholders are brought together through service providers and PA CareerLink® partners in their efforts to host career fairs, employer panels, campus tours, and work experiences – truly developing an interconnected workforce development system.

Advance Central PA and our training partners will continuously improve to diminish the technology gap and increase access to technology. The PA CareerLink® provides online access

to SkillUp™ while our secondary and post-secondary training providers offer online courses with instruction from their faculty, and self-paced programs through ToolingU-SME, Ed2Go, and Coursera. PA CareerLink® computer labs and the staff-assisted customer resource area allow customers to access computers and high-speed internet they may not have at home. “Zoom Rooms” are available across the PA CareerLink® sites, allowing customers to access laptops with microphones and cameras critical to equity across job seekers who need to complete virtual interviewing to be considered for employment or for participating in training, as necessary. Regional PA CareerLink® workshops are offered to teach technology skills from internet basics, intro to Office Applications, email bootcamp, and how not to be a victim of digital scams. There are also offerings designed to help increase digital literacy. Furthermore, partners integrate basic workplace skills, such as using technology into their programming.

OPERATIONAL PLANNING: LOCAL AREA WORKFORCE DELIVERY SYSTEM

Section 4.1: Business Employer Engagement

What strategies will be implemented in the local area to improve business and employer engagement that:

- Support a local area workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area;
- Manage activities or services that will be implemented to improve business engagement;
- Better coordinate regional workforce and economic development strategy, messaging, engagement and programs; and
- Strengthen linkages between the PA CareerLink® service delivery system and unemployment insurance (UI) programs.

Meeting the Needs of Business

The local workforce development system is carefully and strategically designed to meet the needs of businesses in Central PA. Businesses are a primary customer and Advance Central PA works to be sure their needs are met so they can successfully compete, grow, and thrive in the Commonwealth. The Business Solutions Teams (BSTs) in the Central region provide a point of contact for businesses to address their most important talent activities which include: recruiting, training, pipeline development, and retaining a skilled and productive workforce along with any other need they may have, workforce-related or not.

Advance Central PA views the employer as the primary customer of the workforce system because without the information, skills verification, and employment opportunities they provide, jobseekers will not receive relevant services through the PA CareerLink® system.

PA CareerLink® Business Solutions Team

Business development is not limited to a specific job title or partner agency but refers to any staff involved in providing consultative services to employers and providing information and solutions acting in partnership as an extension of the business. Each BST is led in collaboration by competitively procured Title I staff and BWPO staff responsible for business engagement, tracking, and timely and accurate data entry in CWDS. Membership includes the other core partners including Title II, Title IV, Title I A/DW and Youth programs, EARN, and others all working as a unified PA CareerLink® network comprehensively serving businesses.

As a core partner, OVR participates in Employer Engagement and provides multiple services to the business community designed to assist businesses with onboarding pre-screened qualified employees with disabilities. OVR on-boarding supports for a qualified new hire can include reasonable accommodation consultation, On-the-Job Training (OJT) wage reimbursement, referral on tax credits or deductions. OVR also works with businesses through connecting students involved in OVR's pre-employment transition services. Services under pre-employment transition services include programs like paid work experiences, job shadowing, workplace tours. OVR also offers no-cost consultation on the Americans with Disability Act (ADA), accessibility standards and helping a business to retain current employees following an accident, injury, or disability. Statewide business services staff can identify resources to assist any organization on how to improve access compliance and steps to diversify their workforce to include citizens with a disability.

Advance Central PA expects the BST to act as an extension of each business's human resources team and be the premier resource for cost effective and efficient services for employers to attract, develop and retain a talented workforce. Through a consultative process that assesses employer needs, the BSTs tailor the robust array of PA CareerLink® and partners services to meet individual employer workforce needs, including small employers and larger businesses with in-demand occupations.

Managing Activities to Improve Business Engagement

Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

Professional development is critical so the local BST staff remain on top of industry trends, best-in-class service delivery, and intentional learning designed to support their expertise in serving local businesses. Advance Central PA will continue to identify opportunities that will support continuous learning and improvement, including trainings on labor market information, Registered Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship, and certification trainings such as the Certified Business Services Consultant training Advance Central PA secured funds for in the past.

Metrics and data collection are used to drive continuous improvement. Common Measure attainment is critical and is therefore tracked internally along with other employer services indicators Advance Central PA has developed to keep a pulse on success in serving businesses. Advance Central PA uses indicators and data to deploy active grant management techniques in overseeing the Title I BST provider so that challenges are successfully addressed, best practices are scaled up, and services to businesses continuously improve. Advance Central PA's on-staff Business Engagement Coordinator oversees the Title I BST contract and other business engagement initiatives and partnerships, including Industry Partnerships, and our active participation in SEDA-COG's Engage! project.

Advance Central PA looks forward to utilizing EconoVue™ with Dun & Bradstreet, made available by the PA Dept. of Labor & Industry to remain apprised of business needs and develop strategies and targeted outreach designed to assist businesses in the Central WDA. This newly acquired access to data will prove important in the Local Plan cycle as the WDB aims to proactively serve businesses and avert layoffs.

Advance Central PA takes lessons learned from human centered design projects, evaluations, and survey results into consideration when developing new strategies to serve businesses and will continue to place businesses at the center of programming so the PA CareerLink® is the premiere place for all businesses to access workforce solutions and connections to other services they need.

Work Based Training

All businesses including small business and new and emerging industries benefit from the On-the-Job Training program (OJT). A key service of the PA CareerLink®, OJT benefits businesses who need skilled workers and individuals who want to enter a specific career path who do not have all the qualifications a job requires. Advance Central PA allocates funding for OJT each program year for Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker and Out-of-School Youth. Individuals served by other partners in the PA CareerLink® in the Central LWDA are strongly encouraged to co-enroll in Title I Adult to access an OJT.

Advance Central PA also supports Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) and seeks competitive grants to financially support businesses as they up-skill current employees so that their business thrives.

Industry Partnerships are a key institutional innovation for meeting the needs of businesses, the career goals of workers and the economic development goals of the Commonwealth. Advance Central PA has developed two Industry Partnerships to date: MADE in Central PA (Advanced Manufacturing) and Central PA Healthcare Partnership. These partnerships convene C-Suite executives or their designees who work collaboratively to increase their overall competitive edge by developing solutions to shared problems. Along with Advance Central PA and the PA CareerLink®, key public partners including economic development and education convene and collaborate to support each of the groups. In 2024, Advance Central PA secured grant funds to kick-off two additional Industry Partnerships: Agriculture and Building & Construction. Each of their grants have IWT built in. Advance Central PA will support and facilitate activities for all four IPs so they are integrated into the workforce system during this Plan cycle.

Career Pathways

The relationships Advance Central PA and the PA CareerLink® Business Solutions Teams have made with businesses is key to career pathway initiatives. Insight learned from local businesses is shared with partners so that all job seekers in the PA CareerLink® network have program staff who understand the career opportunities and pathways available and can guide program participants accordingly. Career pathway mapping plots out the steps one can take to progress within a business; these are powerful tools for the businesses who take part as it can pinpoint where gaps in their progression strategies exist, promote opportunities for advancement with incumbent workers, and identify training needs so that current employees can increase skills and move up into harder to fill positions. For program participants, understanding the career pathways of local businesses, the training needed for entry at various points, and skills and credentials that are necessary can be useful as they decide on their own plans.

Title II partners are highly skilled in career pathway mapping. They integrate career pathways into their programming and support the whole of the PA CareerLink®, helping participants in the network through their offerings designed to increase math, literacy, digital, and foundational skills, all of which have a direct impact on which entry-ramp an individual can begin with.

Apprenticeship Ecosystem

Registered Apprenticeship is a proven model that benefits businesses and job seekers alike. Advance Central PA strongly supports apprenticeship programs and development of an ecosystem where pre-apprenticeship programs are created within the local secondary schools and career & technical education to develop a pipeline of talent prepared to enter an apprenticeship. Such schools are well positioned with both infrastructure and staff expertise to serve both secondary students and adults. Additionally, Advance Central PA supports

development of pre-apprenticeship programs outside of the career & technical education space, such as post-secondary institutions, labor organizations, and other program sponsors and providers. Advance Central PA will ensure identified local staff meet with the local ATO representative at least annually to review current Registered Apprenticeships in the local area. Advance Central PA is currently directly involved with and supporting the following related activities with more projects leading to program registrations in the works:

- Water and Wastewater Operator Registered Apprenticeships- Advance Central PA partnered with Central Pennsylvania Institute of Science and Technology (CPI) to register these two apprenticeship programs with five companies and will continue to promote the programs as these are critical occupations with an aging workforce throughout Pennsylvania. Advance Central PA will continue to support CPI's efforts and PA CareerLink® will make referrals to the program. Advance Central PA is providing technical assistance to CPI to develop a pre-apprenticeship directly connected to these registered programs.
- Advanced Manufacturing Pre-Apprenticeship (AMP)- By partnering with Pennsylvania College of Technology, Advance Central PA is preparing eligible PA CareerLink® participants for this pre-apprenticeship program designed to prepare them for entry-level employment in advance manufacturing, or an existing Registered Apprenticeship in the industry. Advance Central PA and PA CareerLink® have been partners responsible for providing outreach and recruitment services for the training and fully supporting participants including to monitor their progress and connect them with additional core program services as needed, including but not limited to Title I OSY paid work experience and tutoring, Title I basic skills classes, and EARN case management and special allowances through the County Assistance Offices. Going forward, PA CareerLink® will make referrals to AMP.
- Industrial Manufacturing Technician (IMT) Pre-Apprenticeship- Advance Central PA is supporting the Keystone Central School District CTE to build a pipeline of credentialed graduates ready for Registered Apprenticeship, the military, post-secondary school, or employment right out of high school. Currently Advance Central PA is leveraging an Apprenticeship Building America Grant to support pre-apprenticeship enrollment and completion of the program. This pre-apprenticeship program is directly connected to the registered apprenticeship sponsored by PMF Industries, Inc.
- Computer Numerical Control Machinist Pre-Apprenticeship- Advance Central PA has coordinated CTE partners across the region to build a pipeline of credentialed graduates ready for Registered Apprenticeship, the military, post-secondary school, or employment right out of high school. Currently Advance Central PA is leveraging an Apprenticeship Building America Grant to support pre-apprenticeship enrollment and completion of the program.
- Computer Numerical Control Machinist Registered Apprenticeship- Advance Central PA has worked with this Registered Apprenticeship consortium sponsored by Keystone Central School District supporting them in moving to a sustainable model that utilizes the CTE instructors and classrooms across the region to provide the RTI portion of the Registered Apprenticeship.

Small Businesses and New and Emerging Industries

The Central PA region is made up of mainly small employers and the BSTs support them comprehensively by serving as an extension of their human resources department and connecting them to other public partners who are expert in assisting them with their unique needs. For example, small businesses are referred to agencies such as the Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) that support this area (Bucknell & Penn State), the Innovative Manufacturing Center (IMC) or Northeastern PA Industrial Resource Center (NEPIRC) for further assistance. One of the SBDC directors is also a WDB member who offers valuable input for policy and programmatic decisions that will affect small businesses.

Effective Coordination of Regional Workforce and Economic Development

Advance Central PA has a long history of collaboration with regional economic development partners. Key to the collaboration is Advance Central PA serving as an active participant in the activities of Central Region Partners for Regional Economic Performance (PREP). PREP coordinates economic development efforts in the region to promote enhanced customer service to the business community and a comprehensive and efficient economic development delivery strategy. This means there is “no wrong door” for businesses who can access support and solutions in areas such as business management and product development and technology.

Advance Central PA’s partnership with SEDA-COG and other local economic development partners is further strengthened via collaboration with Engage!. Advance Central PA and PA CareerLink® BST members have been active participants in the Engage! program since inception contributing to the positive outcomes of the program coordinated by SEDA-COG. Through Engage! members from economic development and workforce often meet jointly with business leaders to conduct Engage! interviews which streamlines the services for businesses. Partners from economic development and workforce both utilize Executive Pulse to make referrals for services after the business interviews. Additionally, Engage! partners meet to discuss the results of Engage! interviews and identify which partner is most appropriate to be the continued main point of contact and ambassador for that business to ensure their needs are addressed.

Advance Central PA’s Executive Director is also a Focus Central PA board member. Focus Central PA is a regional economic development organization with a focus on attracting new corporate investments to Central PA. The Focus Central PA board consists of local elected officials, other economic development organizations, private developers, and local railroad operators with direct connections to utility companies, engineering firms, real estate services, and commercial builders. The coordination of these entities results in successful attraction of new businesses to the region and a quick connection to the local workforce network to fill the newly created positions.

Implementation of Industry Partnerships have led to increased coordination between the economic development and workforce systems. Economic development partners, workforce, and education all sit at the same table to listen to employers’ challenges and needs, instead of each group meeting with companies individually with their own agendas. This approach reduces the number of referrals necessary between workforce and economic development while building a stronger relationship between partners, because everyone receives the information from businesses first-hand.

Linkage to Unemployment Insurance (UI) Programs

Of great value to local customers is the availability of Unemployment Compensation (UC) representatives currently deployed in all the PA CareerLink® comprehensive centers. Customers and/or claimants may call a designated number to schedule an appointment with an unemployment compensations agent either in person or on occasion virtually. In the event UC staff are not present, claimants can use the computer resource area (CRA) to connect with the unemployment compensation filing system. A kiosk system has been deployed throughout the commonwealth to assist with ID.me connectivity issues some claimants have encountered. The kiosk will assist identification verification in order for the claimant to have full access to their unemployment compensation claim dashboard on the state website.

Support for customers who need to file an unemployment compensation (UC) claim, need to search for work, or otherwise comply to maintain their UC until they obtain new employment is integrated into the PA CareerLink® operations. Customers have ready access to computers in the CRA and are encouraged to use technology as it is made available by UI programs, such as chatting online with UC representatives. PA CareerLink® staff also assist customers with faxing, resetting passwords, completing the UC verification process, and answering general computer accessibility questions to assist UC customers as necessary.

In addition to a variety of printable resources for both Claimants and Employers, UC handbooks are also made available. Potential UC eligibility issues identified during RESEA or other UC claimant interactions are referred to UC for adjudication. The One-Stop Operator also works with the Office of UC Service Centers Customer Services Section to coordinate seminars for employers, which address UC topics such as rights and benefits. These services provide additional opportunities to inform employers of all services provided by PA CareerLink® partners.

Individuals who are likely to exhaust their benefits are identified by the Commonwealth through the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program. These individuals are directed to PA CareerLink® for assessment, referral to resources, and comprehensive services and job search assistance from the specialized local BWPO staff.

Section 4.2: Economic Development

How will the local board coordinate local area workforce investment activities with regional economic development activities that are specific to a local area? How will the local board promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services?

Advance Central PA has a history of partnerships with regional economic development organizations, including multiple Chambers of Commerce, Small Business Development Centers (SBDC), Focus Central PA, DRIVE, IMC, NEPIRC, and SEDA-Council of Governments. For example, Advance Central PA is an active participant in the activities of Central Region Partners for Regional Economic Performance (PREP) which is a core group consisting of SEDA-COG, the industrial resource centers, industrial development organizations, and three Small Business Development Centers that coordinate economic development efforts. In another example, Advance Central PA is a partner on DCED's Engage! project administered by SEDA-COG and assists in outreach to businesses, intensive interviewing, and referrals to education, economic development and workforce partners based on the needs of each participating company.

While industry partnership activities have focused on incumbent worker training in 2023-2024, Advance Central PA will be working with the industry partnerships to broaden their focus in 2025 and beyond. Activities will include school-to-career and other workforce pipeline

initiatives, career pathways, recruitment and retention, and overcoming other human resource challenges. Collaboration with economic development partners is key to the success of the partnerships' initiatives and keeping our work streamlined and effective without duplication. For example, Central PA is experiencing population decline; collaboration between industry leaders participating in the IPs, economic development partners, the WDB, and education partners will be critical to ensure the existing population has the appropriate skills for the local jobs and stays in the region, but also to create coordinate recruitment strategies to recruit new talent to the area. All these partnerships support the Governor's Ten-Year Plan to prioritize economic development and expand support for small businesses.

Labor market information is a key deliverable Advance Central PA offers economic development partners. The data we provide is used to help the partners showcase Central PA as the right place for new corporate investment which results in the growth and creation of family sustaining jobs in the Commonwealth. This supports the Governor's Ten-Year plan and the goal that companies find the Commonwealth to be a place to innovate and thrive.

Various LEO and WDB members and Advance Central PA's Executive Director are members of various economic development partner boards of directors. Holding these seats keeps all parties informed of new initiatives and allows for the coordination, not duplication of services. Advance Central PA will continue to seek and welcome opportunities to work with economic development agencies in a collective, collaborative way in the best interests of businesses in the region.

Community Action Agencies (CAA) are also key partners. Advance Central PA works with the various providers closely to collaborate on strategies and resource development. PA CareerLink® partners, including Title I A/DW and Youth have close partnerships with staff at the CAAs promoting cross-referrals and collaborative approaches to service delivery. The CAAs financial literacy, food programs, tax services, housing resources, and substance use disorder supports are leveraged often in support of PA CareerLink® customers. Advance Central PA wants any person who wants to secure a family-sustaining job along a meaningful career pathway to be able to do so, and partnerships like those with the CAAs and other community and faith-based networks support the PA CareerLink® mission to do so in alignment with the Governor's Ten-Year Plan.

Self-employment is a viable option in Central PA and Advance Central PA supports and grows entrepreneurial spirit within Title I, EARN, and TANF Youth Development programming through direct services and activities that introduce leadership and information about owning a business. Self-employment is a great option for individuals with barriers, such as disabilities or incarceration. When any participant expresses interest in owning a business, they are connected with one of the region's Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) to learn more and are supported with case management, barrier remediation, and other programming as they progress to meeting their goals.

Advance Central PA supports entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services in several ways supporting the Commonwealth as a place where innovators help our people and companies succeed in alignment with the Governor's Ten-Year Plan. Entrepreneurial skills development is a core element for WIOA that ISY and OSY participants have access to via intentional programming. Adults interested in self-employment are referred to community partners, such as an SBDC, or our Industrial Resource Center affiliates. We also refer to other regional economic development partners for interested individuals to receive specialized assistance that includes but is not limited to:

- Entrepreneurship education that introduces the values and basics of starting and running a business. These programs often guide individuals through the development of a business plan and may also include simulations of business start-up and operation.
- Enterprise development which provides support and services that incubate and help individuals develop their own businesses. Enterprise development programs go beyond entrepreneurship education by helping individuals access small loans or grants that are needed to begin business operation and by providing more individualized attention to assist in the development of viable business ideas.
- Access to micro-loans and grants available to start or expand businesses
- Consulting and business assistance services to help start or expand businesses.

Advance Central PA will continue supporting youth engagement in Pennsylvania Free Enterprise Week (PFEW) facilitated by The Foundation for Free Enterprise Education (FFEE), pending available funds. During this weeklong event, students stay on a college campus where they form teams of 16 students and one adult mentor and become the management team of an underperforming manufacturing company in direct competition with other student companies. They are responsible for all aspects of business operations, including management, production, sales and marketing, HR, finance, corporate communications, and more. This is another example of supporting entrepreneurship and our economic development partner initiatives.

Advance Central PA measures employer outcomes by internally tracking Common Measure performance and internal measures as well. This includes the percentage of employers using the PA CareerLink®, repeated use of the PA CareerLink®, active job orders with referrals, successful OJT contracts, employer engagement with industry partnerships, and satisfaction with job fairs and other events. In this planning cycle, Advance Central PA is revamping employer satisfaction surveys with results going directly to Advance Central PA and will utilize findings in the PA Dept. of Labor & Industry Employer Engagement Feedback Survey to adjust program delivery and strategies as needed to continuously improve outcomes in serving businesses.

Section 4.3: Business and Employer Program Support

What services, activities, and program resources will be provided to businesses and employers in the local area?

Role of the Business Solutions Team

The Business Solutions Team is a critical consortium of partners within the PA CareerLink® working together to provide consultative services and solutions that help businesses thrive and compete in Central PA, with focus on talent recruitment, talent pipeline development, and retention services. The menu of services are as follow.

- Job postings
- Applicant pre-screening
- Large-scale job fairs
- Smaller scale/individualized recruitment events
- Placement/matching of PA CareerLink® participants with job openings
- On-the-Job Training
- Seminars geared to HR and other professionals
- Career pathway development
- Pre-Apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeships

- Layoff Aversion/Rapid Response support
- Incentives such as WOTC, Fidelity Bonding
- Connections to other resources
- Pipeline development (connections to schools/events, teacher in the workplace, paid internship connections, job shadow facilitation, Path to Careers website)

In partnership with the Board and/or special grants awarded to Advance Central PA, the BST also provides support as follows:

- Industry Partnerships
- Incumbent Worker Training
- Labor Market Information
- Wage Analysis
- Engage! (Economic Development strategy to learn business needs and provide intentional connections and follow-up)

BST Members

The BST is not limited to a specific job title or partner agency but refers to any staff involved in contacting employers for the purposes of providing information on available services and/or obtaining information about the employing entities. Advance Central PA expects all partners to work as a unified team, not a single entity. The BST is comprised of: the competitively procured Title I provider (currently the Tuscarora Intermediate Unit 11); Title III BWPO staff, including Supervisors, Veteran program LVERs, and Career Advisors; Title II providers; Title IV OVR staff, Rapid Response staff, and the PA CareerLink® Site Administrators.

Regional Messaging and Engagement

Any partner staff on the BST may visit employers, and CWDS is utilized as the system of record for staff notes. BST members share information during weekly Match Meetings and monthly BST meetings, in addition to sharing relevant information with the entire staff of the sites in email blasts or during weekly staff meetings. Information is distributed to employers through Constant Contact employer blasts as well as targeted personal contacts.

The Site Administrators play a key role in the coordination and communication of the BST with all partner staff. The BST works for and with all partner staff and programs such as RESEA, Title II, OVR, Adult/Dislocated Worker, Youth, EARN, and TANF YD. The Site Administrators are well informed of BST initiatives and can help disseminate relevant information to partners and facilitate coordination.

Specialized Services

Advance Central PA envisions BSTs as the premier resource for cost effective and efficient services for employers of any size to attract, develop, and retain a talented workforce. Through a consultative process that assesses employer needs, the BST tailors the array of PA CareerLink® services to meet individual employers' needs, including small employers and larger businesses. Following are some of the specialized services offered by partners on the BST.

This approach aligns with the DCED Engage! interviews that PA CareerLink® participates in. The goal is to listen to what the companies need and connect them with the right community partners to meet their needs, whether that's workforce development, workplace literacy, financial assistance, help with research and development connections, or assistance with finding new real estate to expand their business. The workforce partners aren't expected to provide all the services but knowing who to connect a business with to address their company's needs makes our services more valuable.

Rapid Response

The Rapid Response team takes a proactive, customized approach in assisting businesses at risk of closing, downsizing, and/or laying off employees. Services are delivered to help sustain businesses and retain their employees. In the event a layoff is unavoidable, a team of PA CareerLink® staff, led by the Rapid Response Coordinator, is deployed to equip employees with information they'll need to sustain their families and ultimately find new employment. Rapid Response can also help businesses impacted by foreign competition. As part of Rapid Response services, we include The Link, which gives impacted employees immediate access to PA CareerLink® services such as enrollment or password reset assistance to ensure they are compliant with Unemployment Compensation's work search requirements on-the-spot. We continue to tailor services to assist dislocated workers, including job search workshops, resume reviews, industry-specific job fairs, and weekly Job Club meetings when applicable.

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services

WIOA Title IV partner OVR provides multiple services to the business community designed to assist businesses with onboarding pre-screened, qualified employees with disabilities. OVR onboarding supports for a qualified new hire can include reasonable accommodation consultation, On-the Job Training (OJT) wage reimbursement, referral on tax credits or deductions. OVR also offers no-cost consultation on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), accessibility standards, and helping a business to retain current employees following an accident, injury or disability. OVR meets the needs of businesses by providing no cost services including ADA Awareness training, ADA Accessibility evaluations, accommodation recommendations for current employees and retention services. OVR continues to partner with employers with On-the-Job Training (OJT), providing 100% wage reimbursement to businesses that hire OVR customers.

Pre-Apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship

Advance Central PA has made a concerted effort to provide training and resources about Registered Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship to the BST and other PA CareerLink® staff. With support from an Apprenticeship Building America (ABA) grant awarded in partnership with the PA Dept. of Labor & Industry Apprenticeship & Training Office, Advance Central PA has a staff person who has extensively trained on materials and processes in coordination with the ATO. She serves as a point of contact to the PA CareerLink® when BST discussions with employers about apprenticeship require more extensive technical assistance and work. As part of the ABA grant project, ATO guidance was utilized to develop an Apprenticeship Strategic Plan as a living document to map and support the existing apprenticeship ecosystem and create strategy and goals to further develop registered apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship and connect people and businesses to them. The BST and PA CareerLink® staff are well trained in apprenticeship thanks to efforts led directly by the ATO as well as Advance Central PA staff. Advance Central PA complies with the requirement that LWDBs will ensure BST members are provided the Registered Apprenticeship Desk Guide and the Apprenticeship Strategic Plan Guide for PA CareerLink® Staff. The ATO's Employer Needs Assessment is a valuable tool that both Advance Central PA and the BST can use when working with employers.

Engagement with Secondary and Post-Secondary Schools, including CTEs

Advance Central PA is increasing business engagement with schools through Teacher in the Workplace tours, Business and Education Partnership activities, Camp STEAM, Youth Business Challenges, Manufacturing Day events, and Path to Careers. Staff from Advance Central PA and the PA CareerLink® serve CTEs on advisory committees and Perkins meetings as well as Career Ready Central PA. The BST plays a key role in supporting engagement with schools via their

partnership in above named initiatives and activities, recruiting business participation that ultimately will build their talent pipeline. Further, PA CareerLink® staff participate in activities such as mock interviews, organizing guest speakers from local businesses, and planning in-school career fairs with local school districts. The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) specifically works with businesses through connecting students involved in OVR's pre-employment transition services. Services under pre-employment transition services include programs like paid work experiences, job shadows, and workplace tours.

Local Initiatives

Ongoing Staff Training and Development

In the fall of 2023, all Central region PA CareerLink® staff participated in apprenticeship training provided by the ATO, and in December 2024, staff attended Interval Training on the topic of Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship. Advance Central PA further offers training and technical assistance related to apprenticeship. BST team members discuss apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships with employers when relevant to their workforce needs. BST members are able to provide information directly to businesses and also refer businesses to Advance Central PA for assistance in registering programs.

Advance Central PA has a goal of ensuring the workforce system is increasingly meeting the needs of area employers. For example, Advance Central PA hired TAD Grants to provide intensive, in-person Certified Business Services Consultant training for all BST members, including merit and Title I staff, and several Advance Central PA employees in 2022. That training has since been recognized as a best practice.

Metrics

To ensure we achieve our mission of meeting the needs of businesses, Advance Central PA has developed employer service Indicators. Chief among these is a report that provides details on higher level engagements with employers and community partners, as well as intelligence gained through employer and other contacts with community and economic development organizations. This data provides both our Business Solutions Teams and Advance Central PA with an indicator of who our core customers are, allowing us to target our outreach, identify opportunities for partnership, and potentially tailor new activities to specific sector needs. Our BST hosts monthly virtual Employer Seminars at no cost, on topics our local employers indicate they are interested in learning more about.

Other metrics that are tracked include the total number of successful staff-assisted job placements each month and the business penetration rate. Employer satisfaction surveys will provide regular feedback regarding the services offered and the degree to which they meet local business' needs.

Section 4.4: Continuous Improvement

Describe how the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers through the system and that such providers will meet the employment needs of local area employers, workers, and job seekers.

Advance Central PA is committed to ensuring continuous improvement of eligible providers of services, including contracted service providers and providers on the eligible training provider list (ETPL). Efforts to ensure contracted service providers are meeting and exceeding the demands of jobseekers and businesses are comprehensive and start with procurement processes.

Our local board uses labor market information and first-hand input from employers to understand needs, set goals and drive the employment and training programming and operations. When serving job seekers, we will look for occupations on the HPO list and compare that to skills and interests. Employers submit requests to us for new and emerging occupations to be considered on the HPO list as needed. We collaborate with our training providers to ensure that training is available in the region for occupations that are on our high priority list.

Advance Central PA writes requests for proposals (RFP) in such a way as to invite providers with and without prior experience contracting in the Central region to respond and views competition as healthy. Advance Central PA staff devoted time for professional development from the Harvard Kennedy Governance Performance Lab made possible by the PA Dept. of Labor & industry because of our culture of continuous improvement. That training was exceedingly helpful in improving our RFP process and designing a new RFP format which has led to increased responses from varied proposers. Releasing RFPs regularly assures competition and promotes continuous improvement.

The board continually evaluates the performance of the system to make sure career services and business services align with WIOA expectations and needs.

In addition, Advance Central PA provides technical assistance and oversight to Title I and EARN services providers. Advance Central PA staff dedicated to continuous improvement spend time with service provider staff and supervisors to understand challenges and successes and see first-hand the quality of services being provided. With an active grant management approach, providers are held accountable in a respectful way so that problem-solving and continuous improvement are at the forefront. In the event local policies are a barrier, Advance Central PA shares information with WDB committees who provide expert advice and modify policy where possible within the confines of state and federal regulations. As part of the technical assistance, case notes are reviewed frequently and give Advance Central PA insight into the quality of services being provided. Concerns are immediately shared with providers and followed up on to ensure appropriate actions are taken.

Advance Central PA thoroughly monitors all Title I and EARN programming and overall PA CareerLink® operations in addition to training providers and OJT employers. Each Title I and EARN program is comprehensively monitored at least once each program year. In addition to monitoring of individual ITAs and OJTs submitted to Advance Central PA for approval, training providers and OJT employers are selected for monitoring with a priority to monitor those who are new or those who contract frequently. Findings are outlined along with corrective actions that are required, recommendations for improvements, and best practices. A formal response is required regarding any corrective actions Advance Central PA requires. Advance Central PA then approves the corrective action plans or requires additional steps be taken and then closely monitors to ensure plans are implemented and that processes do improve as a result. A comprehensive Monitoring Activity Report is reviewed by the WDB and LEO Board at their joint quarterly meetings to address any concerns and highlight best practices.

Quality outcomes and common measure attainment are expected for participants in individualized career services and training services; therefore, all service providers are expected to continuously improve. Through the PA CareerLink® system, classroom training in occupations that are directly connected to High Priority Occupations (HPO) are posted on PA's workforce development system of record.

Advance Central PA works closely with training providers through the ETPL application process, providing technical assistance and guidance in navigating CWDS and the guidelines and expectations. Each program is reviewed to ensure that information has been entered correctly, that the intended occupation is tied to an HPO, and is delivered by a provider in good standing. The course descriptions and outcomes must match the CIP and SOC codes that are promoted on the application. The HPO list is specific in the occupation and degree level trainings must provide, and Advance Central PA ensures this is adhered to. Advance Central PA also advises training providers how to collect student information to be used when entering performance data. In the event a course must be rejected, Advance Central PA helps the provider understand the reason for rejection so that improvements can be made; depending on the circumstance the provider will be equipped to resubmit the course. Maintaining good communication and relationships with training providers ensures Central region participants receive high quality training.

In addition to the training provider performance data provided through wage records on CWDS, Advance Central PA prepares a training outcomes report for review by the WDB, which compares the success rate per provider of Central region participants within the same program of study. PA CareerLink® staff also use this information as a tool to help participants make informed training decisions. Advance Central PA's real-time data examines not just who finishes training and obtains employment, but who obtains training related employment. The results often show that the most expensive training does not always produce the highest percentage of participants who obtain employment in their field of study.

Advance Central PA remains apprised of business needs via a careful strategy that includes dedicated labor market analysis, industry partnerships, and coordination and communication with partners including the BST and economic development agencies. Using the statistical reports from CWIA as well as data from a third-party data, Advance Central PA regularly analyzes trends and discrepancies across multiple data points to understand the local labor market and business needs. Industry partnerships give insight directly from leaders from local small and large businesses alike in industries key to the area including: Agriculture, Building & Construction, Healthcare, and Manufacturing. Coordination with partners provides further critical access to front-line intelligence unique to the BST and economic development partners as they work to serve businesses across the vast array of industries and occupations in the area and collect insights that may not immediately show itself in data.

Similarly, Advance Central PA stays abreast of training provider needs. Data such as top skills included in job postings provides a glimpse into the needs of local employers that training providers can utilize. Solid partnerships with local training providers allow for ample productive communication so that their offerings are evolving to meet employer demands. In regard to the ETPL, Advance Central PA provides extensive technical assistance to providers who wish to join and/or retain their status as eligible providers.

In the event there is employer demand for a training that is currently not on the ETPL, Advance Central PA will work with the vast array of accredited training providers in the region, including technical schools and universities to liaise and help advocate for development of curriculum to meet needs.

Advance Central PA also analyzes outcomes of on-the-job (OJT) contracts to help determine viability of entering into repeated agreements with employers who do not have a high retention rate with past OJT participants. This data is expanded to all other training contracts outside the ETPL and OJT system as well.

Advance Central PA closely monitors performance overall, including outcomes and repeat business customers; information is regularly shared with WDB committees for expert guidance and ideas for policies to promote continuous improvement above and beyond common measures.

As part of our customer satisfaction performance monitoring, we routinely conduct satisfaction surveys of workshops that we conduct. We also conduct satisfaction surveys of job fairs. We use this information to continually improve processes. We have done periodic employer and job seeker satisfaction surveys as well. The Operator will be tasked with more regularly surveying customer satisfaction in this Plan period.

Section 4.5: Technology and Remote Access

Through the use of technology, how will the local board facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop service delivery system, including in remote areas?

The Board will continue to facilitate access to services provided through the PA CareerLink® system as follows:

Strategically Located Centers- The Board has established PA CareerLink® centers in six counties and additionally has a specialized site, The Link mobile unit, to enhance accessibility to all partner services.

Access in Remote Areas- The Board provides and expands services in the remote locations of the region via the “no wrong door approach.” This means that individuals and businesses can access the vast array of PA CareerLink® services in person or remotely. Remote offerings for individuals include virtual program registrations, case management, and delivery of services for Title I where necessary and preferred by the customer. Partners promote use of the PA CareerLink® services and resources available at www.pacareerlink.pa.gov to overcome barriers to access as well. Outreach to human services agencies and Community Action Agencies expand access to overcome barriers to access in addition to program staff meeting eligible participants where they are when possible. Late night events offer access to those who have limitations on the hours they can engage, and The Link specifically is utilized to reach the most rural pockets of the population.

Technology to Improve Access- All PA CareerLink® sites in the Central WDA have video conferencing equipment that makes it possible for job seekers and others to participate in programming. The Link is equipped with seven computers, a printer, presentation screen, and internet and allows us to take PA CareerLink® services into any community within the region. The power of PA CareerLink® goes well beyond the physical walls and we are able to provide services remotely if it's in the best interest of the customer. Advance Central PA will continue to offer virtual services as part of the strategy going forward, including but not limited to live instructor-led workshops and video case management sessions. Virtual services don't work for everyone, but Advance Central PA recognizes that for some, virtual technology gives them access to services they otherwise wouldn't be able to take part in due to barriers such as transportation and childcare. Programs provide step-by-step guidance in signing workforce paperwork electronically and otherwise navigating the online CWDS system to access the services they want. Digital literacy courses are featured regularly on the public PA CareerLink® workshop calendar to assist all customers in improving these skills critical to making the most out of remote offerings and to the workplace.

Utilizing Case Management Systems- The system as a whole utilizes the Commonwealth Workforce Development System (CWDS). To promote timeliness and accuracy of information, Advance Central PA requires Title I case managers and BST staff to enter information within seven (7) days of customer interaction. Advance Central PA supports an approach to workforce development activities that is holistic in assessing the needs of jobseekers to help them be prepared for success in the workforce. Advance Central PA requires providers of Title I programming to build a strong rapport with community partners and faith-based organizations in order to ensure a solid network of supports are available to all PA CareerLink® customers through a referral in CWDS with warm hand-off and advocacy where needed.

Coordinating with Adult Education- To ensure that individuals participating in basic education and English learning programs have direct connections to career pathways leading to high-quality jobs, Advance Central PA works with Title II Adult Education partners to identify strategies that improve access, cross-referral, and co-enrollment. Adult Education partners are co-located in the three comprehensive PA CareerLink® sites which can improve the customer experience when co-enrolled in multiple partner programs in addition to holding classes in other community spaces to meet needs.

Technology is used to ensure access to services by using a digital platform for remote assessment, intake/orientation, instruction, and student support activities. Classes are offered in a variety of formats to meet individual needs, including the following live-instructor led options: in-person, hyflex (which brings together in-person and remote learners), and fully remote.

In addition, students can take advantage of computer-based instruction to supplement real-time remote instruction, using for example, Essential Ed., Elli, and Kahn Academy courseware.

Distance learning instruction is accessible via laptops, tablets, and mobile devices with some Title II partners providing laptop device lending programs; Title II partners are expert in teaching digital literacy skills necessary to improve accessibility.

Meeting the Needs of Individuals with Barriers to Employment- Aligned with efforts to serve individuals who have barriers to employment, Advance Central PA has a support services policy for: Adult and Dislocated Worker participants who access ITAs, and for ISY and OSY, as well as incentive services for EARN participants.

Among the basic career services available to all jobseekers regardless of eligibility is readily available information relating to community resources and the availability of support services and assistance for a variety of needs such as child care, child support, dependent care, housing, Medicaid, CHIP, SNAP, TANF, transportation, and addiction rehabilitation. Having relationships with agencies who can provide supports such as these enables jobseekers to move forward with their workforce goals.

Continuing to develop career pathways- Business Education Partnership and youth programming have been actively developing and promoting a comprehensive career pathways strategy linking recognized credentials among our various education providers and connecting this to local employer needs. Within the PA CareerLink®, registered participants can expect to develop well-informed career pathways based on their interest, skills, abilities, training, and local labor market information.

Advance Central PA will continue to be an active member on Career Ready Central PA and encourage other school districts outside of Snyder, Union, Northumberland, Columbia and Montour Counties to join the partnership or replicate the model across school districts.

Advance Central PA is committed to helping all individuals enter a career pathway, including individuals with barriers. Partner programs have career pathway strategies integrated into the overall service delivery so that individuals are aware of the local career opportunities, understand the skills needed to enter a career pathway, access to educational services and training to do so, have clear knowledge of the next steps possible once they enter a career path, and an IEP/ISS with specific goals, plans, and barrier remediation to help them obtain their goals. The BST works with employers to help them showcase the vast entry points they have available as a strategy to better promote themselves to job seekers.

Information sharing- Consent to share information is requested of participants so that programs can work together effectively and efficiently without duplicating efforts. Advance Central PA requires eligibility determinations to take place as quickly as possible in the least burdensome way as possible for participants. When necessary to share participant information across partners, Advance Central PA's Confidentiality and PII Policy must be strictly adhered to. Partner use of high-quality, integrated data is essential to make service delivery seamless for customers and more efficient for all. Partners share information securely. The Commonwealth's IEP/ISS is used and shared among partners where available to them, ensuring consistent communication and alignment of strategies for those who are co-enrolled. Other information shared with consent of the customer includes validating documentation and other documents in the case record. Case notes are available to partners with access to CWDS.

Improving Access to Services for English Language Learners and Individuals with Impairments (Visual, Hearing, Other Accessibility Needs)- Advance Central PA and the PA CareerLink® partners provide equal physical and programmatic accessibility to all customers including those with limited English proficiency (LEP) and individuals with disabilities.

As outlined in the regional Limited English Proficiency (LEP) plan, customers who speak or write English less than very well have access to free language services including interpretation and translation. Propio over-the-phone interpreter service is the most widely used language service in the local one stop system. For instance, with the assistance of Propio, customers can communicate their needs to PA CareerLink® staff, complete employment applications, and participate in program orientations. Additionally, video interpreting is now available through Propio. Translation services are provided in two ways. First, customers may request the translation of any document containing information vital to accessing services and benefits of PA CareerLink®. Second, by applying the Four Factor Test described in the LEP plan, each location is prepared with key PA CareerLink® documents translated to languages most likely to be encountered at each site. As a result of a Four Factor test in 2023, each site has on hand Spanish translations of vital, shared PA CareerLink® documents. LEP customers also have access to English language skill assessment and referrals to Title II partners for further skill acquisition.

PA CareerLink® coordinates the use of auxiliary aids and the provision of reasonable accommodations to achieve equal access for customers with disabilities such as hearing or visual impairments. Available equipment/technology includes, desktop magnifier (Acrobat HD Ultra), screen enlargement software, screen reading software, Windows Accessibility features, sound amplifiers, visual impairment keyboards, communication technology (UbiDuo), and Text Telephone/Typewriter for the Deaf (TTY). Printed materials are available in accessible formats such as large print and audio recordings. Personalized accommodations may include reading materials aloud, providing a quiet workspace, lighting adjustments, and offering services remotely. Braille and American Sign Language interpretations/translation will also be provided upon request.

The physical and programmatic accessibility of PA CareerLink® services is routinely monitored by Advance Central PA's Equal Opportunity Officer. Each site also has an Equal Opportunity Liaison that works closely with the Site Administrator to maintain compliance.

Requests for Accommodation - Staff will be trained to provide services to all, regardless of range of abilities, mobility, age, language, learning style, or comprehension or education level. All requests for accommodations must be addressed and reasonable accommodations will be made available to customers as necessary to ensure physical and programmatic accessibility to all customers within the PA CareerLink®. Such accommodations will include but are not limited to an interpreter provided in real time or, if not available, within a reasonable timeframe to any customer with a language barrier, assistive devices, such as screen-reading software programs (e.g., JAWS and DRAGON), and assistive listening devices.

Benefiting Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Recipients- Advance Central PA provides a SNAP EARN program for eligible residents. This is a voluntary program for individuals receiving SNAP assistance that want to gain skills, training, and/or employment which allows them to receive the full services of the PA CareerLink® EARN program, including access to a wellness coach. Individuals receiving SNAP continue to see the benefit of voluntary program participation. There were 30 SNAP participants during PY 2021, 26 in PY22, 29 in PY23, and 18 in PY24 through February 1, 2025.

Section 4.6: Transportation and Supportive Services

How will the local board coordinate WIOA title I workforce investment activities with the provision of transportation and other appropriate supportive services in the local area?

Advance Central PA's approach to workforce investment activities is holistic in assessing the needs of jobseekers and their families in an effort to truly help them be prepared for success in the workforce. Advance Central PA requires providers of Title I programming to build a strong rapport with community partners and faith-based organizations in order to ensure a solid network of supports are available to all PA CareerLink® customers through a referral.

Among the basic career services available to all jobseekers regardless of eligibility is readily available information relating to community resources and the availability of support services and assistance for a variety of needs such as child care, child support, dependent care, housing, Medicaid, CHIP, SNAP, TANF, Mental health services, recovery services, and transportation. Having relationships with agencies who can provide supports such as these enables jobseekers to move forward with their workforce goals. Advance Central PA supports the use of PA's workforce development system of record to track referrals across our strong network of community partners. Customers are encouraged to apply for benefits from the County Assistance Office using COMPASS while they are at the PA CareerLink® rather than traveling to the CAO for paper copies.

Advance Central PA has a support services policy for Adult and Dislocated Worker participants who access individual training accounts (ITA). Individuals interested in ITA are notified of the available support services designed to ensure both access to and retention in the training program. Support services include:

- Pre-requisite clearances and background checks
- Pre-requisite physicals and drug tests
- Transportation (mileage according to the federal rate, monthly bus passes)
- Childcare

- Tools, equipment, clothing, uniforms (required for training)
- Certification and/or testing fees (required to enter the occupation for which the ITA was provided)

Support services are also available to ISY and OSY with a goal of ensuring access to programming, job related activities and training, and work. Support services for youth include:

- Driver's permit and/or license fees
- Bus pass
- Medical and health expenditures necessary to attend training or accept employment
- Physical health exams and screenings necessary to attend training or accept employment
- Pre-requisite clearances and background checks
- Uniforms and other necessary attire
- Personal hygiene
- Childcare
- GED® or HiSET® exam fees
- College application fees
- Certification/testing fees
- Driver's Education

Advance Central PA has an incentive services policy in place for EARN which, among other things, provides necessities related to retention in the program and employment in the absence of special allowances from the County Assistance Office and community resources. Incentive services related to needs include:

- Driver's Permit and/or License Fees
- Gas cards
- Pre-requisite Clearances and Background Checks
- Tools
- Personal Hygiene
- Uniforms and other Necessary Attire
- Childcare
- Certification/Testing Fees
- Car Insurance Premiums (not to exceed 3 months and only if the request is submitted 7 days in advance of payment due date)
- GED® or HiSET® exam fees
- Driver's Education

Support services/EARN incentive services are offered after program staff confirm that other community resources are unavailable to meet the needs. Further, those community and faith-based organizations are leveraged to meet needs that are not covered or allowable in local policies.

Advance Central PA requires subcontractors to assess participant needs throughout their enrollment using various means, such as case management, observation, and formal assessments. Advance Central PA supports the use of SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral to Treatment) to assess substance use disorder (SUD) which is a major barrier to employment. Using SBIRT across all programming helps ensure that all individuals are properly assessed, and staff are prepared for and understand next steps should there be signs of SUD.

Advance Central PA has implemented several strategies to assist in overcoming transportation barriers in addition to the specific supports available to programs per the above. Advance Central PA has vehicles available for program use, some specific to EARN and others available to all programs, which are used by staff to assist program registrants in accessing programming, job fairs, and recruitment events. Where available, staff helps customers access and navigate public transportation.

An additional way Advance Central PA helps overcome transportation barriers is with The Link. The Link is Advance Central PA's mobile career center which takes the workforce expertise of the PA CareerLink® to rural areas to reach more jobseekers, including a focus on reaching Dislocated Worker populations. The Link is used to strategically overcome barriers not only related to transportation. With The Link, we take high speed internet into communities where technology is lacking, allowing job seekers to complete on-line applications and job search close to home. The Link helps others with barriers resulting from their involvement in the criminal justice system. Advance Central PA serves re-entry participants and those gearing up for re-entry when they're still incarcerated. Our unique model gives these individuals access to expert workforce guidance and planning as well as all basic career services they otherwise wouldn't have access to. The Link is also used as a resource for businesses who want their workers to participate in online training without them traveling away from the worksite and for employee recruitment.

Section 4.7: Rapid Response

How will the local board coordinate workforce investment activities and ensure they are carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response?

Advance Central PA aligns workforce services in coordination with Rapid Response. The BWPO Regional Rapid Response Coordinator is the lead and mobilizes a core Rapid Response Team (RRT) that include Site Administrators, PA CareerLink® partners, UC Liaisons, Advance Central PA, and the Operator as needed, in a structure with activities that align with PA Dept. of Labor & Industry Workforce System Guidance- Rapid Response Process and Procedures. The goal of Rapid Response is to provide services to businesses and Dislocated Workers and therefore the collaboration of PA CareerLink® and the overall RRT is critical.

The RRT, as led by the Rapid Response Coordinator, designates who will be deployed for Rapid Response. The RRT gathers information from available resources to present to the affected workers at a time and location that is convenient for the affected employees. These services are available in-person or virtually and often occur on multiple dates to maximize participation. Events are held on-site at companies where possible or at other locations, including the PA CareerLink®, educational partners, or community partner sites that will best serve impacted employees. Staff from *The Link* mobile career center is deployed taking the computer lab onsite for Rapid Response events so that individuals can most easily enroll in www.pacareerlink.pa.gov. Regardless of Rapid Response location, the RRT implements a strategy to assure that all impacted employees have the opportunity to attend, are captured in outcomes, and are welcomed to participate in PA CareerLink® programming. The PA CareerLink® BST often coordinates a job fair or smaller recruitment event specifically for the impacted employees if a closure occurs providing additional opportunities for the Dislocated Workers to connect with PA CareerLink® resources.

Advance Central PA provides an update on all Rapid Response activities that occur within the Central WDA at the quarterly WDB/LEO board meetings and tracks the date of events, the

number of employees dislocated, how many attend the Rapid Response meetings, and if the event is in response to a layoff or permanent closure. Additionally, Advance Central shares the Statewide Rapid Response Weekly Activity reports received from the PA Dept. of Labor and Industry with all WDB and LEO Board members. WDB members utilize these reports to help identify if newly dislocated workers could be viable candidates for their companies. Sharing the reports also provides Local Elected Officials real time data of Rapid Response activities in their communities.

Rapid Response is a proactive program, designed not only to serve employees who are impacted by a dislocation, but also to provide layoff aversion services. Through SEWN, the RRT can direct services to at-risk companies. Early intervention in a dislocation event, or in a situation where there is risk for dislocation is key. Advance Central PA looks forward to utilizing EconoVue™ with Dun & Bradstreet, made available by the PA Dept. of Labor & Industry to remain apprised of business needs and develop strategies and targeted outreach designed to assist businesses in the Central WDA to stay competitive and grow. Layoff aversion strategies include saving jobs, closing or transitioning an employee at risk of dislocation to a different job with the same employer or a new job with a different employer seamlessly with a minimal period of unemployment. The BST is an important partner in layoff aversion with their existing trusted relationships with employers and an understanding of their career pathways.

Advance Central PA sees the need to also quickly respond to business expansion and creation. Therefore, Advance Central PA asks sites to track closings/downsizings as well as employer expansions and new employers to provide information regarding the number of individuals affected during a specified time period. Advance Central PA often receives requests for this type of information from economic development organizations and other regional partners.

Section 4.8: Individuals with Barriers to Employment

What services, activities, and program resources will be provided to participants, including those outlined at WIOA Sec. 3(24), Individuals with a Barrier to Employment, in the local area?

Priority of Service

Advance Central PA and local service providers make a concerted effort to find and serve priority of service customers including veterans, spouses of veterans, recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals, individuals identified as having a basic skills deficiency, and specifically those who are under-employed and low income to achieve the goals of serving the hardest to serve populations. Additionally, Advance Central PA targets parents of children eligible to receive a free or reduced-price lunch. Other target populations include the re-entry and ex-offender population in an effort to reduce the recidivism rate, to help this population find gainful employment and become positive contributors to the local economy and be role models for future generations. Other discretionary priority of service populations include older individuals who are not self-sufficient and individuals with a disability who are not self-sufficient.

In program year 2023, the vast majority of the Title I Adult and Title I Dislocated Workers served met statutory priority of service.

POS Data

Advance Central PA tracks and monitors the priority of service through CWDS Ad Hoc reporting, fiscal obligation sheets, and individual case file review. Advance Central PA has historically met the POS thresholds for Adults.

Advance Central PA supports a PA CareerLink® network that is truly one-stop and responds according to unique individual needs. All staff are required to have a solid foundational understanding of partner services, so they can provide the best recommended services and referrals possible to serve each unique individual. From Veteran services to services for older adults, services for individuals with disabilities, services geared to young adults with barriers, etc., the PA CareerLink® has individualized services to meet the needs of priority of service populations. With an eye on compliance with equal opportunity and a passion for it, staff makes warm referrals to partner agencies so that all individuals have ready access to the services that will meet their needs.

Advance Central PA promotes co-enrollment among core-partners within the PA CareerLink® to help ensure individuals with barriers are served in a human-centric manner addressing unique needs.

In Central PA, the PA CareerLink® has an intake process that begins with a friendly welcome whether a customer physically enters or calls the site. Staff identifies the customer need, provides a brief overview of all available services, and makes recommendations for next steps. Staff ensure the welcome process is accessible by offering translation services, interpretation services, or other accommodations to customers upon entry. This can include providing paper documents instead of using the computer to complete forms as appropriate. Each site has a variety of auxiliary aids available to accommodate individuals with disabilities. Customers are informed of the aids that can be made available upon request, including to complete Digital Intake. Enrollment on PA CareerLink® online is facilitated and a warm hand-off to partner program staff is made, so customers can learn more about recommended services and be made eligible as necessary. Barriers are collected in PA's workforce development system of record as required and referrals to community partners are made in accordance with provision of Basic Career Services. Wagner-Peyser services are data entered accordingly. Once registered for a program, needs are further identified through assessment and formally addressed as per individual program protocols across the partners.

Digital Intake

The PA CareerLink® utilizes the information gathered from the Commonwealth's Digital Intake process to enhance barrier mitigation processes. The Digital Intake Form provides a consistent and standardized method for gathering customer information ensuring that all relevant data, including demographics and barriers, is captured accurately and uniformly at the inception of a customer's PA CareerLink® experience. This helps in identifying common barriers faced by job seekers, allowing for the development of categories and subsequently a plan to deal with the most common barriers while staying informed of less frequent obstacles to employment.

Since the Digital Intake data feeds into the state system of record, Advance Central PA can generate reports that summarize key demographics and barriers. This enables continuous monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of barrier mitigation strategies as it relates to population groups in the region.

Staff will be able to identify specific barriers that individuals face, such as lack of transportation, childcare needs, or skills gaps. It will then allow them to take a targeted approach to tailoring support services. Local offices can also allocate resources more efficiently by highlighting the

most common barriers and needs among their customers. This ensures that the right services are provided to those who need them most.

Finally, by using the Digital Intake Form, PA CareerLink® staff can streamline the intake process, making it easier and faster for customers to receive the help they need, which improves customer satisfaction and engagement, and their overall PA CareerLink® experience.

Outreach

Outreach to the targeted population groups include presentations to local county coalitions (local management committees), community organizations, governmental agencies, and faith-based organizations. These organizations are also welcomed to present to the PA CareerLink® staff during weekly meetings so that staff develop rapport and relationships that lead to referrals in both directions. Additionally, outreach to populations with barriers includes direct outreach methods with flyers geared to the benefits of making use of the PA CareerLink® programming. A new approach Advance Central PA will take to help recruit the working-poor is the use of reverse referral to EARN for individuals who are not mandatory and receive SNAP benefits but not TANF cash assistance.

Strategies to specifically help identify and serve targeted populations include the use of The Link, continued participation in the county specific Reentry Coalitions, participation in county coalition meetings (local management committees), integration of the EARN, TANF Youth Development, and Adult Basic Education programs in the PA CareerLink® offices, and referral to specialized PA CareerLink® services based on unique needs.

The Link helps us serve targeted populations by eliminating or significantly reducing the transportation barrier to get to the local PA CareerLink® for workforce services. The Link travels throughout the WDA bringing workforce and online training services to where jobseekers are already going including food banks, local libraries, thrift stores, probation offices, county assistance offices, and other community-based organization locations.

PA CareerLink® Title I Adult staff and/or the PA CareerLink® Site Administrators are active members on Reentry and Recovery Coalitions in several counties. Advance Central PA and PA CareerLink® staff will continue to actively participate in these Coalitions. These Coalitions work to identify what services can be provided prior to release and what services are available upon release to the justice-involved population that will keep them from returning to the prison system. Finding employment and having a strong support network upon release can significantly reduce a person's chance of returning to jail. While the PA CareerLink® cannot and will not be the only resource for these individuals, the public workforce system can help this population learn how to promote themselves to employers even with a criminal record, help identify employers that will hire individuals with a record and help them identify occupations that will be a good fit for their skills and abilities using assessments and labor market information.

In addition to Reentry and Recovery Coalitions, there are county coalitions that were formed to work together in serving individuals in need. The county coalitions are comprised of partners ranging from County Assistance Offices, food banks, libraries, mental health, housing, addiction services, Early Learning Resource Center (ELRC), Probation Offices, training providers, and WDB staff to serve the targeted population. Participation allows the PA CareerLink® staff to learn about valuable resources and initiatives in the community and to share the PA CareerLink® offerings and initiatives in order to recruit priority of service populations.

Partners in Outreach

Advance Central PA has a process by which all PA CareerLink® partners submit materials to Advance Central PA for review and vetting following the guidance as outlined in PA Dept. of Labor & Industry policy. In this way, Advance Central PA assures compliance and also quality so that all partner outreach may be well received.

Advance Central PA and PA CareerLink® will ensure all partners are included in regular community outreach by fostering strong industry partnerships and leveraging a network of local organizations. These partnerships, such as the MADE in Central PA manufacturing partnership and the Central PA Healthcare Partnership, are business-led and supported by workforce development, education, and economic development entities. Additionally, PA CareerLink® will engage with Community Action Agencies, United Way, the 5-County Recovery Coalition, county level coalitions, and other local resources to provide comprehensive support that aims to reduce poverty. Regular communication and collaboration with these partners will help address community needs and promote economic growth in Central Pennsylvania.

Provision of Equal Services

Guided by WIOA equal opportunity and nondiscrimination regulations, PA CareerLink® will provide equitable access to a wide range of employment and training services. This system ensures that individuals, regardless of background or circumstances, receive the support they need to achieve their career goals. PA CareerLink® offers personalized services such as job search assistance, resume building, career coaching, and access to training programs. PA CareerLink® staff are prepared to accommodate individuals with disabilities, limited English proficiency, or remediate other potential barriers to equal access. A variety of auxiliary aids are available for use by PA CareerLink® customers and accommodations are provided upon request. Services are tailored to meet the unique needs of each participant, ensuring that everyone can succeed and reach their career goals.

PA CareerLink® partners provide specialized services for various groups, including individuals with disabilities, veterans, mature workers, low-income populations, and youth and collaborate with local agencies and organizations to provide comprehensive wrap around support, including in regard to childcare, transportation, and other essential services.

The EARN program, TANF Youth Development program, and Title II Adult Basic Education programs are integral partners in the PA CareerLink® system in the Central LWDA and strengthen the system's ability to provide for all using the no wrong door structure. Within each of the three comprehensive sites in Lewistown, Williamsport, and Sunbury, Title II and EARN are both located within the PA CareerLink® making the co-enrollment and transition between programs easier for both jobseekers and partners. The EARN program serves individuals currently receiving TANF cash assistance from the county assistance office as well as SNAP volunteers. These customers are co-enrolled as WIOA Adults when appropriate, so they can get the training necessary to obtain desired employment. Customers that are basic skills deficient will also be co-enrolled in Title II programs referred from Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker or Youth and EARN programs as appropriate. TANF Youth programming is integrated into all PA CareerLink® sites as well as school districts in highest need.

Advance Central PA emphasizes the importance of continuous improvement and feedback and conducts Equal Opportunity monitoring of all programs. The monitoring regularly evaluates program services and solicits input from participants and businesses to identify areas for enhancement. This approach ensures that PA CareerLink® remains responsive to the evolving needs of the workforce and continues to provide high-quality, equitable services.

WIOA Title IV OVR Services

WIOA Title IV eligible OVR customers receive multiple services from qualified Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors that may include but not be limited to diagnostic, vocational counseling and guidance, vocational evaluation, restoration, training, job placement and pre-employment training services for eligible and potentially eligible high school students with disabilities.

Section 4.9: Nondiscrimination

How will entities within the one-stop service delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, comply with WIOA Sec. 188 (as applicable), and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101, et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities?

The Board requires that the PA CareerLink® and any affiliated sites are fully accessible, both physically and programmatically, to any individuals who may be interested in receiving employment and training services. This is achieved through strict adherence to WIOA Section 188 and local nondiscrimination complaint policies and procedures. The Office of Equal Opportunity, PA Department of Labor and Industry (OEO) provides oversight and certifies full compliance each year following a thorough review.

The responsibility for ensuring equal employment opportunities and civil right protections is shared across the PA CareerLink® system. To begin, Advance Central PA's Equal Opportunity Officer (EOO), Marca O'Hargan, functions as the contact person regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Section 188 of WIOA. The EOO maintains communication with OEO and disseminates updates and guidance, provides relevant training to the PA CareerLink® and WDB staff, implements the local equal opportunity and nondiscrimination complaint policies and procedures, maintains a complaint log for Advance Central PA and submits the local area's complaint logs to OEO, and investigates and resolves claims of discrimination. To support these efforts, each PA CareerLink® site has a designated Equal Opportunity (EO) Liaison who acts as a point of contact for their colleagues. Among other duties, the EO Liaison answers questions about complaint procedures and provides complaint forms as requested. The Operator and Site Administrators also play key roles in equal opportunity compliance including assisting with the site monitoring, training new hires, record keeping, disseminating information, and helping to identify new EO Liaisons as necessary. Lastly, Site Administrators collaborate with program supervisors to provide day-to-day oversight of site staff as they implement policy and adhere to the equal opportunity and nondiscrimination obligations in the PA CareerLink®.

The original physical accessibility/ADA compliance of each PA CareerLink® site was certified by OEO. Currently, compliance is monitored on an annual basis by Advance Central PA's Equal Opportunity Officer using the ADA Checklist for Existing Facilities Based on the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design. Additional review is facilitated for new and/or expanded/re-designed PA CareerLink® sites. In 2022/2023, OVR has also conducted a courtesy physical accessibility review of each site. Such reviews ensure accessible features such as accessible parking and accessible restrooms are compliant with federal standards.

Assistive technology is available at each site and includes: communication technology (UbiDuo), desktop magnifier (Acrobat HD Ultra), screen enlargement software, screen reading software, Windows Accessibility features, Text Telephone/Typewriter for the Deaf (TTY) and

connection and referral to community resources and agencies that assist persons with disabilities. Additionally, The Link is wheelchair accessible and has a workstation with the same assistive technology that is available at the brick and mortar PA CareerLink® sites.

Both the Advance Central PA website and Central PA CareerLink® websites are fully ADA compliant. An accessible menu is available in the bottom corner of the page being viewed. The accessible menu allows an individual to consume digital content in a manner that works best for them. The menu includes changes to adjust contrast, text size, pause animations, show a cursor, space text, and others.

Fundamental to WIOA compliance, Advance Central PA's EEO coordinates, schedules, and facilitates trainings for all PA CareerLink® partner staff once per month on topics related to equal opportunity and nondiscrimination. For example, presentations have reviewed specific characteristic/classes protected from discrimination, forms of discrimination and retaliation, and the local complaint policy and procedures. The schedule has also included disability etiquette training provided by OVR personnel. Staff are trained to operate available assistive devices and software available on an ADA compliant computer located in each career resource area. Although topics vary, some key elements are reviewed annually such as providing equal access to customers with limited English proficiency. Attendees include WDB staff, Title I providers, EARN, Title II, and BWPO staff.

A regional Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan outlines PA CareerLink® service provision to customers who read or speak English less than very well. A Babel notice informs customers of no-cost language services available for the purposes of accessing all PA CareerLink® benefits and services. For instance, Propio telephone interpretation is used to facilitate in-person and remote communication with customers. Additionally, shared vital PA CareerLink® documents have been translated to Spanish and other languages as needed and are readily available at PA CareerLink® sites as required by the LEP Plan. Advance Central PA's routine equal opportunity and accessibility monitoring of PA CareerLink® sites and Title I programs ensures the LEP Plan is implemented as required. The plan is reviewed and revised annually by the EEO and Site Administrators, and the language needs of the local area are assessed every three years.

Title I partner program providers are monitored annually by Advance Central PA for programmatic accessibility. A self-monitoring survey, like that used by OEO to monitor local area compliance, is used in these annual reviews. In this way, the Board can ensure full system alignment with the nine elements of PA Department of Labor and Industry Nondiscrimination Plan for Equal Opportunity Compliance. Providers describe their internal procedures and practices satisfying the requirements of each element. As an example, verification is given that Advance Central PA's Equal Opportunity policy and complaint procedure is explained and distributed to all new WIOA participants.

Advance Central PA fully complies with all monitoring, including the Office of Equal Opportunity annual compliance reviews. The 2025 monitoring is currently underway. The previous monitoring cycle concluded August 22, 2024, and determined the LWDA to be compliant at that time. As a result of the monitoring, the Advance Central PA and Central PA CareerLink® websites were updated so that the full contact information for the Equal Opportunity Officer was accessible from each page. Additionally, the local complaint policy was updated to include the current EO Liaisons and to include the full contact information for the EO Officer and OEO's Director.

Outreach is conducted in a variety of ways to help reach all individuals who might benefit from workforce services, including: radio slots, social media posts and advertisements, flyers, and partnership with local agencies, faith-based organizations, and service providers. Specific groups or individuals experiencing particular barriers are also targeted for recruitment through this variety of outreach methods.

PA CareerLink® participates in local county coalition (local management committee) meetings for the opportunity to connect with other agencies that serve particular populations such as women, unhoused individuals, individuals with disabilities, older individuals, immigrants, and those practicing particular faiths. These organizations are also welcomed to present to PA CareerLink® staff during weekly meetings, encouraging referrals in both directions. By way of newsletters and flyers, community organizations are kept informed of PA CareerLink® programs, services, and events are shared with these organizations as well.

Other partnerships also contribute to affirmative outreach efforts. For example, PA CareerLink® youth programs have established strong partnerships with school districts, technical education programs, and post-secondary institutions. Through such connections, local high schools have included PA CareerLink® in transition meetings for youth with disabilities. In this way, staff can discuss the range of services available and coordinate with other serviced providers represented in the meetings and learn about their programming.

The Link increases overall accessibility to PA CareerLink® and regularly serves targeted communities. Because it is a mobile unit, it can serve customers with transportation barriers preventing them from reaching a brick-and-mortar site. Also, The Link regularly visits area facilities to reach jobseekers currently incarcerated or receiving treatment for addiction. Workshops and resume clinics are facilitated in prisons, halfway houses, and rehabilitation centers.

Advance Central PA's WDB and Standing Committees are comprised of members with diverse background and areas of expertise in serving various populations and serve as valuable consultants in ensuring effective outreach to minority and other populations.

Overall, the Board promotes full accessibility by requiring that its Operator, Partners, and Site Administrator:

- Conduct and participate in training of staff members and partner personnel regarding services to individuals with disabilities.
- Provide outreach and referral to agencies within the local area, including OVR that offer services to individuals with disabilities.
- Maintain an updated list of resources available within the local area for use by staff and customers in accessing needed services.
- Advocate for individuals with disabilities and barriers to employment by advising and informing them about resources available within the PA CareerLink® centers and throughout the local area and coaching them on how to apply for needed resources.
- Utilize a Limited English Proficiency plan, including the use of bi- and multi-lingual personnel in the Center as well as providing access to language interpretation services.
- Provide assistive technology for persons with disabilities, such as adaptive keyboards and/or adjustable workstations.

- Conduct a physical inspection of all assistive technology/equipment to ensure functionality on a regular basis.
- Coordinate staff training on assistive technology and equipment to ensure that personnel are trained in usage and application.
- Help individuals with disabilities who may require additional assistance with the registration process.
- Maintain required federal and state notices and postings.

COMPLIANCE

Section 5.1: MOU assessment(s)

Describe the cooperative agreements that define how all local area service providers will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the local area one-stop delivery system.

The Memoranda of Understanding between the Board and the PA CareerLink® partners defines the expectations, service levels, and resource contributions of each organization.

With respect to the provision of services to individuals with disabilities, the Board utilizes the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) expertise regarding assessment, career pathways development, education training and placement services. Advance Central PA and OVR work together in various capacities and at different levels within the workforce system to enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities. Importantly, the Regional Assistant Director serves on the LWDB and the Audit/Finance Committee.

OVR is a strong partner in all PA CareerLink® offices in the WDA as formalized in the MOU PA CareerLink® Operating Budget. Beyond operation of their own programming, OVR staff provide their valuable expertise to Advance Central PA and partners. For example, staff provide training to partners such as operation of ADA compliant software and hardware and periodic training for effectively serving individuals with disabilities. OVR staff participate in “match” meetings and BST meetings at the PA CareerLink® so that resources are leveraged, not duplicated. Additionally, Title I In-School Youth staff are members of the Transitions Teams in the local high schools with OVR staff to help youth with disabilities transition to higher education or employment after graduation.

OVR also assists the LWDB and PA CareerLink® network by providing expert guidance regarding ADA accessibility and monitoring.

Section 5.2: Fiscal responsibility

What is the process the local board uses to ensure the collection of the debts of lower-tier sub-recipients, as a result of audits?

Advance Central PA’s Policies and Procedures outlines the local debt collection system and how the WDB will ensure the collection of debts established as a result of audits. The debt collection policy includes:

Issuance of a Final Determination signifies the completion of the audit resolution process. A debt is established when that Final Determination disallows any costs questioned in the audit.

The collection of that debt is a separate process, with specified time frames and procedures. The Final Determination contains the first official demand for repayment of the debt.

Following receipt of the Final Determination, the audited entity will have twenty (20) days to submit an appeal. That appeal will be a request for a formal review of the Final Determination before an impartial hearing officer. The debt collection process will be stayed pending a decision regarding the appeal. The hearing officer's decision rendered will be final.

If no appeal of the Final Determination is filed, a lump-sum cash repayment from non-Federal funds is due within 30 days after receipt of the Final Determination. Advance Central PA, at its discretion, may negotiate short-term installment agreements in lieu of lump-sum payment.

Repayment of the debt is mandatory, and funds must be returned to Advance Central PA under the following conditions:

- Willful disregard of the requirements of DHS and/or WIOA, gross negligence, or failure to observe accepted standards of administration;
- Results from incidents of fraud, malfeasance, or misfeasance; and
- Results from illegal or irregularities that must be reported under OMB A-133.

Upon repayment of the outstanding debt, Advance Central PA will issue a satisfactory resolution letter acknowledging receipt of repayment and closing the audit process. However, Advance Central PA reserves the right to reopen the audit in the event the USDOL or the Commonwealth disagrees with the final resolution

Should repayment not be received within the thirty (30) day period, a second notice will be transmitted by certified mail. This notice will state that repayment must be submitted within twenty (20) days of receipt of the letter. It will also state that interest on the outstanding debt began to accrue on the 31st day following receipt of the Final Determination by the audited entity.

Should repayment of the outstanding debt not be received within twenty (20) days after receipt of the second notice, a Final Notice will be sent by certified mail. The Final Notice will state that Advance Central PA must receive repayment within ten (10) days of receipt. It will also list the amount of accrued interest due on the debt. The notice will also state that, should repayment of the debt and interest not be received, appropriate legal and/or programmatic sanctions may be instituted. These sanctions may include the following:

- Withholding a percentage of payments until the audit is resolved satisfactorily;
- Withholding or disallowing overhead costs;
- Suspending the Federal Funds until the audit is resolved;
- Determination of ineligibility, suspension or debarment through the Contractor Responsibility Program;
- Referral to the Office of the Attorney General for collection.

Section 5.3: High-Performing Board Attainment

What action(s) is the local board taking (or will take) towards becoming or remaining a high-performing board?

Advance Central PA diligently strives to maintain status as a high-performing board and offers the following examples and intentional actions taken to uphold our accountability to stakeholders, regulations, and the intent of WIOA.

- Alignment with the Governor’s goals as described in PA’s WIOA Combined State Plan and implementation of activities and strategies that support attainment of those goals;
- Meets or exceeds the local area negotiated federal performance goals with monitoring and provisions of technical assistance to procured providers to that end;
- Consistently compliant with fiscal and administrative responsibility and accountability in accordance with all laws, regulations, and policies;
- Stringent compliance with internal controls and procurement policies;
- Receives successful monitoring reports and other evaluations by federal and Commonwealth oversight staff, including documented best practices, with quick actions taken as necessary to continuously improve;
- Researches new and/or improved methods to assist individuals with barriers to employment and procures professional development training for PA CareerLink® staff as needed;
- Continuous improvement of WIOA Title I program delivery, including via robust procurements that welcome innovation, mandated strategy from the WDB, and review and adoption of best practices identified by networking with peers across the Commonwealth and country;
- Development of a comprehensive ETPL that includes training providers and offerings in demand in the local area;
- Coordinated development and implementation of services to directly and positively impact businesses, including through collaboration between the WDB, the BST, and economic development agencies;
- Utilizes labor market information to drive needs assessment, goal setting and planning discussions with partners in the workforce system as well as the broader region;
- Collaborates with other regional partners to leverage workforce funds and increase investment into the workforce development and training system;
- Achieves training targets via carefully designed budgets on the back end and outreach at the PA CareerLink® level;
- Industry Partnership initiatives with support from business leaders, education, economic development, and other workforce partners.

To further articulate the WDB’s intent to sustain as a high-performing Board, Advance Central PA has Standing Committees of the WDB designed to that end. For example, the Governance Committee helps recruit new members for LEO consideration so the membership stays compliant. The Policy & Performance Committee reviews A/DW performance, evaluates local policies for compliance and excellence, and weighs in on matters of continuous improvement.

Section 5.4: Public Notice

What is the process the local board uses to provide a 30-day public comment period prior to submission of the plan, and describe the opportunity for input into the development of the local area plan, particularly for representatives of business, education, labor organizations, program partners, public agencies, and community stakeholders?

Advance Central PA did not convene a large meeting of partners. Rather, Advance Central PA reached out to multiple partners via email and phone, held virtual meetings with partners, and participated in our partners’ organizational meetings to guide the development of the local plan between July 30, 2024 and February 20, 2025. Partners participating in various meetings include, but are not limited to, SEDA-COG, Pennsylvania College of Technology, Innovative

Manufacturing Center, PennTAP, Commonwealth University, Focus Central PA, DRIVE, WDB members, Central Susquehanna Opportunities, Inc., Tuscarora Intermediate Unit, Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit, and CTE providers. Partners representing Title II, Title III, the Community Services Block Grant were also contacted to review sections of the plan.

Public Comment Process

To ensure an open opportunity for public comment, the Board published the Central Local WIOA Plan on its website for the required 30-day period beginning June 30, 2025 and ending July 30, 2025. Notification of the availability of the Local Plan for public comment was also directly distributed via email to representatives of local businesses, labor organizations, educational institutions, and partners.

Comments Received

(To be completed after public comments are received.)

Attestations

ATTESTATIONS	
<p>By checking the box adjacent to each line item, the local board attests to ensuring the compliance components and documents listed are (or will be) in place and effective prior to June 30, 2025. In the rare circumstance that something is not applicable, the local board must write "N/A" next to adjacent line item.</p>	
<p>The following components and documents, including local workforce system policies, must be reviewed and revised as to be aligned with WIOA for the current planning cycle unless it is established as a best practice. Each item must be available to L&I at any time during the planning process and monitoring or auditing processes. L&I is not requiring copies of such documents to be attached to regional or local area plans at this time.</p>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The <u>Central</u> Local Workforce Development Area attests that each of the below referenced policies contain any required language or content and were last revised, if necessary, by this plan's effective date.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Agreement between all counties and other local governments, if applicable, establishing the consortium of local and chief elected officials.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Agreement between the chief elected official(s) and the fiscal agent, if a fiscal agent is designated.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Agreement between the local area elected official(s) and the LWDB.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	LWDB policy and process that provides for nomination, appointment and removal of board members; resolutions; bylaws; code of conduct; and conflict of interest.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Financial management policy and process including cost allocation plan; internal controls; cash management; receipts of goods; cost reimbursement; inventory and equipment; program income; travel reimbursement; audit requirements and resolution; annual report; property management; debt collection; and allowable costs.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Local area procurement policy that must describe formal procurement procedures.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Local area MOU.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Program management policies and processes must include equal opportunity for customers; complaints and grievances; supportive services; one-stop operator local firewall (if applicable); file management; eligibility determination and verification; self-sufficiency criteria; self-attestation and certification random sampling; priority of service; training verification/refunds; individual training accounts; contracts for training services; statewide training providers list and eligibility verification; local area training provider list and eligibility criteria and process; "additional assistance" definition; work-based training policies including incumbent worker training, OJT, CT, and apprenticeship.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	It is best practice to have a risk management policy and process including records retention and public access; public records requests; monitoring, grievance; incident; and disaster recovery plan.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	It is best practice to have a human resources policy and process including employee classification; benefits; holidays and PTO; recruitment and selection; employee development; discipline; layoffs, terminations and severance; sexual harassment; and equal opportunity and non-discrimination.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	It is best practice to have a professional services contract(s) for administrative services such as staffing and payroll, if applicable.

Attachment 1: WIOA Title I Programs Performance Accountability Tables

The Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry (L&I) negotiates WIOA Title I programs performance goals with the U. S. Department of Labor on a two-year program cycle, which aligns with the WIOA planning requirement of reviewing WIOA Local Area Plans every two years. In an effort designed to meet or exceed the state WIOA performance goals, PA negotiates these same goals with PA's local workforce development areas (LWDA) to optimally set each local area's WIOA Title I performance goal levels so that, collectively, the state negotiated performance goals are met or exceeded.

The *Local Area WIOA Title I Programs Performance Accountability Tables* are for the benefit of the public and Table A or Table B must be updated **annually with L&I supplied information as it becomes available**. The completed tables must be publicly posted with the local area plan. The local workforce development board (LWDB) does not need to perform a WIOA plan modification as the tables are revised; email notification to local area workforce development stakeholders including L&I will suffice.

Table A instructions: LWDBs must use Table A during initial local area plan development (i.e., PY25) and planned modification (i.e., PY27). LWDBs must edit the table's three columns with the appropriate program year(s) to correctly match the attained performance results from the most recent program year and LWDA-negotiated performance goals for the next two program years.

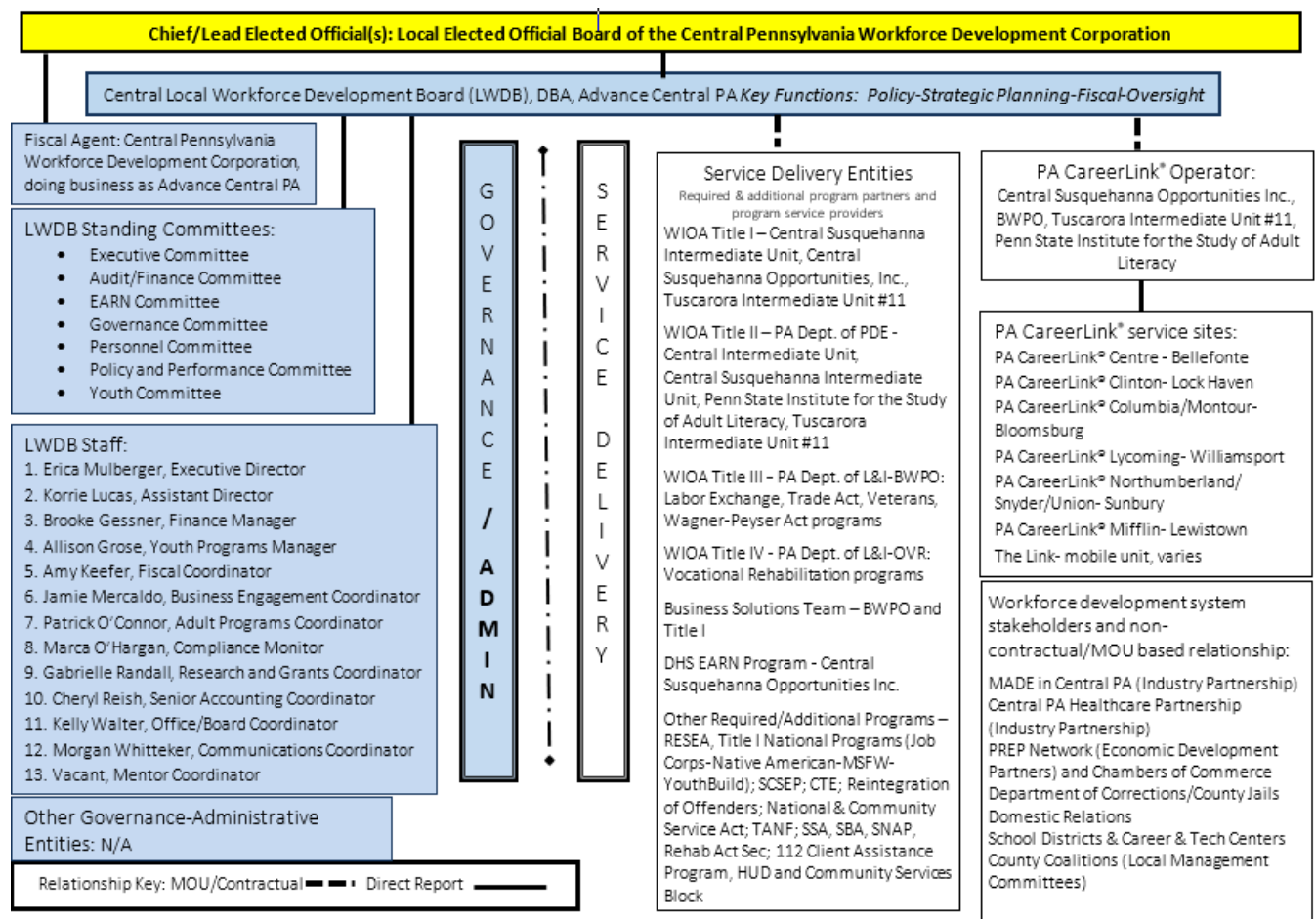
Table A	LWDA Name: Central		
WIOA Title I Programs (Adult-Dislocated Worker-Youth) Performance Measures	Attained Performance Results	Negotiated Performance Goals	Negotiated Performance Results
	*Program Year 2023	*Program Year 2024	*Program Year 2025
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)			
Adult	80.2%	77.0%	78.0%
Dislocated Worker	86.7%	81.0%	81.0%
Youth	76.1%	69.0%	70.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)			
Adult	83.1%	77.0%	78.0%
Dislocated Worker	72.7%	81.0%	81.0%
Youth	69.7%	69.0%	70.0%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)			
Adult	\$9,108	\$8,000	\$8,000
Dislocated Worker	\$10,507	\$9,000	\$9,250
Youth	\$3,691	\$4,000	\$4,000
Credential Attainment Rate			
Adult	51.5%	60.0%	60.0%

Dislocated Worker	73.3%	66.0%	67.0%
Youth	48.3%	56.0%	56.0%
Measurable Skill Gains			
Adult	67.3%	60.0%	60.0%
Dislocated Worker	44.0%	60.0%	60.0%
Youth	66.2%	68.5%	68.5%

Attachment 2: WIOA Local Workforce Development System Organizational Chart

The organizational chart is for the benefit of the public and must be used to describe the attributes of the local workforce development system. The local workforce development board (local board) may supplement this model with clarifying charts. If multiple pages are needed to represent the local system, ensure that "Governance/Administrative" and "Service Delivery System" information is displayed on separate pages respectively. Use of model sub-titles is required. Do not list key governance personnel within the chart. Publicly post Attachment 2 with the local area plan.

This chart should be reviewed annually for revisions. If further revisions are required after a local area plan (or subsequent plan modification) is approved, another separate plan modification is not required.



Attachment 3: WIOA Local Workforce Development Delivery System Program Partner-Provider List

Local Workforce Development Area Name: Central
Effective Date (must align with current MOU): July 1, 2023

Local workforce development boards (local boards) may supplement this template with their own version if all required template information is reflected. Local boards must publicly post this list to address the public's need for access to service as mandated by the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA).

Required programs (as listed in WIOA sec. 121(b)(1)) and the corresponding program authorization information are pre-filled for convenience. In the event multiple providers provide the same program, it is the local board's responsibility to add this information accordingly. WIOA also specifies that one-stop centers may incorporate additional partner programs. Thus, the local board must ensure this document reflects the current PA CareerLink® Memoranda of Understanding and include any necessary additional partner program(s) contact information.

This list should be reviewed annually for revisions. If further revisions are required after a local area plan (or subsequent plan modification) is approved, another separate plan modification is not required.

Program Name	Program Authorization	Local Area Partner/Provider
POC address	POC telephone	POC website/email & POC Name (if known)
Adult Employment and Training Activities	WIOA Title I, Subtitle B, Chapter 3	Central Susquehanna Opportunities, Inc.
2 East Arch Street, Suite 313 Shamokin, PA 17872	570-644-6575	Mbair@censop.com Megan Bair
Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Activities	WIOA Title I, Subtitle B, Chapter 3	Central Susquehanna Opportunities Inc.
2 East Arch Street, Suite 313 Shamokin, PA 17872	570-644-6575	Mbair@censop.com Megan Bair
WIOA Youth Workforce Activities	WIOA Title I, Subtitle B, Chapter 2	Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit
90 Lawton Lane, Milton, PA 17847	570-523-1155	Kvastine@csiu.org Katherine Vastine
WIOA Youth Workforce Activities	WIOA Title I, Subtitle B, Chapter 2	Central Susquehanna Opportunities, Inc.
2 East Arch Street, Suite 313 Shamokin, PA 17872	570-644-6575	Mbair@censop.com Megan Bair

Adult Education and Family Literacy Activities (AEFLA)	WIOA Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program	Tuscarora Intermediate Unit #11
6395 SR 103 North Lewistown, PA 17044	570-259-6047	cklinger@tiu11.org Chuck Klinger
Adult Education and Family Literacy Activities (AEFLA)	WIOA Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program	Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit
90 Lawton Lane Milton, PA 17847	570-523-1155, ext. 2341	mmingle@csiu.org Mary Mingle
Adult Education and Family Literacy Activities (AEFLA)	WIOA Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program	Central Intermediate Unit
1125 Linden Street Clearfield, PA 16830	814-765-8118, ext 303	jwitherite@ciu10.org Jenna Witherite
Adult Education and Family Literacy Activities (AEFLA)	WIOA Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program	Penn State Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy
405E Keller Building, University Park, PA 16802	570-660-6072	Rcg6@psu.edu Robert Getz
Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment Grants (RESEA)	FY2018 Amendments to the Social Security Act	L & I Bureau of Workforce Partnership & Operations
329 Pine Street Williamsport, PA 17701	570-327-3501	brujones@pa.gov Bruce Jones
Jobs for Veterans State Grant Programs	38 U.S.C., Chapter 41	L & I Bureau of Workforce Partnership & Operations
329 Pine Street Williamsport, PA 17701	570-327-3501	brujones@pa.gov Bruce Jones
Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service Program	Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et. seq.), as amended by WIOA Title III	L & I Bureau of Workforce Partnership & Operations
329 Pine Street Williamsport, PA 17701	570-327-3501	brujones@pa.gov Bruce Jones
Foreign Labor Certification Program (H-2A and H-2B)	ETA Foreign Labor Exchange	L & I Bureau of Workforce Partnership & Operations
329 Pine Street Williamsport, PA 17701	570-327-3501	brujones@pa.gov Bruce Jones

Vocational Rehabilitation State Grant Program	Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 720 et. seq.), as amended by WIOA Title IV	L&I Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
The Grit Building, Suite 102 208 W. 3 rd Street Williamsport, PA 17701	570-505-7234	sswartz@pa.gov Susan Swartz
Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)	Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et. seq.)	STEP Inc.
2138 Lincoln St Williamsport, PA 17701	570-326-0587	jdplankenhorn@stepcorp.org James Plankenhorn
Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)	Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et. seq.)	Associates for Training Development (4ATD)
24 E. Third St. Williamsport, PA 17701 (Clinton, Lycoming, Northumberland, Snyder, and Union Counties)	570-404-7744	Lwyble@a4td.org Louise Wyble
Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)	Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et. seq.)	Associates for Training Development (4ATD)
13 Depot St. Lewistown, PA 17044 (Centre and Mifflin Counties)	814-569-6093	lcasey@a4td.org Leigh Casey
Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)	Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et. seq.)	AARP
(Columbia and Montour Counties)	570-972-0080	pvergnetti@aarp.org Patty Vergnetti
Postsecondary Career & Technical Education (Perkins V)	Carl D. Perkins Vocational & Applied Technology Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et. seq.) and (as amended Pub. L. No. 155-224)	Central Pennsylvania Institute of Science and Technology
540 N Harrison Rd. Bellefonte, PA 16823	814-359-2793	TTaylor@cpi.edu https://cpi.edu/ Todd Taylor

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)	Title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et. seq.)	L & I Bureau of Workforce Partnership & Operations
329 Pine Street Williamsport, PA 17701	570-327-3501	bruji@pa.gov Bruce Jones
Employment and Training Activities–Department of Community Economic Development	Community Services Block Grant Act (CSBG) (42 U.S.C. 9901 et. seq.)	Central PA Community Action, Inc.
270 East Cherry Street Clearfield, PA 16830 (Centre County)	814- 765-1551, ext. 1116	mstiner@cpcaa.net Michelle Stiner
Employment and Training Activities–Department of Community Economic Development	Community Services Block Grant Act (CSBG) (42 U.S.C. 9901 et. seq.)	Central Susquehanna Opportunities, Inc.
2 East Arch Street, Suite 313 Shamokin, PA 17872 (Columbia, Montour, Northumberland Counties)	570- 644-6575	Mbair@censop.com Megan Bair
Employment and Training Activities–Department of Community Economic Development	Community Services Block Grant Act (CSBG) (42 U.S.C. 9901 et. seq.)	Union-Snyder Community Action Agency
713 Bridge Street, Suite 10 Selinsgrove, PA (Union and Snyder Counties)	570- 374-8938	sweller@union-snydercaa.org Susie Weller
Employment and Training Activities–Department of Community Economic Development	Community Services Block Grant Act (CSBG) (42 U.S.C. 9901 et. seq.)	STEP Inc.
2138 Lincoln St Williamsport, PA 17701 (Clinton and Lycoming Counties)	570-326-0587	jdplankenhorn@stepcorp.org James Plankenhorn
Employment and Training Activities–Department of Community Economic Development	Community Services Block Grant Act (CSBG) (42 U.S.C. 9901 et. seq.)	Center for Community Action
3 West Monument Square, Ste. 204 Lewistown, PA 17044 (Mifflin County)	717-325-4380	wmelius@centerforcommunityaction.org Wendy Melius

State Unemployment Insurance (UI) Program	Social Security Act 9 of 1935(Title III, IX, and XII) and Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA) of 1939	PA Dept. of Labor & Industry Office of UC Centers
Office of Unemployment Compensation Service Centers 651 Boas Street Harrisburg, PA 17121	888-313-7284	UCHelp@pa.gov www.uc.pa.gov
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	(43 U.S.C. 601 et. seq.)	Dept. of Human Services
(Snyder, Union, Centre, Mifflin Counties)	717-783-3994	amiles@pa.gov Allison Miles
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	(43 U.S.C. 601 et. seq.)	Dept. of Human Services
(Clinton County)	570-826-2148	wschabener@pa.gov William Schabener
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	(43 U.S.C. 601 et. seq.)	Dept. of Human Services
(Columbia, Lycoming, Montour, Northumberland Counties)	267-858-3346	lrascoc@pa.gov Larry Rascoe
EARN	Programs authorized under the Social Security Act Title IV, part A (TANF)	Central Susquehanna Opportunities, Inc.
2 East Arch Street, Suite 313 Shamokin, PA 17872	570- 644-6575	Mbair@cesnsop.com Megan Bair, CEO
TANF YD	Programs authorized under the Social Security Act Title IV, part A (TANF)	Central Susquehanna Opportunities, Inc.
2 East Arch Street, Suite 313 Shamokin, PA 17872	570- 644-6575	Mbair@cesnsop.com Megan Bair, CEO
TANF YD	Programs authorized under the Social Security Act Title IV, part A (TANF)	Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit
2 East Arch Street, Suite 313 Shamokin, PA 17872	570- 644-6575	Kvastine@csiu.org Katherine Vastine

Rapid Response	WIOA, Title I, Subpart C	L & I Bureau of Workforce Partnership & Operations
279 US 6 W. Coudersport, PA 16915	814-274-9330	twerstler@pa.gov Tom Werstler
Job Corps	WIOA Title I, Subtitle C	Adams & Associates/ Red Rock Job Corps
Route 487 North Lopez, PA 18656	570-708-0692	weaver.edward@jobcorps.org Edward Weaver
Native American Programs	WIOA Title I, Sec. 166 (29 U.S.C. 3221)	Council of Three Rivers American Indian Center, Inc.
	412-498-2443	ebrabender@cotraic.org Edith Brabender
YouthBuild Program	WIOA Title I, Sec. 171 (29 U.S.C. 3226)	N/A- Referrals to other workforce development areas as needed.
N/A	N/A	N/A
National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP)	WIOA Title I, Sec. 167	PathStone Corporation, Inc.
400 East Avenue Rochester, NY 14607	717-234-6616	ndagostino@pathstone.org www.pathstone.org Nita D'Agostino
Reentry Employment Opportunities (REO) Programs Multiple Statewide Initiatives	Second Chance Act of 2007, Sec. 212 (42 U.S.C. 17532) and WIOA Title I, Sec. 169	Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center; Vera Institute of Justice
N/A	N/A	N/A
Family Self-Sufficiency Programs	US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development Grants	Housing Authority of Centre County; Housing Authority of County of Lycoming; Housing Authority of Northumberland County
N/A	N/A	N/A