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# WIOA Local Plan

2020-2024

Revised

2022-2024

South Central Workforce Investment Board

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## Local Workforce Development Board: South Central Workforce Investment Board

### STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

#### 1. Local Workforce Development Board's Vision

State the Board's vision for the Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) and how this vision meets, interprets, and furthers the Governor's vision in the PY20–PY24 WIOA Missouri Combined State Plan.

The vision of the South Central Workforce Investment Board is to improve the quality of life in our area. Through partnerships we will ensure all citizens are afforded an environment that supports a market-driven workforce development system with clear goals and accountability. This system will be responsive, support lifelong skill development through the use of career pathways, establish a culture of continuous learning, and provide easy and universal access to information and services by jobseekers and the business community. Ultimately, this system will provide customers with the knowledge and tools necessary to establish a world-class workforce for a world-class economy.

#### 2. Local Workforce Development Board's Goals

Provide the Board's goals for engaging employers and preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment). Include goals relating to the performance-accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency.

Goals of the South Central Region include:

- A strong linkage to economic development projects in all twelve counties.
- Tight connections with businesses to ensure their needs are met.
- Services that effectively and efficiently connect our jobseekers to in demand jobs.
- All counties being certified as Missouri Work Ready communities.
- Involving more employers in OJT and Apprenticeship programs.

#### 3. Local Workforce Development Board's Priorities

Identify the workforce development needs of businesses, jobseekers, and workers in the LWDA, and how those needs are determined.

**WIOA Youth Program:** The South Central Region is diverse, with many rural areas which create numerous barriers to employment and/or education. The WDB strives to support a high school diploma or HiSet as a first priority. The Board sees benefit in work experience, to strengthen their soft skills and help to identify a career path. Eliminating the barriers is often the biggest challenge. Through intense case management, building relationships with youth, career guidance, and support we achieve success. Using local Youth Office sites strengthens our present in local rural communities. Computers available at each office, available to connect via technology to partner agencies for a complete support system.

**WIOA Adult (AD) and Dislocated Worker (DW) Program:** The South Central Region priority for our Adult and Dislocated Workers is to obtain suitable and self-sustaining employment. The Board saw the benefit and success with work experience and decided to incorporate Work Experience into our adult populations. Work experience gives the job seekers a unique opportunity to explore different career

paths and strengthen their soft skills. If needed, education is available for long term and short term training. Case management is available in all avenues. Computers are available in our Job Centers and Satellite offices for any job seekers to use and availability to connect via technology to any partner agency services needed.

Businesses in the South Central Region are still in need of dependable, skilled labor, to fill the gaps of our aging workforce. Incumbent Worker training is offered to help fill the gap and upgrade existing employees. This creates an opportunity for less skilled/entry level openings to enter the workforce. This is an excellent opportunity to hire new employees with the help of On-Job-Training (OJT), hiring events and expert Business Outreach/Marketing & Outreach Trainer staff working closely with each employer.

#### **4. Local Workforce Development Board's Strategies**

Describe the Board's strategies and goals for operation, innovation and continual improvement based on meeting requirements for the needs of businesses, job seekers and workers. Required strategies are listed below. Please describe the strategies and objectives for:

By the very nature of WIOA, partnerships are developing and strengthening. We're seeking innovative ways of communication, integration and referrals. This will allow for improvement to the current system, streamlining services, braiding funding, and working to create a seamless service system in our region. Co-location has been implemented to further serve our customers.

##### **a. Career Pathways**

A Career Pathway allows those participants that we serve in the South Central Region to build an intentional and strategic plan to obtain employment and careers that will lead to self-sufficiency through education and training services provided by our programs. The career path and services are specific to each individual based on their career pathway, assessment, needs, and barriers. Whether the participant has a plan that includes education or they choose to engage in training, it is crucial for every enrolled participant to develop a career pathway so they have a completed plan with a timeline to achieve the opportunities provided by the program including attaining credentials, finding employment, increasing wages, and advancing in career opportunities.

Critical for each participant is the labor market information. Using this information will help steer the career pathways initiative to ensure that participants are aware of job opportunities for both what they want to do and other opportunities that are available in the South Central Region. The sector strategies development in the South Central Region is also important in that it will assist employers by providing qualified job seekers to those careers. Along with occupations that fall into the South Central Regions Sector Strategies, participants should also be informed of high-wage, high-growth, and in-demand job opportunities that are available in other regions and areas. A pathway to employment that leads to self-sufficiency is the catalyst to the key to success for the program, job seeker, and the employer.

##### **b. Employer Engagement**

The crucial link in our region's Workforce Development efforts are the Employers. While individual barriers to employment have to be addressed, the needs of local employers are just as important. When the South Central Region focuses on getting the participants being prepared and qualified for the jobs that are available in our region, this ensures we are addressing those needs of the local employers. Beyond letting employers know our programs exist, we must determine the criteria that makes employees and employers a good fit for each other to ensure that both the employer and the job seeker placed meet the needs on both ends.

Engaging employers is a challenge due to their lack of understanding of the WIOA programs that are available to them. We must outreach to employers so they are aware of the services available through our programs, but the sharing of information is not the only focus with those outreach and engagement services provided to employers. Employer Town Hall Meetings, area Chamber of Commerce meetings, and various community and service organizations are just a few of the ways that we can reach out to employers and explain the Employer services that South Central Region is able to provide them in bridging the gap between the needs of the job seekers and the needs of the employers.

**c. Business Needs Assessment**

In various South Central Region business/industry roundtables and meetings, the following have been identified as business needs:

- Work ethics
- Soft skills in every business industry
- Basic computer skills

The goal is for staff and partner staff is to work together with employers to find easily attainable employment solutions that last for both the job seeker and the employer. This is done by working with area Chambers of Commerce, regional planning organizations, Economic Development, and other community agencies to assist with things like: Job Fairs, Manufacturing Day Events, hiring events, and community events to outreach to both job seekers and employers but to also keep an eye on the needs that our employers are currently facing. To be able to understand the needs of an employer we must have open lines of communication not only with the employers in the area but also among staff and partner staff. A successful example of this is through a recent Employer Town Hall Meeting that brought 35 area employers together where a panel consisting of state and local workforce development staff and area resources staff explained the services that area available to them as employers. That afternoon a job fair was held with a majority of the same employers and panelists that brought out 160+ potential employees.

**d. Alignment and Coordination of Core Program Services**

The South Central Region has two Comprehensive (full service) Missouri Job Centers (CJC) also known as One-Stop centers. Both of these CJC's currently hold certification. These CJC centers are tasked with aligning services within the CJC by developing outreach for jobseekers and businesses, customer service, assessment and supportive services. The South Central Region continues to work at developing and maintaining meaningful inter-agency relationships to continue working as the hub for all services and making referrals and being the connection between job seekers and employers. Interagency alignment and coordination will be an on-going process. Through weekly staff meetings/training, the One-Stop staff continue to become more knowledgeable of the services available through core/mandated partners. This will enable all staff to give customers the information they need to improve their choices.

Partners used to align and coordinate with their core programs include:

- WIOA Title I Adult & Dislocated Worker
- WIOA Title I Youth
- WIOA Title I Job Corps
- WIOA Migrant/Seasonal – UMOs
- Wagner-Peyser Act – OWD
- Title II – AEL
- VR/RSB
- Title V/SCSEP

- Perkins Career/Tech
- Trade – OWD
- Veterans – OWC
- CSBG
- Division Employment Security – UI
- TANF/MWA
- MOUs have been and are being reviewed to ensure we are meeting the requirements of core partner-based activities and needs.

**e. Coordination with Economic Development**

The South Central Region has a board member from South Central Ozarks Council of Governments who fills the Economic Development board seat. This involvement allows us to be kept up-to-date on economic development within our region with Economic Developers at the table. We are also apprised of anything that might have an effect on the workforce development in the South Central Region. The Real-Time Labor Market Analysis provides a snapshot of current labor demand that can be helpful to current job seekers interested in who is hiring and for what occupations. MERIC has developed products, like the Real Time Labor Market Summary. The Labor Market Summary provides both a regional and statewide snapshot of data found in job ads and is published every other month. MERIC and Office of Workforce Development (OWD) will continue to explore how this data can inform workforce and economic development efforts to meet the needs of businesses around the state.

- f. Outreach to Jobseekers and Businesses (The LWDB should explain its outreach plan to attract WIOA eligible individuals. Please highlight any efforts to reach veterans, spouses of veterans, and displaced homemakers.)**

Who we are? What we do? Why we matter? Helping Jobseekers and Businesses understand these three basis questions will enable us to be more effective in our outreach. As a WDB we should be able to answer these three questions for both Jobseekers and Businesses in a way that attracts, entices, and excites them to want to learn more about the services that are available to them and then use them. Major factors in meeting the needs of both job seekers and employers are accomplished by using education and agency partnerships. They are a significant part of helping to answer Who we are? What we do? Why we matter?

Jobseekers – The South Central Region’s Job Centers uses the social media platform Facebook to reach out to job seekers. They offer an array of services aimed at making every job seeker a better job candidate. Through the website [www.jobs.mo.gov](http://www.jobs.mo.gov) job seekers are able to have access to regional, state, and national job openings. Through labor market information, career exploration activities, job seeking assistance, resume preparation assistance, assessments, skills certifications such as the National Career Readiness Certificate, and workshops we can assist job seekers in the preparation of applying for jobs that match with their knowledge, skills, and abilities. We offer access to short and long term skill-building training and employment services, supportive services information, job specific training and certifications, placement assistance, opportunities for on-the-job training, and tuition assistance to build on the knowledge, skills, and abilities that a job seeker will need for their chosen career path. Methods of referral and opportunities for co-enrollment with other workforce partners will continue to be refined. Collaborating with partner agencies to develop a triage approach to serving customers will increase awareness of area resources and avoid duplication of services.

Businesses – Outreach through WDB and Job Center involvement with various business organizations and employer organizations enable us to tell the Who we are? What we do? Why it matters? WDB continues strong partnerships with our two community colleges and with our many vocational technical schools. Their expertise is needed to develop curriculum to educate our workforce. Working together with both education and agency partners is not only the best use of the funding, but also our best option for meeting the needs of both job seekers and employers.

Veteran Representatives in the South Central Region work closely with Veteran Service and Veteran Support Organizations to assist in the outreach and recruitment of qualified and eligible veterans and their spouses.

**g. Access—Improvements to Physical and Programmatic Accessibility**

The South Central Region has two Comprehensive Missouri Job Centers (CJC) located in Poplar Bluff (Butler County) and West Plains (Howell County). Both locations include WIOA Adult, WIOA DW, SkillUp, Re-Employment Services, Wagner/Peyser, Trade, WIOA Youth, RESEA and Missouri Workforce Assistance (MWA) program. In addition to the two counties with the CJC's, WIOA services available at affiliate locations in eight other counties throughout the South Central Region (Carter, Douglas, Oregon, Ozark, Reynolds, Shannon, Texas, and Wright Counties). The remaining two counties (Ripley and Wayne) have WIOA Youth Employment Specialists who conduct outreach efforts to engage residents who live in the counties without physical office locations.

The comprehensive centers and affiliate locations offer customer services including computer access, program information, program referrals, AEL services, assessment services, and testing services. Local community partnership coordination exists in each rural area. As we continue outreach efforts to provide additional access points where possible, but we must also keep a focus on the budget and participant cost expenditure percentage rate so that we meet the targeted percentages. Information for job seekers is also distributed to partner agencies, food pantries, civic organizations, libraries, and other public facilities.

Improvements to Physical and Programmatic Access:

- Facilities are checked for ADA compliance as part of periodic Local Equal Opportunity monitoring, using the ADA Self-Assessment Tool, provided by OWD in the local monitoring tool.
- Customers are provided reasonable accommodations upon request at the Job Centers. Job Center Staff members have been instructed to provide accommodations immediately for anything not resulting in a cost and that customers do not have to use specific phrases like “reasonable accommodation” or provide medical documentation to be granted an accommodation.
- Training is provided to all staff members beginning on their first day of employment and continuing throughout employment.
- Assistive technology is available at all full service job centers in the region. All staff complete OWD EO and assistive technology trainings. Staff are also encouraged to refer customers to the Missouri Assistive Technology Free Loan Program.
- Sign language interpretation service is available for persons with hearing loss.
- Telephone language interpretation service is available to customers with limited English proficiency.
- Written translations for vital information are provided for customers with limited English proficiency when appropriate.

**h. Customer Service Training**

- Upon being hired, all staff are trained using the required OWD Mandatory Trainings, Complaint Training, Equal Opportunity Orientation, Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Policy, Complaint and Grievance Policy, Equal Opportunity Notice and Complaint Procedure, Accommodation Policy and Request Form, and any other newly implemented new hire training resources. As part of the new hire training, staff are also trained on serving customers with accommodations and assistive technology.
- Program training begins on the first day of employment and continues throughout employment via meetings, trainings, and updates.
- Staff are provided access to all OWD Issuances and Local Policy Issuances through the website links and New Hire Orientation materials.
- Staff are provided with an Equal Opportunity Desk Aid for quick reference on accommodations, assistive technology and serving customers with limited English proficiency.
- Staff have been provided the [jobs.mo.gov/DHEWD](https://jobs.mo.gov/DHEWD) link for all other Equal Opportunity Related needs and resources.
- Staff have been provided the link for [www.scwib.org](http://www.scwib.org) which has all our Equal Opportunity related policies and notices for easy and unlimited access to this information.

**i. Assessment**

All customers who visit a Missouri Job Center in the South Central region are given an assessment to immediately engage the customer into job center activities. This assessment will identify skill levels, aptitudes, abilities, skill gaps, barriers to employment and supportive service needs. Assessments allow assistance with setting goals and developing next steps. Specialized assessments are offered as well to evaluate interests, personality traits, and diagnostic testing.

Specialized assessment tools include but are not limited to: O\*Net, Missouri Connections, Talify, TABE, and WorkKeys. Assessments allow the customer to self-assess basic academic skills, identify high demand occupations and determine if their interest and qualifications match job requirements or if additional training is needed. Results obtained from these assessments are utilized by the customer to make informed choices in their attempts to connect to employment offering the best wages available at their current skill capacity. The information gained through assessments will be used with sector strategy data and/or Labor Market Information to help customers make informed choices regarding their training and careers and to develop their strategic employment plan.

**j. Supportive Services**

WIOA defines Supportive Services as those services necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under WIOA. Local Supportive Service policies have been developed and are included within the local plan. The region's Supportive Service policy provides assistance to WIOA eligible adults, dislocated workers, and youth so they may participate in Title I activities or employment/training activities through other programs when we are braiding funds. Funds may be provided to assist with a wide range of needs, including transportation, housing, childcare, tools, uniforms, and daily living expenses. All other sources of funding must be sought before using WIOA supportive services funds. Referrals are made to partner agencies, such as the Salvation Army, food pantries, faith-based partners, MERS Goodwill, and other area agencies. The region's Supportive Service Policy follows all guidelines contained in OWD Issuance 13-2017.

**k. Outcome measures assessment, monitoring and management**

The WDB has charged WDB Compliance Department and Fiscal Department staff to conduct monitoring as these staff members are not authorized to operate programs. This ensures an adequate firewall between providing services and overseeing the provision of those services from a monitoring standpoint. Compliance and Fiscal Staff with the WDB do not have input on program processes, daily program decisions, or program approvals. They are not involved in the daily interactions of program staff and program operations. Compliance and Fiscal Monitoring includes but is not limited to fiscal expenditures, WIOA program eligibility and compliance, Federal/State/ Local policy adherence, and data system compliance. The OWD requires annual monitoring on a statistically valid sample size dependent on the number of enrollments or exits WDB. Compliance staff will monitor a percentage of new enrollments per program for each contract year. If 100% of the files are not monitored, a random sampling technique will be used to identify the selection of files to be monitored. South Central Region has a goal to monitor 100% of all enrollments in every program we operate. This ensures all files are monitored for eligibility documentation and access to services.

OWD requires an annual monitoring report presented to the CLEO and board members regarding compliance and performance reviews. To fulfill this annual requirement, the WDB Compliance staff present a Sub-State Monitoring Report to the full board and subcontractor attendees during the quarterly board meeting following the completion of the Sub-State Monitoring. This annual report includes Sub-State Monitoring results, compliance concerns, performance reviews, adequacy of assessments, planning of activities and services, coordination with One-Stop Delivery System partners, and customer outcomes. If a problem is discovered during Sub-State or any other on-going monitoring, the WDB adheres to the WIOA regulations and requires that these problems be resolved by prompt and appropriate corrective action.

WDB fiscal staff monitors and tracks youth expenditures to ensure they are in line with WIOA regulations.

With the newly released OWD Issuance 12-2019, Data Validation Monitoring will have to be conducted every quarter. This mandated monitoring will allow the South Central Region to keep a focus on staff input in the Case Management System and promptly correct any staff errors resulting in a negative outcome performance measure. Through the use of MoPerforms Rosters, the South Central Region is able to look at upcoming performance outcomes and evaluate participant accounts for a participant being negative or positive in any performance measure. Using the tools of MoJobs reports and MoPerforms, we are able to monitor and track performance to work at reaching our regions negotiated performance levels.

**5. Economic, Labor Market, and Workforce Analysis Source**

Please indicate the source of the information. If using Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC) data, please indicate the source is MERIC. If using another resource, please reference the source. MERIC regional representatives can be found online at: <https://meric.mo.gov/about-us>

**6. Economic Analysis**

Describe the LWDA's current economic condition, including the following information by county (if your LWDA includes more than one county) and the overall region:

**a. Average personal income level**

The per capita income in all counties of the South Central Region is below the statewide average of \$51,697. The county with the highest per capita income is Butler County (\$40,255) and the lowest is Douglas County (\$31,031).

Personal income increased in 2020 in both the U.S. and Missouri due to an increase in transfer payments. Transfer payments reflected new government relief payments provided by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020, including increases in state unemployment insurance compensation and economic recovery payments to individuals.

**b. Number and percent of working-age population living at or below poverty level**

The statewide poverty rate of working age persons, or those 18-64 years, is 8.0 percent. The poverty rate in each county in the South Central Region is above the state average. Counties with the highest poverty rate in the region are Ozark (16.5%) and Shannon (16.0%). Counties with the lowest poverty rate in the region are Carter (8.5%) and Douglas (9.9%).

Name	2020 Per Capita Personal Income	Working Age Population living below poverty level	
		Number	Percentage
Missouri	\$51,697	474,886	8.0%
Butler	\$40,255	5,378	12.9%
Carter	\$35,898	510	8.5%
Douglas	\$31,031	1,301	9.9%
Howell	\$37,414	4,416	11.2%
Oregon	\$33,166	1,214	11.6%
Ozark	\$33,722	1,501	16.5%
Reynolds	\$38,107	648	10.6%
Ripley	\$34,297	2,020	15.1%
Shannon	\$33,071	1,293	16.0%
Texas	\$32,774	3,436	14.2%
Wayne	\$34,018	1,866	14.5%
Wright	\$35,480	2,234	12.5%

Sources:  
*Per Capita Personal Income - Bureau of Economic Analysis 2021*  
*Poverty Level - American Community Survey-5 Year data (2015-2019)*

**c. Number and percent of working age population determined to have a barrier to employment**

Barriers to employment can include homelessness, disability status, lower education levels, and limited proficiency with the English language. In all counties in this region, the percentage of the working age population with disabilities is above the state average of 12.2 percent. However, the percentage of the working age population in this region with some difficulty with the English language is lower than the state average (1.1%) in all counties.

In Missouri, 9.4 percent of the working age population does not have a high school diploma. All twelve counties in the region have higher percentage of the working age population without a high school diploma than the state average. Wayne County has the highest percentage of the working age population without a high school diploma at 20.9 percent whereas Howell County has the lowest percentage of the working age population without a high school diploma at 11.4 percent.

Barriers To Employment									
Area	Total Population	Total Population 18-64	% of 18-64 in Population	Total Population 18-64 with less than high school diploma	% of Population 18-64 without high school diploma	Total Population 18-64 with a disability	% of Population 18-64 with a disability	Total Population 18-64 who speak English "not well" or "not at all"	% of Population 18-64 who speak English "not well" or "not at all"
<b>Missouri</b>	<b>6,104,910</b>	<b>3,716,573</b>	<b>60.9%</b>	<b>348,975</b>	<b>9.4%</b>	<b>453,975</b>	<b>12.2%</b>	<b>42,150</b>	<b>1.1%</b>
<b>Butler</b>	42,656	24,715	57.9%	3,524	14.3%	5,738	23.2%	58	0.2%
<b>Carter</b>	6,147	3,472	56.5%	452	13.0%	703	20.2%	0	0.0%
<b>Douglas</b>	13,306	7,232	54.4%	1,183	16.4%	1,476	20.4%	31	0.4%
<b>Howell</b>	40,104	22,653	56.5%	2,575	11.4%	4,236	18.7%	33	0.1%
<b>Oregon</b>	10,647	5,761	54.1%	825	14.3%	1,258	21.8%	0	0.0%
<b>Ozark</b>	9,207	4,858	52.8%	775	16.0%	1,030	21.2%	0	0.0%
<b>Reynolds</b>	6,290	3,616	57.5%	637	17.6%	750	20.7%	0	0.0%
<b>Ripley</b>	13,567	7,659	56.5%	1,283	16.8%	2,307	30.1%	21	0.3%
<b>Shannon</b>	8,217	4,688	57.1%	954	20.3%	1,178	25.1%	0	0.0%
<b>Texas</b>	25,604	14,820	57.9%	2,299	15.5%	3,410	23.0%	80	0.5%
<b>Wayne</b>	13,195	7,315	55.4%	1,527	20.9%	1,972	27.0%	17	0.2%
<b>Wright</b>	18,203	10,032	55.1%	2,013	20.1%	2,065	20.6%	2	0.0%

Source: American Community Survey-5 Year data (2015-2019)

**d. Employment rates for the last 5 years**

The unemployment rate in the Central Region is declining after peaking in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The unemployment rate for 2021 through September is below the state average of 4.3 percent in three of the 12 counties. The highest unemployment rate is in Ripley and Shannon Counties (5.5%) and the lowest in Reynolds County (3.9%).

Unemployment Rate by County - South Central Region					
Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	Thru Sept 2021
<b>Missouri</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>4.3</b>
<b>Butler</b>	4.5	4.6	4.7	6.3	4.6
<b>Carter</b>	5.9	5.1	4.9	6.5	5.1
<b>Douglas</b>	4.6	4.5	5.1	7.7	4.2
<b>Howell</b>	4.8	3.6	4.1	6.7	4.8
<b>Oregon</b>	4.6	3.5	3.9	6.7	5.1
<b>Ozark</b>	5.8	5.2	5.8	7.2	5.2
<b>Reynolds</b>	3.9	3.1	3.7	5.7	3.9
<b>Ripley</b>	5.5	5.3	5.5	7.9	5.5
<b>Shannon</b>	6.1	5.0	5.5	7.3	5.5
<b>Texas</b>	5.0	4.1	4.5	5.8	4.4
<b>Wayne</b>	5.1	4.8	4.8	6.1	4.9
<b>Wright</b>	5.0	4.2	5.3	7.0	4.0

Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics, Not Seasonally Adjusted

**e. Major layoff events over the past 3 years and any anticipated layoffs**

Over the past three years, the South Central Region experienced one business closing that was affected by the Trades Act. The layoff affected 241 employees. During the COVID-19 pandemic, several small businesses did close their doors in our 12 county area. The individuals affected through layoffs were

serviced through our two local Missouri Job Centers. A COVID-19 grant was used to re-train individuals wanting new skills to find employment.

**f. Any other factors that may affect local/regional economic conditions**

Economic and workforce data in 2020 was rapidly and significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is important to use some consideration in using this data, as some data sets do not yet reflect the recovery occurring in 2021.

**7. Labor Market Analysis**

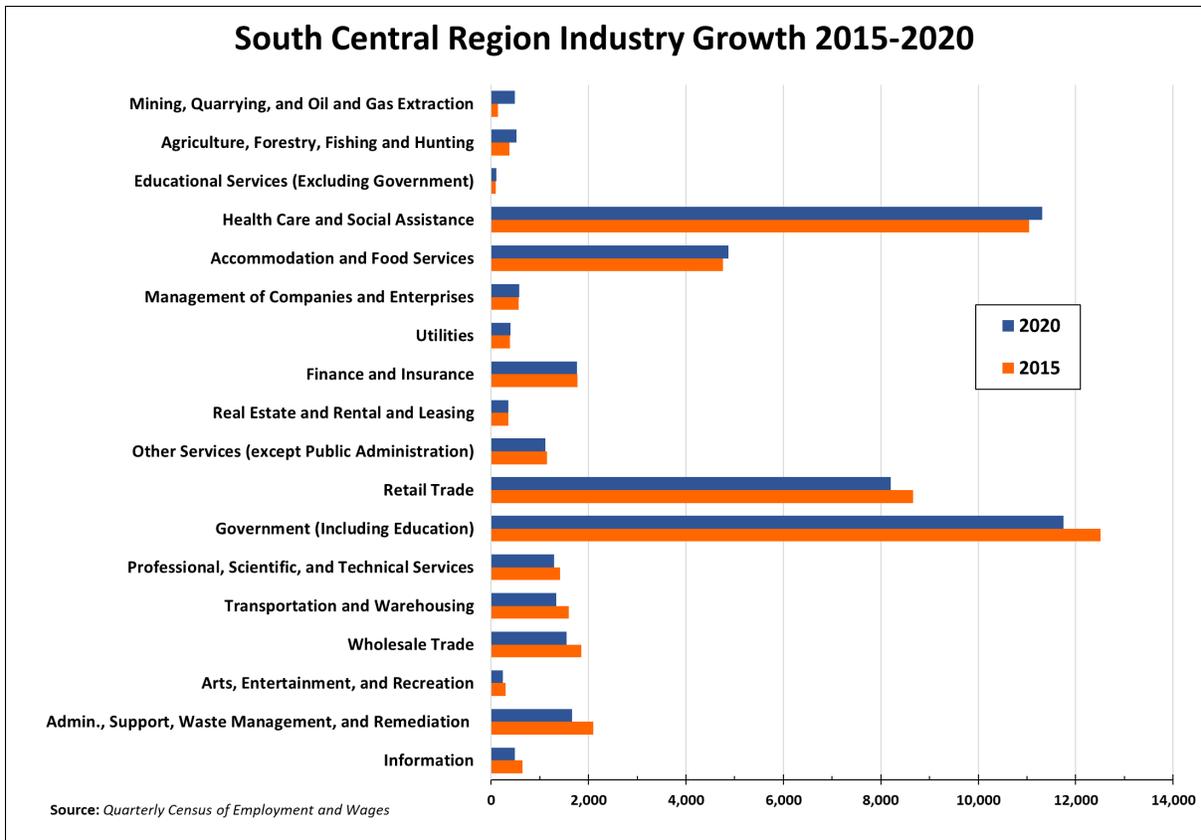
Provide an analysis of the LWDA’s current labor market including:

**a. Existing Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations**

Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which there is existing demand.

**Current Industry Demand**

Over time, several of the South Central Region’s industries have grown steadily. The South Central Region has a slightly negative compound annual growth rate of -0.7 percent over the past 5 year period from 2015 to 2020, indicating the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the market. However, seven industry groups have increased employment and experienced a positive growth rate. Those industries are *Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction* (340 new employments at 27.3% compound annual growth rate), *Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting* (144 at 6.7%), *Educational Services (Excluding Government)* (15 at 2.9%), *Health Care and Social Assistance* (274 at 0.5%), *Accommodation and Food Services* (111 at 0.5%), *Management of Companies and Enterprises* (11 at 0.4%), and *Utilities* (17 at 0.4%).



## Location Quotient

Location Quotient (LQ) describes the concentration of an industry in a geographic region in relation to the nation. The national average is 1.0. Industries with an LQ higher than 1.0 indicate a concentration in the area and the need for an above average number of workers to support the industry.

The South Central Region has five industries with LQs higher than 2.0: *Wood Product Manufacturing* (10.6), *Forestry and Logging* (3.9), *Gasoline Stations* (3.5), *Machinery Manufacturing* (2.5), and *Nursing and Residential Care Facilities* (2.2). Other industries with high LQs are *Social Assistance* (1.8), *General Merchandise Stores* (1.8), *Building Materials and Garden Supplies* (1.7), and *Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers* (1.5).

2020 South Central Region Location Quotients		
Industry	Employment	Location Quotient
Wood Product Manufacturing	1,615	10.6
Forestry and Logging	79	3.9
Gasoline Stations	1,234	3.5
Machinery Manufacturing	1,027	2.5
Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	2,718	2.2
Social Assistance	2,745	1.8
General Merchandise Stores	2,016	1.8
Building Material and Garden Equipment and Supplies Dealers	914	1.7
Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	1,122	1.5
Truck Transportation	802	1.4
Mining (except Oil and Gas)	88	1.3
Credit Intermediation and Related Activities	1,170	1.1
Food and Beverage Stores	1,354	1.1
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	581	1.1
Accommodation	562	1.0

Source: *Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), 2020 Annual Averages*

## Current Occupational Demand

Current occupational demand can be attained through the job ads placed by employers. From November 2020 to October 2021, nearly 4,230 on-line job ads were placed for jobs located in the South Central Region according to Emsi Burning Glass Labor Insight.

Job ads were placed for positions at every skill and education level. Missouri uses a system of **Now**, **Next** and **Later** to categorize jobs according to the typical education and experience required for success on the job. **Now** jobs typically require a high school education or less and short-term training. **Next** jobs typically require moderate to long-term training or experience or education beyond high school. **Later** jobs typically require a bachelor's degree or higher education.

**Now** occupations with the highest number of job postings include *Personal Care Aides, Retail Salespersons, Customer Service Representatives, Stock Clerks and Order Fillers*, and *Food Preparation and Serving Workers*. Occupations with the most job postings in the **Next** category are *Merchandise*

*Displayers and Window Trimmers, Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers, Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses, Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers, and Nursing Assistants. Later occupations with the highest number of job postings are Registered Nurses, Physicians and Surgeons, Internists, Medical and Health Services Managers, and pharmacists.*

Many of the occupations with the most job postings also appear on the list of jobs with the highest number of projected openings through 2028. The occupations with high numbers of job postings and high numbers of projected annual openings are identified with the star.

Top Job Ads - South Central Region		
SOC Code	Occupation Title	Online Job Postings
<b>NOW - Typically requires high school education or less and short-term training</b>		
39-9021	Personal Care Aides	164 ★
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	157 ★
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	103 ★
43-5081	Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	74 ★
35-3021	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	53 ★
31-1011	Home Health Aides	40
41-2011	Cashiers	36 ★
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners	35 ★
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	30 ★
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	27
<b>NEXT - Typically requires moderate/long-term training or experience or education beyond high school</b>		
27-1026	Merchandise Displayers and Window Trimmers	148
41-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	129
29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	112 ★
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	92 ★
31-1014	Nursing Assistants	71 ★
41-4012	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing	69 ★
43-3021	Billing and Posting Clerks	61
49-9051	Electrical Power-Line Installers and Repairers	42
49-9071	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	36 ★
31-9097	Phlebotomists	32
<b>LATER - typically requires a bachelor's degree or higher</b>		
29-1141	Registered Nurses	341 ★
29-1069	Physicians and Surgeons, All Other	89
29-1063	Internists, General	66
11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	65 ★
29-1051	Pharmacists	56
41-3031	Securities, Commodities, and Financial Services Sales Agents	52
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	49 ★
29-1062	Family and General Practitioners	35
29-1127	Speech-Language Pathologists	34
29-1122	Occupational Therapists	32

Source: Emsi Burning Glass Labor Insight, job ads between Nov. 1, 2020 - Oct. 31, 2021

★ = Top Openings in Now, Next and Later categories, 2018-2028 Occupational Projections for South Central Region, MERIC

### Missouri Workforce 2021 Survey

A total of 834 Missouri companies, with five employees or more, were surveyed in June and July of 2021 to assess the state of the workforce from the employers' point of view. Companies interviewed were randomly selected from a categorized list of Missouri businesses from the Data Axle (formerly Reference

USA) employer database. Of the respondents, 541 were in metro areas and the remaining 293 were in non-metro areas of the state. Companies were asked 16 questions, some with multiple parts, about hiring trends, skill needs and shortages, experience and education requirements, and the effects of COVID-19 on their businesses.

In order to gauge employment trends, employers were asked about their staffing levels and future hiring plans. When asked about employment changes over the last 12 months, nearly half (47%) said that employment levels stayed the same. A larger percentage of employers said that they increased employment in 2021 compared to 2020, however the number was still smaller than that in 2019 (25% in 2021 vs. 20% in 2020 and 32% in 2019).

Although more than a year has passed since the start of COVID-19 related shutdowns and unemployment rates have decreased at the time of this report, survey results indicate Missouri employers are still feeling effects of the pandemic. Sixty-four percent of employers who had a significant increase or decrease in employment over the last 12 months stated it was due to the pandemic. However, employers are optimistic about the future, with more than half (55%) expecting to increase employment levels over the next 12 months, the highest response since the start of this survey in 2019. This optimism was higher in metro than non-metro areas (61% metro vs. 43% non-metro).

More employers reported barriers to expanding employment than in previous years, with *shortage of workers with knowledge or skills, economic conditions, and general COVID-19 issues* topping the list. More employers also reported skill shortages in employees and applicants. To meet these shortages, employers are *hiring from outside of the local area and offering increased wages*. Employers were also much more likely to consider workforce initiatives such as *increased employee care and engagement and cross-training and knowledge transfer* than last year.

In relation to business concerns for the coming year, employers were most concerned about *attracting and retaining talent*. Although concerns about attracting and retaining employees are prevalent, 20 percent of employers stated they would not consider hiring a justice-involved applicant.

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More employers reported barriers to expanding employment than in previous years, with shortage of workers with knowledge or skills, economic conditions, and general COVID-19 issues topping the list. More employers also reported skill shortages in employees and applicants. To meet these shortages, employers are hiring from outside of the local area and offering increased wages. Employers were also much more likely to consider workforce initiatives such as increased employee care and engagement and cross-training and knowledge transfer than last year.

In relation to business concerns for the coming year, employers were most concerned about attracting and retaining talent. Although concerns about attracting and retaining employees are prevalent, 20 percent of employers stated that they would not consider hiring a justice-involved applicant

While employers are optimistic about expanding employment, they are having difficulty finding skilled applicants. Employers continue to cite a shortage of workers with knowledge or skills and economic conditions as the most significant barriers to expanding employment, highlighting the need to connect workers to employers.

**b. Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupation**

Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which demand is emerging.

**Industry Projections**

The long-term industry projections help determine the industries that are expected to add positions within their organizations over time. The latest round of projections are through the ten-year period ending in 2028.

The projections reveal several industries with both high employment numbers and above average growth rates compared to the regional average. The top five industries by numeric employment change are *Social Assistance, Ambulatory Health Care Services, Food Services and Drinking Places, Administrative and Support Services, and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services.*

South Central Region Industry Projections 2018-2028					
NAICS	Industry	Employment		2018-2028 Change	
		2018	2028	Numeric	Percent
	<b>Total All Industries</b>	<b>64,957</b>	<b>67,439</b>	<b>2,482</b>	<b>3.8%</b>
624	Social Assistance	3,737	4,703	966	25.9%
621	Ambulatory Health Care Services	3,019	3,896	877	29.0%
722	Food Services and Drinking Places	4,458	5,180	722	16.2%
561	Administrative and Support Services	1,626	2,113	487	30.0%
541	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1,310	1,466	156	11.9%
423	Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods	854	978	124	14.5%
551	Management of Companies and Enterprises	551	668	117	21.2%
444	Building Material and Garden Equipment and Supplies Dealers	941	1,049	108	11.4%
485	Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation	203	299	96	47.5%
447	Gasoline Stations	1,165	1,247	82	7.1%
332	Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	850	929	79	9.4%
622	Hospitals	2,351	2,427	76	3.2%
623	Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	3,065	3,133	68	2.2%
522	Credit Intermediation and Related Activities	1,364	1,427	63	4.7%
446	Health and Personal Care Stores	425	477	52	12.3%

Source: MERIC 2018-2028 Long Term Projections

**Occupational Projections**

Job openings occur due to three reasons – **exits, transfers** and **growth**. **Exits** occur as people leave the workforce for reasons such as retirement. **Transfers** occur when workers leave one occupation for a different occupation. Occupational **growth** occurs as businesses grow and need more workers to serve their customers.

Emerging occupations can be identified through growth openings. The chart below identifies occupations that have the highest number of growth openings and higher than the average growth rate of 3.8 percent for the South Central Region. The total number of openings indicates the projected number of vacancies that businesses will need to fill annually.

Missouri uses a system of **Now, Next** and **Later** to categorize occupations according to these levels. **Now** jobs typically require a high school education or less and short-term training. **Next** occupations typically

require moderate to long-term training or experience or education beyond high school. **Later** occupations typically require a bachelor’s degree or higher.

Growth openings are projected at all education and training levels and are listed by the highest number of growth openings. The highest number of growth openings in **Now** occupations are *Personal Care Aides, Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Waiters and Waitresses, Stock Clerks and Order Fillers, and Janitors and Cleaners*. The largest growth in **Next** occupations is in the occupations of *Cooks, Restaurant, Nursing Assistants, Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses, Medical Secretaries, and Insurance Sales Agents*. **Later** occupations with the highest growth are *Registered Nurses, General and Operations Managers, Child, Family, and School Social Workers, Healthcare and Social Workers, and Accountants and Auditors*. These occupations are consistent with the industries identified as emerging industries.

South Central Region Highest Growth Openings 2018-2028						
Occupation	Average Wage	Percent Growth	Exits	Annual Openings		
				Transfers	Growth	Total
<b>NOW - Typically requires short-term on-the-job training or less, little to no experience, and/or a high school diploma</b>						
Personal Care Aides	21,608	30.6%	225	199	81	505
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers	19,118	20.6%	149	184	35	368
Waiters and Waitresses	19,318	8.1%	69	122	8	199
Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	24,517	7.9%	43	70	6	119
Janitors and Cleaners	24,694	2.0%	46	54	2	102
Bus Drivers, School or Special Client	24,468	18.6%	29	18	6	53
Receptionists and Information Clerks	23,457	8.9%	21	28	3	52
Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	40,722	11.3%	15	27	4	46
Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	26,923	5.5%	14	30	2	46
Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop	18,324	14.2%	20	21	2	43
<b>NEXT - Typically requires non-degree certificate, associate degree, apprenticeship, some experience, or moderate- to long-term training</b>						
Cooks, Restaurant	21,785	23.9%	43	72	17	132
Nursing Assistants	25,669	6.2%	60	65	7	132
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	35,853	9.3%	27	33	7	67
Medical Secretaries	31,238	20.2%	21	25	8	54
Insurance Sales Agents	45,392	10.7%	12	20	3	35
Billing and Posting Clerks	27,803	18.8%	10	16	4	30
Pharmacy Technicians	30,150	14.9%	8	15	4	27
Machinists	27,353	18.4%	6	12	3	21
Loan Interviewers and Clerks	37,038	17.6%	6	11	3	20
Physical Therapist Assistants	56,166	32.9%	4	8	3	15
<b>LATER - Typically requires a bachelor’s degree or higher</b>						
Registered Nurses	56,396	13.2%	46	43	21	110
General and Operations Managers	69,435	5.6%	19	59	5	83
Child, Family, and School Social Workers	34,331	3.0%	16	36	2	54
Healthcare Social Workers	35,319	20.3%	14	31	8	53
Accountants and Auditors	52,597	12.6%	14	31	6	51
Medical and Health Services Managers	101,220	17.8%	5	10	3	18
Nurse Practitioners	111,808	34.3%	3	6	5	14
Securities, Commodities, and Financial Services Sales Agents	76,367	34.9%	2	5	2	9
Physical Therapists	81,195	28.0%	2	3	3	8
Software Developers, Applications	66,365	30.8%	1	3	2	6

Source: MERIC 2018-2028 Long-Term Occupational Projections

**c. Employers’ Employment Needs**

Identify the job skills necessary to obtain current and projected employment opportunities. With regard to the industry sectors and occupations, provide an analysis of the employment needs of employers. Describe the knowledge, skills and abilities required, including credentials and licenses.

### Real-Time Labor Market Data

Job ads placed by employers offer another source of information on the knowledge, skills, and certifications requested by Missouri’s employers. Emsi Burning Glass Labor Insight is a data tool that spiders to over 35,000 different web sites with job ads. The information found in the ads are placed in a database that can be queried to gain insight on employer needs.

Following table lists the specialized skills, certifications, and software and programming abilities requested most frequently by employers in job ads.

Generally, in the software and programming category, Microsoft Office and its products such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Access rank at the top of the list across all industries therefore, in this list, these Microsoft products have not been included as those tend to crowd the list by appearing at the top across all the industries. Industry-specific programs identified in the job ads are listed in the table.

Employer Skill Needs - South Central Region			
Industry	Specialized Skills	Certifications	Software and Programming
Administrative & Support	Cleaning	Driver's License	Customer Relationship Management (CRM)
	Laundry	Certified Pest Control	
	Customer Contact	Life Insurance License	
	Customer Service	Department of Transportation (DOT) Medical Certification	
	Infection Control	Commercial Driver's License	
Accommodation and Food Service	Customer Service	Driver's License	Apache Groovy
	Food Safety	ServSafe	Speech Recognition
	Cleaning	Food Service Certification	Lotus Domino
	Retail Industry Knowledge	Food Handler Certification	
	Cooking		AutoCAD
Mining, Quarrying, & Oil & Gas Extraction	Budgeting	Driver's License	Peoplesoft
	Ventilation		Electronic Data Interchange
	AutoCAD		Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)
	Engineering Projects		SAP
	Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)		
Finance & Insurance	Customer Service	Mortgage License	Social Media Platforms
	Bank Secrecy Act (BSA)	Registered Nurse	Word Processing
	Information Systems	Driver's License	Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)
	Customer Contact	Insurance License	.NET
	Prospective Clients	Insurance Agent Certification	Tax Software
Information Technology	Customer Service	Driver's License	Microsoft Windows
	Retail Industry Knowledge	Pole Climbing Certification	Cisco Routers
	Customer Contact	OSHA Safety 10 Hour	Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD)
	Repair	CompTIA Network+	Nortel
	Sales	Basic Electricity Certificate	Word Processing

Source: Emsi Burning Glass Labor Insight, job ads between Nov. 1, 2020 - Oct. 31, 2021

## 8. Workforce Analysis

Describe the current workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, as defined in section 3 of WIOA<sup>1</sup>. This population must include individuals with disabilities among other groups<sup>2</sup> in the economic region and across the LWDA.

<sup>1</sup> Individuals with barriers to employment include displaced homemakers; low-income individuals; Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities; older individuals; ex-offenders; homeless individuals, or homeless children and youths; youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system; individuals who are English-language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers; farmworkers (as defined at section 167(i) of WIOA and Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 35-14); individuals within two years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program; single parents (including single pregnant women); and long-term unemployed individuals.

<sup>2</sup> Veterans, unemployed workers, and youth, and others that the State may identify.

**a. Employment and Unemployment Analysis**

Provide an analysis of current employment and unemployment data and trends in the LWDA.

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that Missouri’s population grew to over 6.1 million, up by 0.2 percent in 2020 from the previous year. In the South Central Region over the past year, the population decreased in all counties over the 5-year period. The highest population loss was in Ripley County, decreasing by nearly 3,118 residents from 2015 to 2020.

<b>South Central Region Population Change by County</b>				
<b>NAME</b>	<b>1 Year Change 2019-2020</b>		<b>5 Year Change 2015-2020</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Missouri</b>	<b>14,438</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>79,502</b>	<b>1.3%</b>
Butler	(444)	-1.0%	(727)	-1.7%
Carter	(779)	-13.0%	(1,078)	-17.2%
Douglas	(1,670)	-12.6%	(1,796)	-13.4%
Howell	(334)	-0.8%	(321)	-0.8%
Oregon	(1,882)	-17.9%	(2,229)	-20.5%
Ozark	(602)	-6.6%	(820)	-8.7%
Reynolds	(192)	-3.1%	(198)	-3.1%
Ripley	(2,664)	-20.0%	(3,118)	-22.6%
Shannon	(1,146)	-14.0%	(1,244)	-15.0%
Texas	(896)	-3.5%	(1,205)	-4.7%
Wayne	(1,930)	-15.0%	(2,461)	-18.3%
Wright	(141)	-0.8%	41	0.2%

**Source:** U.S. Census Bureau Decennial Census and Annual Estimates

**Demographics**

In all of the region’s counties except Butler, Carter, and Howell counties, a smaller percentage of the population is in the age group of 20-24 years than the state average (25.2%). The population age 55+ is above the state average of 30.0 percent in all counties in the region. The county with the highest percentage of residents age 55 and up is Ozark County with 45.4 percent residents in this age group.

The male/female gender split is close to the state average in almost all counties. In nine of the 12 counties in the South Central Region male population is less than the female population. Reynolds County has the highest male population in the region (52.3%) and the lowest female population in the region (47.7%).

Race/Ethnicity statistics are different from the Missouri averages in most of the counties in the region. All counties in the region have a lower percentage of minorities than the state average.

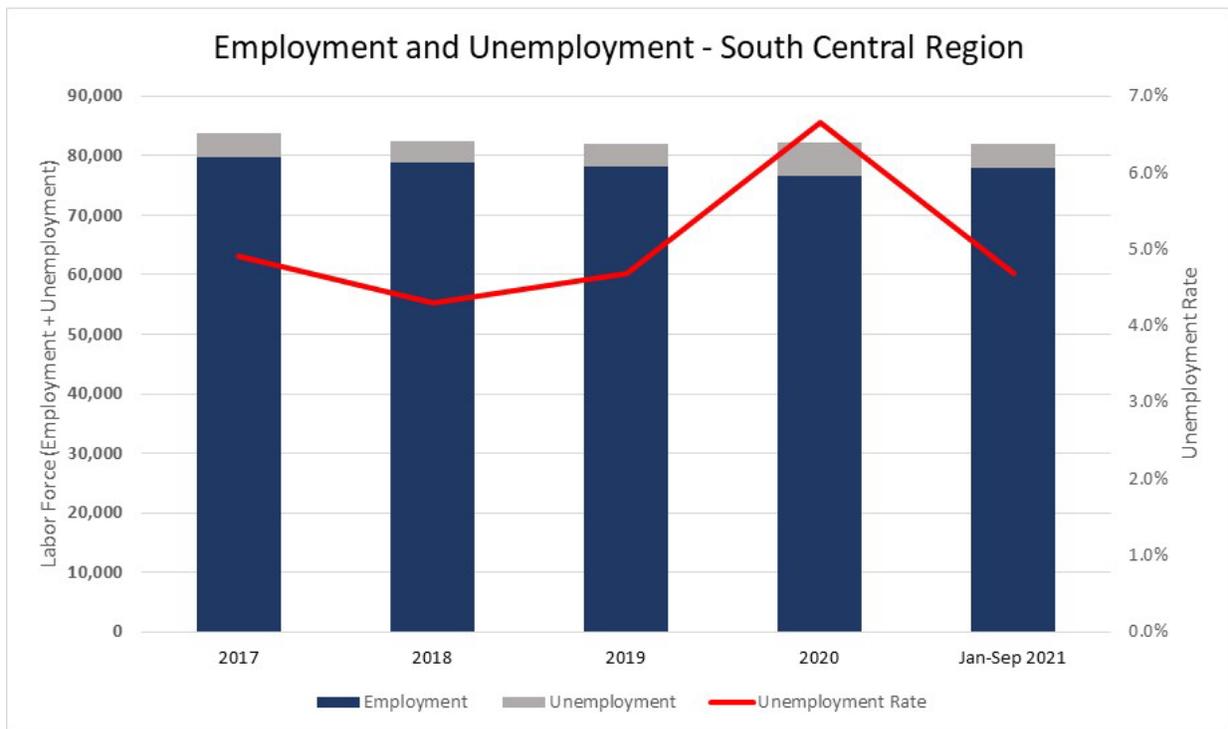
County	Population						Gender		Race/Ethnicity							
	Total	Under 20	20 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 54	55+	Male	Female	White	Black or African American	Asian	American Indian and Alaska Native	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	Some other race	Two or more races	Hispanic or Latino
Missouri	6,104,910	25.2%	6.8%	13.3%	24.7%	30.0%	49.1%	50.9%	82.2%	11.5%	2.0%	0.4%	0.1%	1.2%	2.6%	4.2%
Butler	42,656	25.8%	5.6%	12.1%	24.2%	32.3%	48.9%	51.1%	90.4%	5.5%	0.8%	0.6%	0.1%	0.2%	2.5%	2.1%
Carter	6,147	25.9%	5.3%	10.1%	24.1%	34.7%	49.3%	50.7%	97.0%	0.1%	0.0%	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	2.6%
Douglas	13,306	23.3%	4.5%	9.9%	22.1%	40.2%	50.0%	50.0%	98.3%	0.2%	0.1%	0.5%	0.0%	0.6%	0.3%	0.9%
Howell	40,104	25.9%	5.9%	11.6%	23.7%	32.9%	48.8%	51.2%	96.2%	0.2%	0.7%	1.2%	0.0%	0.1%	1.6%	2.1%
Oregon	10,647	25.2%	4.2%	9.5%	22.9%	38.2%	49.5%	50.5%	95.4%	0.2%	0.5%	1.6%	0.1%	0.4%	1.9%	1.8%
Ozark	9,207	21.3%	4.1%	8.1%	21.2%	45.4%	48.8%	51.2%	96.0%	0.1%	0.5%	1.0%	0.0%	0.1%	2.4%	1.8%
Reynolds	6,290	21.9%	4.6%	9.8%	24.8%	38.9%	52.3%	47.7%	94.4%	2.0%	0.3%	0.4%	0.2%	0.1%	2.6%	0.8%
Ripley	13,567	24.9%	4.9%	11.6%	23.6%	35.0%	49.7%	50.3%	96.5%	0.7%	0.4%	0.6%	0.2%	0.1%	1.5%	1.5%
Shannon	8,217	24.2%	4.5%	11.5%	22.1%	37.6%	48.9%	51.1%	95.7%	0.2%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	4.0%	1.9%
Texas	25,604	23.3%	5.0%	11.2%	24.7%	35.8%	52.2%	47.8%	92.8%	2.2%	0.7%	1.7%	0.0%	0.3%	2.2%	2.1%
Wayne	13,195	23.5%	4.3%	9.9%	23.3%	39.1%	48.8%	51.2%	96.6%	0.6%	0.3%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	2.3%	1.8%
Wright	18,203	27.7%	4.8%	10.4%	22.8%	34.2%	48.9%	51.1%	96.6%	0.5%	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	0.5%	1.6%	1.9%

Source: American Community Survey-5 Year data (2015-2019)

### Employment and Unemployment

The number of South Central Region residents in the labor force has decreased steady over the past five years from over 83,800 to about 81,900. The number of persons employed has also decreased steadily since 2017 from about 79,700 to just over 78,000.

The unemployment rate in 2017 was 4.9 percent. The unemployment rate for the region jumped to 6.7 percent in 2020 as a result of COVID-19 pandemic. However, 2021 data collected through September shows signs of recovery with the unemployment rate decreasing to 4.7 percent.



## Labor Force Participation

The labor force is the sum of employed and unemployed persons. The labor force participation rate is the labor force as a percent of the civilian population 16 years and older. Using American Community Survey-5 year data through 2019, Missouri's labor force participation rate is 62.5 percent. In comparison, the rate for the South Central Region is at 49.6 percent. The county with the highest labor force participation rate in the region is Reynold County (55.7%) and the lowest is Texas County (43.3%).

### b. Labor Market Trends

Provide an analysis of key labor-market trends, including across existing industries and occupations.

### Top Growing Occupations

Over the long term, industry needs for certain occupations grow while others decline. A trained and ready workforce is needed to fill employer demand and offer job seekers bright prospects for employment.

Long-term projections are produced in each state in conjunction with the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Since economies vary throughout the state, projections are also generated for the state and 10 regions and provide insight on the occupations that are growing and declining. The total number of openings account for 3 different types of vacancies - exits, transfers, and growth. Exits occur as individuals leave the workforce for reasons such as retirement. Transfers occur as a person leaves an occupation to work in a different occupation. Growth simply means that more people are needed to work in the occupation. No matter the reason for the vacancy, skilled workers are needed to fill the job openings.

Missouri adds value to the standard projections template by including the ACT WorkKeys Assessment Levels typically required for success in each of the 800+ occupations. Since most of Missouri's counties participate in the Certified Work Ready Communities program, the levels help those researching careers find good options based on their personal assessment.

Missouri uses a system of Now, Next and Later to categorize the occupations according to the training and education typically required for success on the job. **Now** occupations typically require a high school education or less along with short-term training. **Next** occupations typically require moderate to long-term training or experience and or education beyond high school. **Later** occupations typically require a bachelor's degree or higher.

While long-term projections offer a solid understanding of longer-term employer needs, job ads placed by employers help in recognizing the current needs of employers. When projections predict a high number of future openings and job ads show current demand for the same occupation, the occupation may be a good career possibility.

The table below displays the top 5 jobs by the number of projected openings for the 10 year projection period through 2026 in the Now, Next and Later categories for the region. The flame beside some of the occupations represents "hot jobs" determined by the number of job ads placed by employers.

Top occupations by the total number of openings in the Now category are *Food Preparation and Serving Workers* (4,328), *Cashiers* (3,961), *Personal Care Aides* (3,886), *Retail Salespersons* (2,997), and *Helpers, Production Workers* (2,477). The reason for a high number of openings is turnover within these occupations.

Occupations with the highest number of openings in the Next category are *Nursing Assistants* (1,801), *Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers* (1,318), *Retail Sales Supervisors* (1,183), *Restaurant Cooks*

(17,162), *Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks* (752), and *Teacher Assistants* (690). Two of the top five occupations by the number of projected openings also saw a high number of job ads.

Later occupations with the highest number of openings are *Elementary School Teachers* (1,164), *Registered Nurses* (882), *General and Operations Managers* (619), *Child, Family, and School Social Workers* (373), and *Middle School Teachers* (358). One of the jobs listed in this category are also in high demand in the region according to job ads.

Many high demand occupations correspond directly with the high growth industry groups, such as *Food Services/Drinking Places, Health Care and Retail*. Other high demand occupations cross many industry groups, like *Cashiers, Bookkeeping and Accounting Clerks, General and Operations Managers, and Accountants and Auditors*.

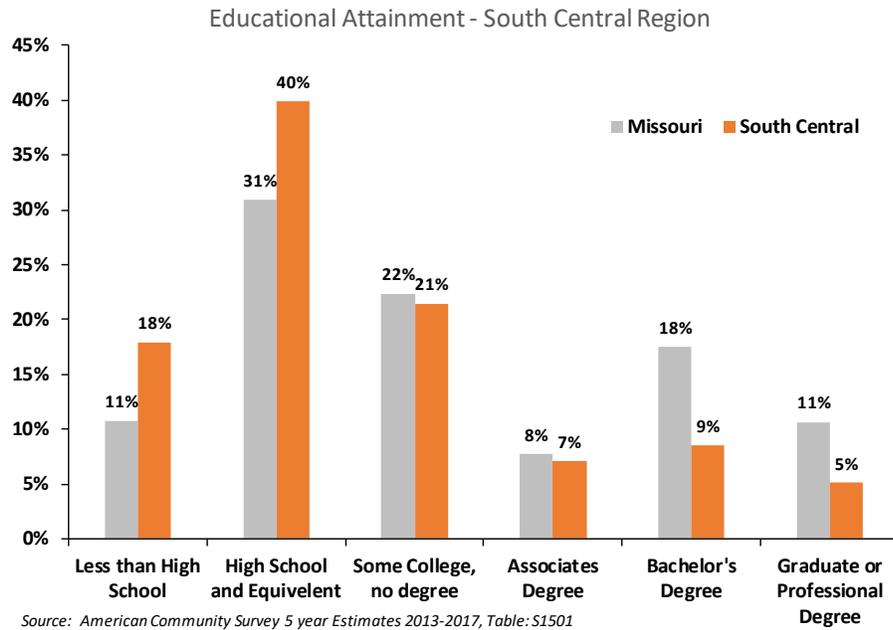
South Central Region Long-Term Occupational Projections							
Occupation	2016	2026	Growth Openings	Exists	Transfers	Total Openings	Median Wages
	Estimated Employment	Projected Employment					
<b>NOW</b>							
Food Prep. & Serving Workers	2,057	2,373	316	1,961	2,051	<b>4,328</b>	\$18,320 
Cashiers	2,157	2,136	-21	2,015	1,967	<b>3,961</b>	\$18,925 
Personal Care Aides	2,012	2,642	630	1,857	1,399	<b>3,886</b>	\$19,453 
Retail Salespersons	2,013	2,086	73	1,298	1,626	<b>2,997</b>	\$24,053 
Helpers--Production Workers	1,103	1,582	479	720	1,278	<b>2,477</b>	\$21,196
<b>NEXT</b>							
Nursing Assistants	1,406	1,558	152	900	749	<b>1,801</b>	\$19,666 
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	1,234	1,247	13	526	779	<b>1,318</b>	\$32,471
Retail Sales Supervisor	1,025	1,101	76	392	715	<b>1,183</b>	\$35,096 
Bookkeeping & Accounting Clerks	702	689	-13	431	334	<b>752</b>	\$28,516
Teacher Assistants	693	689	-4	379	315	<b>690</b>	\$19,873
<b>LATER</b>							
Elementary School Teachers	1,716	1,688	-28	562	630	<b>1,164</b>	\$37,324
Registered Nurses	1,352	1,513	161	410	311	<b>882</b>	\$53,041 
General and Operations Managers	691	736	45	148	426	<b>619</b>	\$64,999
Child, Family, and School Social Workers	327	359	32	123	218	<b>373</b>	\$35,381
Middle School Teachers	529	520	-9	173	194	<b>358</b>	\$39,438

 denotes occupations in the top ten for 2018 on-line job ads in the region and within the Now-Next-Later classification.  
Source: MERIC Occupational Projections 2016-2026

### c. Education and Skills Levels of the Workforce Analysis

#### Educational Attainment

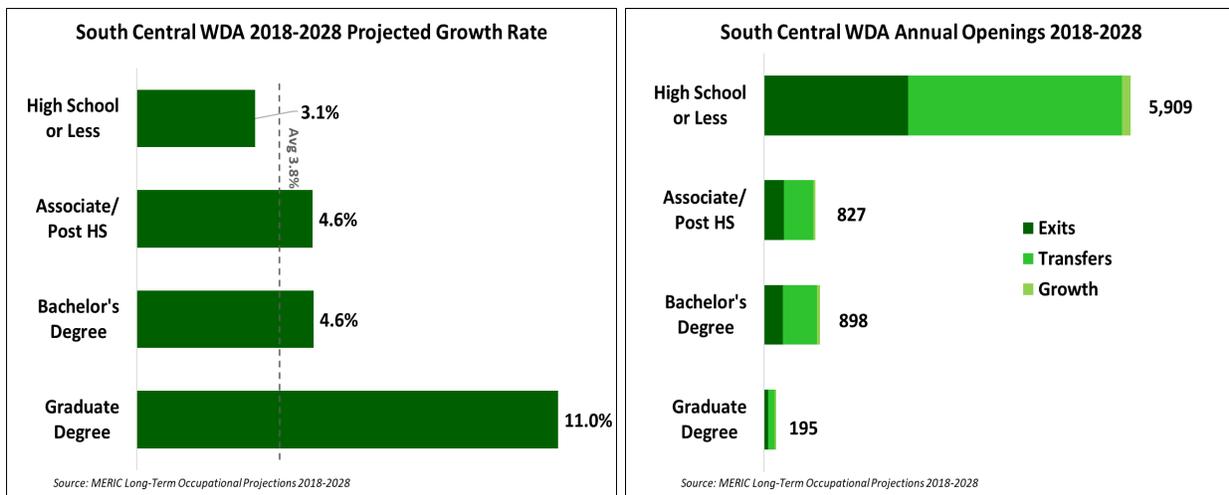
Educational attainment is a measure of the highest level of education obtained by individuals aged 25 and up, or the population generally in the workforce. In the South Central Region, the educational attainment rates for individuals are lower than the state average in the categories of some college but no degree, associate degrees, bachelor’s degrees, and graduate or professional degrees. The rates are higher than the state average for those with less than a high school diploma and high school and equivalent.



### Occupational Projections

Long-term projections are used to identify the fastest growing occupations, as well as occupations with a high number of openings through 2026.

The growth rate of an occupation measures the percentage of jobs added by an occupation between the base year and projected year. Occupations requiring a graduate or associate degree are projected to grow at a faster rate than the South Central WDA average. The occupation groups that are projected to grow the fastest are *Personal Care and Service*, *Healthcare Support*, and *Computer and Mathematical*. Long-term projections also present data on expected job openings for each occupation through 2026. Openings in an occupation can occur due to an occupation growing, workers moving into a different occupation, or workers leaving the workforce entirely. No matter the reason, qualified individuals are still needed to fill job vacancies. Most openings will be in entry-level jobs, mostly due to high turnover rates as workers either transfer to other occupations or leave the workforce.



#### d. Skills Gaps

Describe apparent “skills gaps” in the local area. How are the “skills gaps” determined?

##### Missouri Workforce 2021 Survey

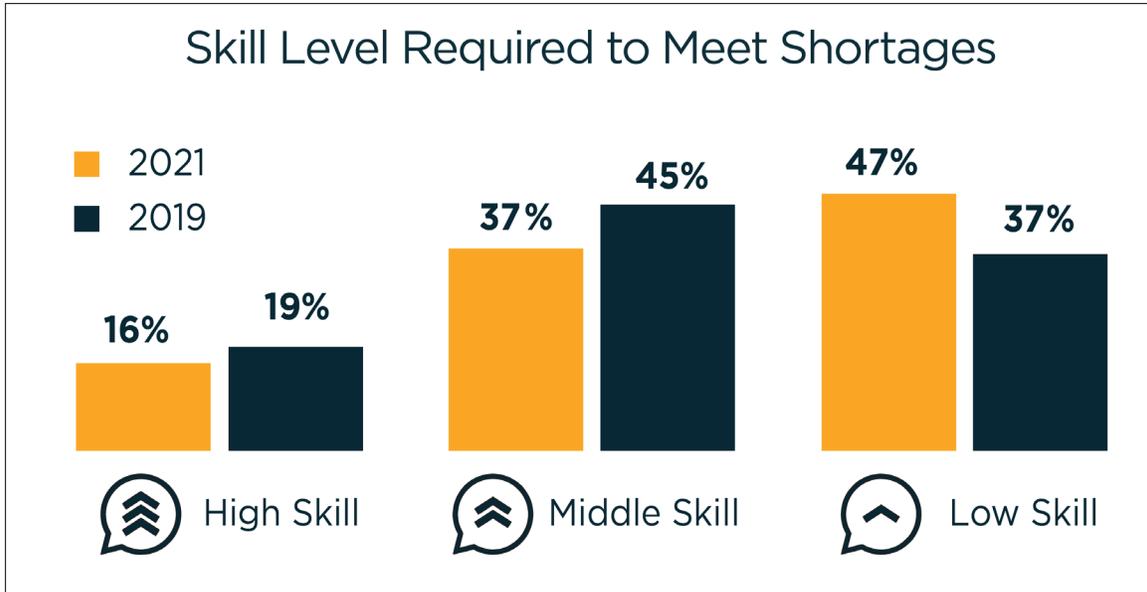
Missouri has more than 200,000 payroll employers who provide jobs for 2.6 million people. Approximately 2.19 million of Missouri’s jobs are in metro areas, while the remaining work in non-metro locations. Metropolitan areas, such as Kansas City, St. Louis, Joplin, and Springfield are spread across Missouri. These areas represent larger urban cities and adjacent counties with strong commuting ties. This 2021 survey looked at both metro and non-metro employers to understand key similarities or differences that may help inform workforce or economic development decisions.

A total of 834 Missouri companies, with five employees or more, were surveyed in June and July of 2021 to assess the state of the workforce from the employers’ point of view.

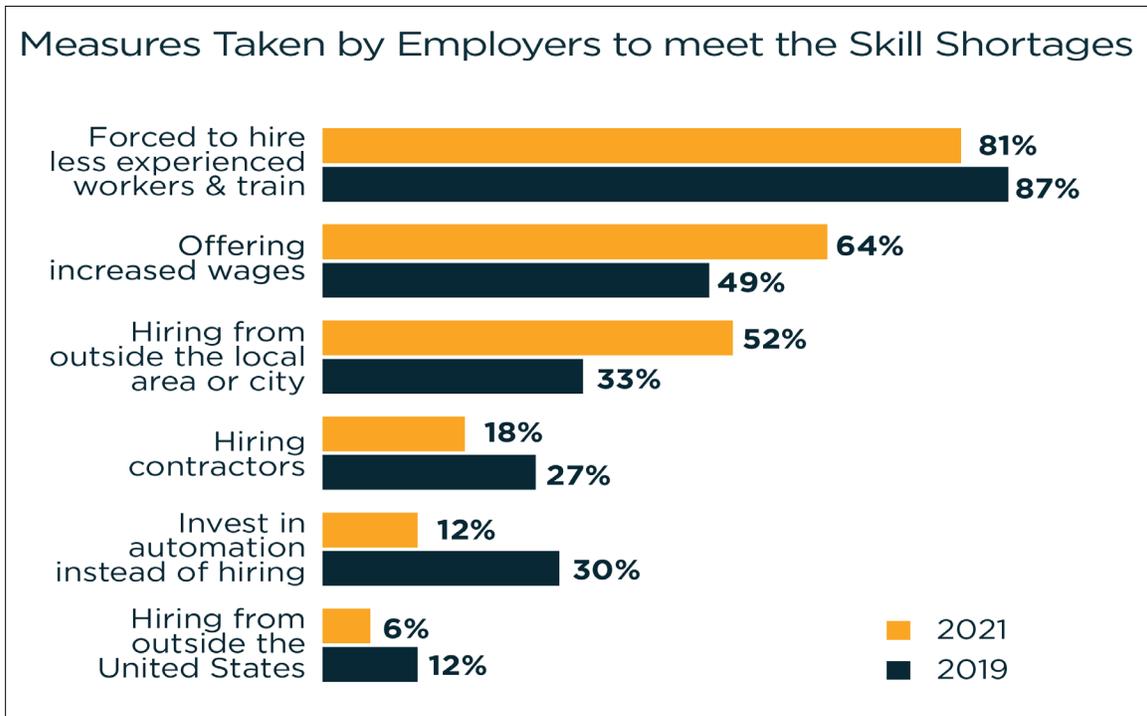
A few key themes from the survey:

- Fifty-five percent of employers plan to expand employment over the next 12 months.
- The top barrier to expanding employment is a *shortage of workers with knowledge or skills*, which increased significantly from previous years, from 47 percent in 2019 and 2020, to 60 percent in 2021.
- *Poor work habits* was the most frequently cited shortcomings, along with *lack of critical thinking, lack of general business or industry knowledge, and lack of communication or interpersonal skills*.
- Shortcomings of skilled applicants were higher in 2021 than previous years, particularly in *Skilled Trades*, where 72 percent of employers reported a shortage in 2021 compared to 60 percent in 2020 and 49 percent in 2019.
- Employers in 2021 were more likely to *hire from outside the local area* (52% in 2021 vs. 33% in 2019) and *offer increased wages* (64% in 2021 vs. 49% in 2019) to meet skill shortages.
- The top business concerns looking forward are *attracting or retaining talent, financial impacts on operations, and supply chain disruptions*.

Sixty-eight percent of employers reported they had a shortage of skilled applicants. When asked last time in 2019, only 28 percent of employers reported a shortage of skilled applicants. In 2021, most of the shortages were in *low-skill jobs* (47%), whereas *middle-skill* was the level with the most shortages in 2019 (45%).

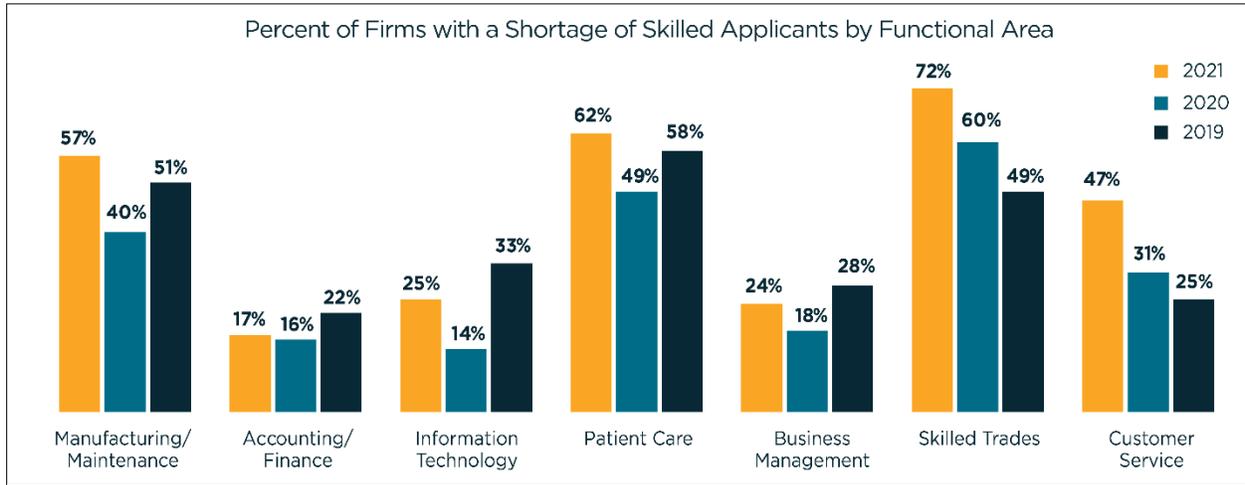


To address skills shortages, 81 percent of employers acknowledged hiring less experienced workers than preferred and needing to train them. Employers in 2021 were also more likely to *hire from outside the local area* (52% in 2021 vs. 33% in 2019) and *offer increased wages* (64% in 2021 vs. 49% in 2019) to meet the shortages. Fifty-nine percent of non-metro employers said they would *hire from outside the local area* compared to 47 percent in metro areas. In all other measures, however, responses were similar regardless of geography.



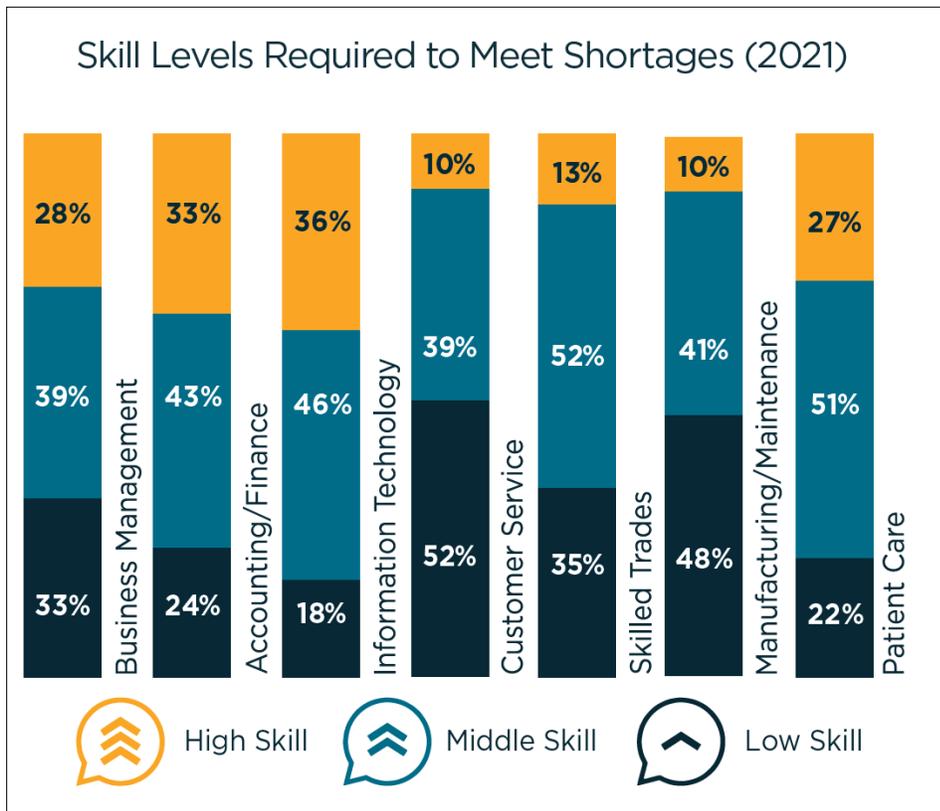
From skilled trades to administration, companies employ workers in a variety of areas with different functional work tasks and duties. In 2021, the number of employers who reported a shortage of skilled

applicants in functional areas increased when compared to reported shortages in 2020 and 2019. The *Skilled Trades* functional area has had a steady increase in the shortage of skilled applicants each year of the survey, increasing from 49 percent in 2019 to 72 percent in 2021.



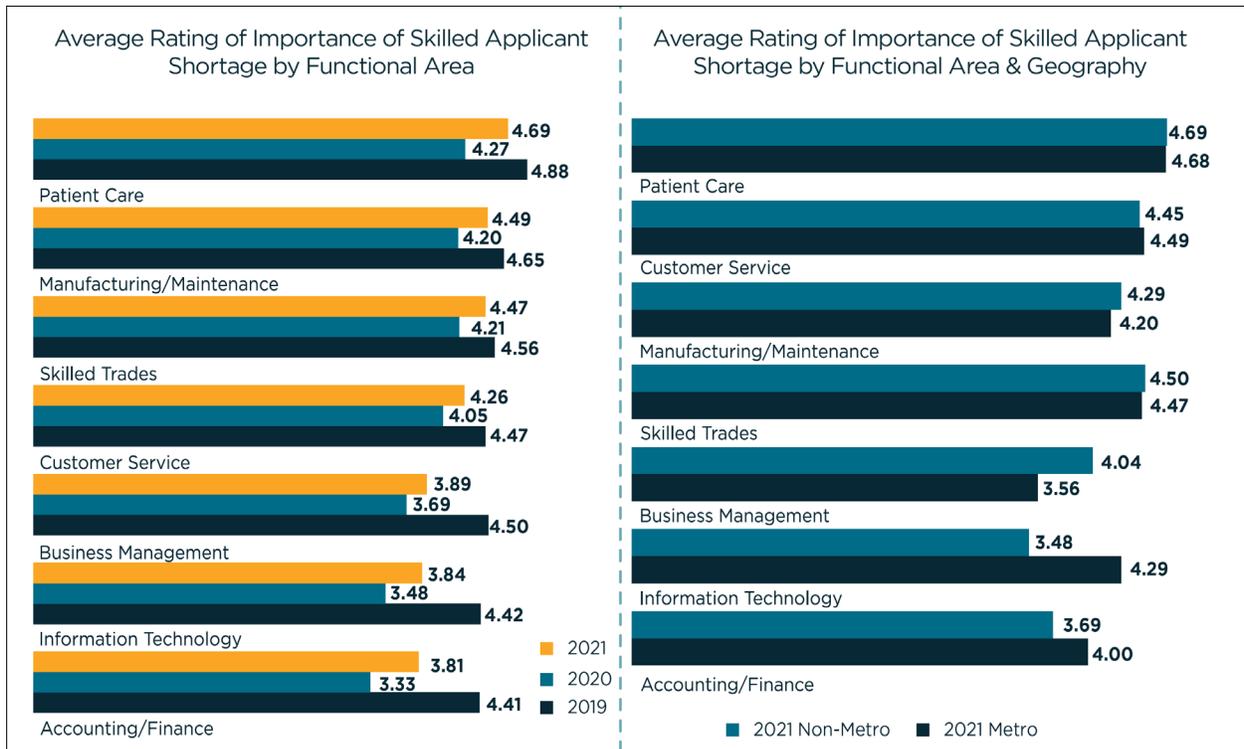
Employers identified the skill level needed to meet applicant shortcomings in each functional area. These levels were described as *low skill* – requiring high school or less, *middle skill* – requiring education beyond high school but less than a four-year degree, and *high skill* – requiring a four-year degree.

Middle-skill jobs had the highest shortages in most areas, with the exception of *Customer Service* and *Manufacturing/Maintenance*.



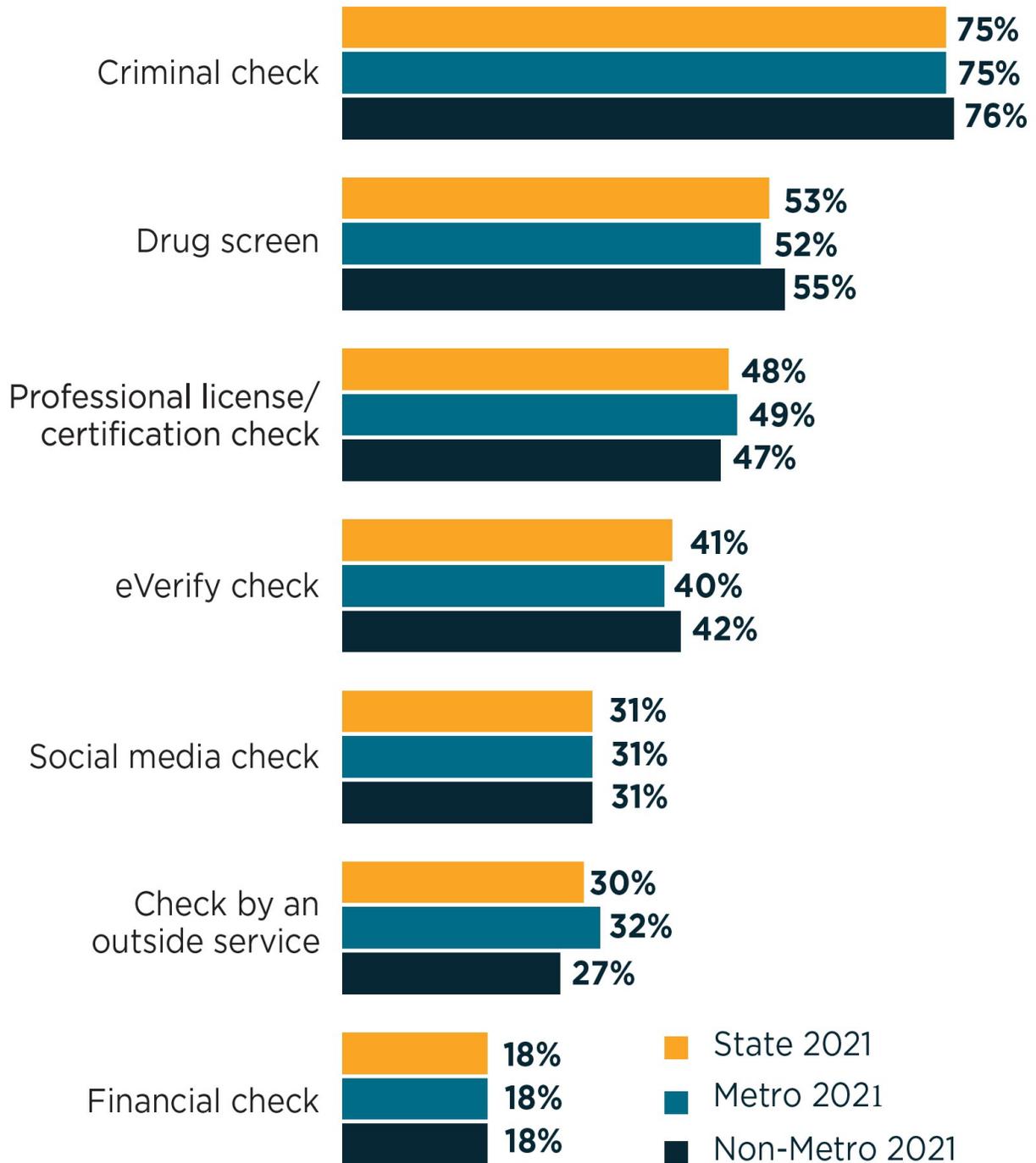
Missouri employers were also asked to rate the importance of skill shortages to their businesses with one being not important and five being very important. *Patient Care* was rated the most important shortage, with an average importance rating of 4.69, followed by *Manufacturing and Maintenance* (4.49) and *Skilled Trades* (4.47). The importance of these shortages increased from 2020 but was slightly below the 2019 ratings.

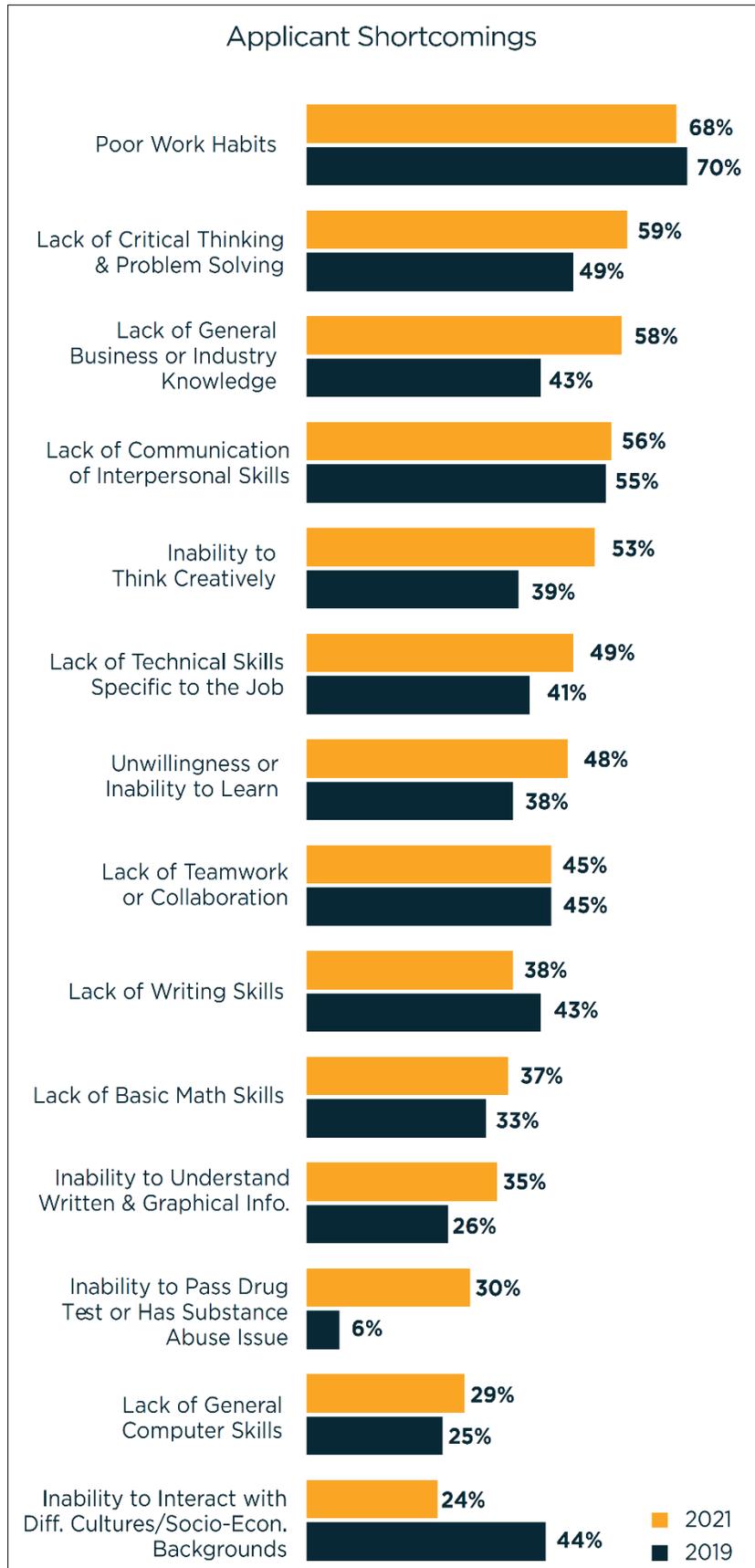
Responses in most functional areas were similar in metro and non-metro areas, with the exception of *Information Technology* (4.3 in non-metro vs. 3.5 in metro) and *Business Management* (4.0 in metro vs. 3.6 in non-metro).



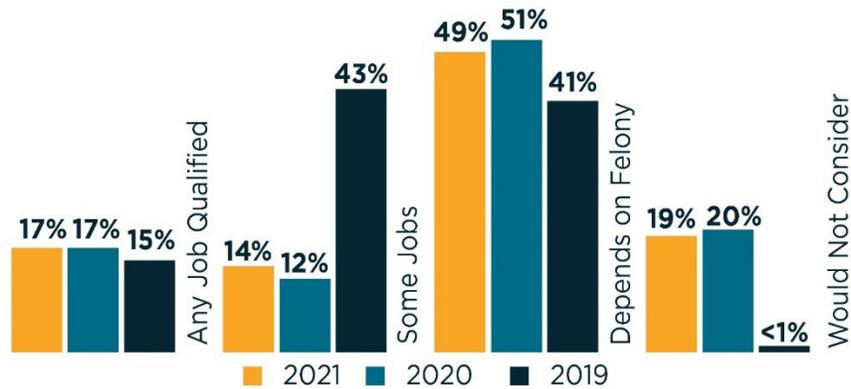
Employers were asked about possible shortcomings of applicants. *Poor work habits* was the most frequently cited shortcoming, with 68 percent of employers indicating that challenge. Other top shortcomings included *lack of critical thinking* (59%), *lack of general business or industry knowledge* (58%), and *lack of communication or interpersonal skills* (56%). While *lack of communication skills* was mentioned as often now as it was two years ago (55% in 2019), most other shortcomings were now mentioned considerably more often. For example, *lack of critical thinking* showed a 10 percent increase (49% in 2019), *inability to think creatively* showed a 14 percent increase (39% in 2019), and *lack of general business knowledge*.

## Percent of Companies that Perform the Following Background Checks

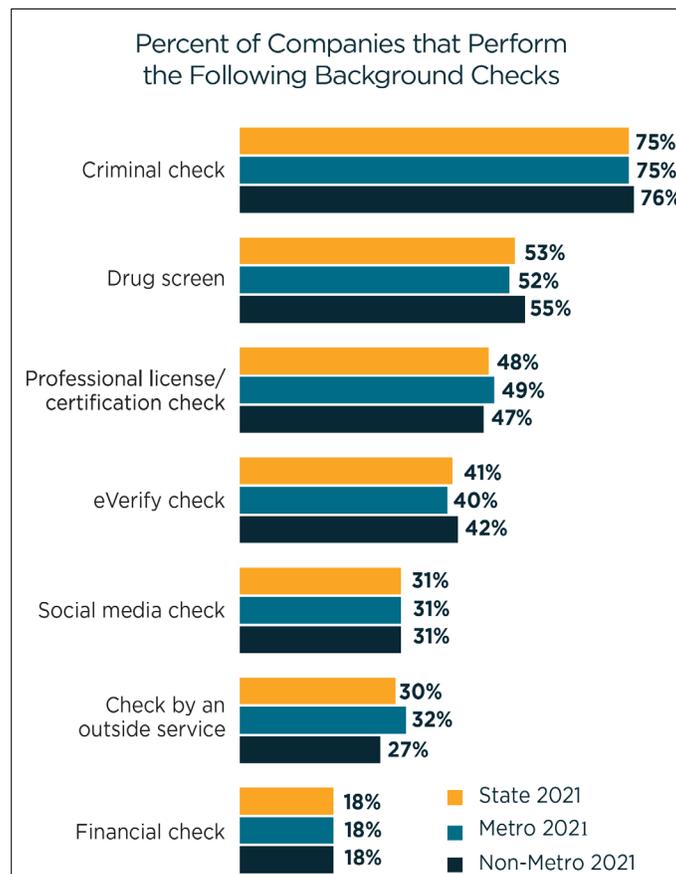




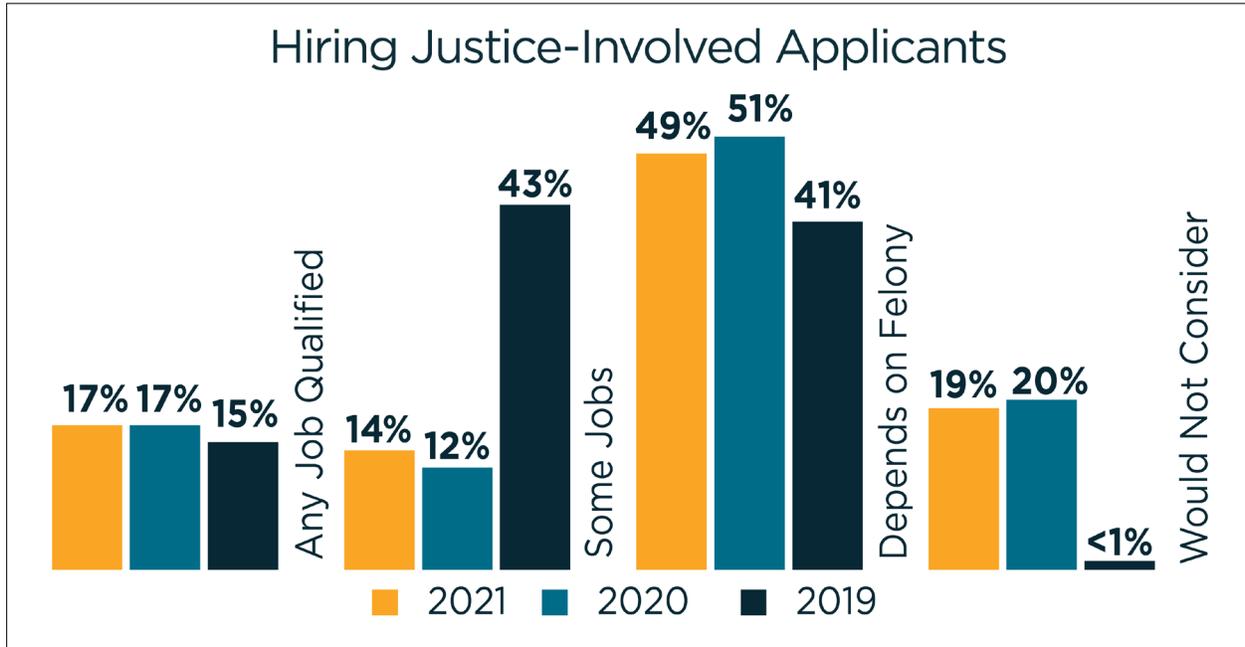
### Hiring Justice-Involved Applicants



The screening process prior to hiring can help identify programs and services to assist job seekers. *Criminal checks* were the most common types of background checks conducted prior to hiring, with 75 percent of Missouri employers reporting they perform one. *Drug screens* followed with 53 percent. Close to half (48%) of employers performed *professional license or certification checks* prior to hire. Other less common checks included *eVerify checks* (41%), *social media checks* (31%), *checks by an outside service* (30%), and *financial checks* (18%).



In 2019, less than one percent of Missouri employers *would not consider* hiring an applicant convicted of a felony offense who had completed his or her sentence and/or probation. This increased to 20 percent in 2020 and stayed at that level in 2021 (19%). In 2021, close to half (49%) said it *depended on the felony*. The readiness to *consider the applicant for any job for which they were qualified* was close to previous years' results (17% in 2021 and 2020, and 15% in 2019). Results were similar in metro and non-metro areas.



**9. Workforce Development, Education, and Training Activities Analysis**

Describe the workforce development services and activities, including education and training in the LWDA, to address the education and skills needs of the workforce. Include education and training activities of the core programs and mandatory and optional One-Stop Delivery System partners<sup>3</sup>.

**a. The Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities**

Provide an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the workforce developments services and activities identified above.

**Strengths:**

- The WDB has focused on partnerships over the past several years. One major strength is the relationships with similar organizations, serving similar participants. WDB leads efforts in information sharing, being able to utilize other services from other partners for a full “wrap around” service and the sharing of our available resources. We rely on the wisdom

<sup>3</sup> Mandatory One-Stop partners: Each LWDA must have one comprehensive One-Stop Center that provides access to physical services of the core programs and other required partners. In addition to the core programs, for individuals with multiple needs to access the services, the following partner programs are required to provide access through the One-Stops: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Career and Technical Education (Perkins Act), Community Services Block Grant, Indian and Native American programs, Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Employment and Training programs, Job Corps, Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program, National Farmworker Jobs Program, Senior Community Service Employment Program, Trade Adjustment Assistance programs, Unemployment Insurance, Re-entry Programs, and YouthBuild.

- from partners and employers to meet the demands of occupational needs and guide our customers for a successful career path.
- There is no single job training approach that is right for all workers. Having access to accurate and up-to-date labor market data provided by MERIC and other sources, as well as information and guidance about career and training opportunities, helps our customers customize a plan through more informed education and employment decisions.
- The region has two comprehensive Missouri Job Centers (CJC) located in the two largest communities of the region. These Centers are positioned to effectively serve the eastern and western halves of the region. In addition, there are multiple mobile sites available for customers in our smaller communities.
- The South Central Region provides a local presence to our business communities, not only within Job Center locations, but outreach efforts. The Job Center staff meet with businesses to share our services and provide assistance with hiring events, job postings, etc.

**Weaknesses:**

- The WDB recognizes the need for greater visibility of programs and services with our elected officials, local employers and the community in general. WDB Staff recognize the need for improved communication and outreach/marketing to the public.
- Employers have indicated that finding workers, even with college degrees, with adequate basic skills is a challenge. Often the lack of basic effective competencies such as communication skills, work ethic, discipline, critical thinking or interpersonal skills are needed.
- Information sharing among partners is difficult. There is currently no universal release of information making a team based case management approach difficult. Within the Centers there are multiple redundancies due to State and Partner systems not being able to “talk” to each other.
- Today’s jobs require more highly-skilled workers. Workplace skills are essential in all industries to advance in the fast-paced economy and to improve efficiency within our region. Technology is changing at a rapid speed; this impacts even the employed and key skill deficiencies among the unemployed and underemployed population.

**b. Local Workforce Development Capacity**

Provide an analysis of the capacity of local entities to provide the workforce development services and activities to address the identified education and skills needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers in the LWDA.

There are opportunities available to the customer through the Job Centers. Staff assist them in recognizing their skills and where they have weaknesses. Assistance is available to increase existing skills, market their skills and work on areas of weakness to create “smart” goal strategies. Skills assessments help to clarify the next steps needed in an individual’s job search. Assessments help identify their need for training or skill improvement to achieve goals that are realistic and can

accomplished successfully. WorkKeys testing, along with Job Center workshops provide opportunities for enhancement of resume preparation, interviewing skills, networking, retaining employment, and more. All of this assists the customer in standing out as a job applicant, and in being a better employee. Earning a National Career Readiness Certification (NCRC) using the ACT skills certification system is an opportunity to take skills our customers have demonstrated to a national level. Our partners are working to ensure customers have a smooth referral process and access to valuable resources. Working together with our partners is the best way to assist our customers in their journey to a self-sufficient career pathway.

## OPERATIONAL ELEMENTS

### Local Structure

#### 10. Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) Profile

Describe the geographical workforce development area, including the LWDA's major communities, major employers, training and educational institutions (technical and community colleges, universities, etc.), population, diversity of the population, and relevant growth trends.

#### Geographical Workforce Development Area (LWDA) with Major Communities

The South Central Region consists of twelve counties in southern Missouri: Butler, Carter, Douglas, Howell, Oregon, Ozark, Reynolds, Ripley, Shannon, Texas, Wayne and Wright. It is one of the largest geographical regions in the state and is sparsely populated with the exception of two Micropolitan Statistical Areas: Poplar Bluff in Butler County and West Plains in Howell County.



#### Major Employers

- Briggs & Stratton (Poplar Bluff)
- Caterpillar (Pomona)
- Leonardo DRS Land Systems (West Plains)
- Gates (Poplar Bluff)
- Hutchens Industries (Mansfield)
- McClain Forest Products (West Plains)
- Mid Continent Nail Corporation (Poplar Bluff)
- Revere Plastics: (Poplar Bluff)
- Roy Oak Enterprises (West Plains)
- Starting USA (Poplar Bluff)
- Today's Foods (Piedmont)
- Western Dairy Transport: (Cabool)

[Missouri Partnership | Economic Development | The Poplar Bluff Region](#)

**Training and Educational Institutions**

For a comprehensive list of the eligible training providers certified for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act please refer to the Missouri Eligible Training Provider System. In brief, the region’s training and educational institutions include: Greater Ozarks Center for Advanced Technology (GOCAT), Missouri State University-West Plains, Three Rivers Community College, South Central Career Center and Poplar Bluff Technical Career Center.

South Central Region	High School Diploma	Some College or Associates Degree	Bachelor’s degree	Graduate or Professional Degree	Total Population 25 years and over
Butler County	11,422	9,400	2,342	1,469	29,313
Carter County	2,000	891	394	223	4,069
Douglas County	4,079	2,646	870	385	9,623
Howell County	10,984	7,904	2,788	1,977	27,506
Oregon County	3,390	1,908	607	509	7,497
Ozark County	2,725	2,045	471	334	6,879
Reynolds County	1,730	1,244	551	172	4,688
Ripley County	3,837	2,915	694	335	9,524
Shannon County	2,653	1,312	511	337	5,866
Texas County	7,109	5,509	1,647	1,031	18,130
Wayne County	4,167	2,689	680	272	9,614
Wright County	5,073	3,524	942	404	12,285
<b>Region Total</b>	<b>56,169</b>	<b>41,987</b>	<b>12,497</b>	<b>7,448</b>	<b>144,808</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5 year estimates, 2020. Educational Attainment for the population 25 years and over .

**Population**

The 2020 U.S. Census population statistics for the region along with the previous projection for the 2030 population are shown below. These statics show that three counties are projected to have a population decrease while the other nine counties are projected to see increases. Overall, the population of South Central Region is expected to increase its population by .0821% over the next 10 years. While this would be a great boost to the South Central region, we are rather doubtful that this will occur having seen a 12.5% decline in our population with the 2020 U.S. Census

South Central Region	Population 2020	Population Projection 2030	Population Projected +/-Change
Butler County	42,130	41,491	-639
Carter County	5,202	5,837	635
Douglas County	11,578	13,934	2,356
Howell County	39,750	43,414	3,664
Oregon County	8,635	10,558	1,923
Ozark County	8,553	8,457	-96
Reynolds County	6,096	6,285	189
Ripley County	10,679	14,008	3,329
Shannon County	7,031	9,693	2,662
Texas County	22,487	22,169	-318
Wayne County	10,974	11,200	226
Wright County	18,188	19,963	1,775
<b>Region Total</b>	<b>191,303</b>	<b>207,009</b>	15,706

Sources: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Census Bureau, and MERIC

**Diversity of the Population**

The male (49%) and female (51%) population in the South Central Region is just +/- .6% off from Missouri’s male (49.4%) and female (50.6%) population. The comparison of the different race populations in the South Central Region in comparison with Missouri is as follows (The first % is South Central Region with the second % being Missouri.): Black or African American is 1.0% compared to 11.3%; American Indian and Alaska Native is 0.5% compared to 0.4%; Asian is 0.3% compared to 2.2%; Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander is 0.0% compared to 0.2%; Some other race is 0.2% compared to 0.4%; Two or more races is 4.9% compared to 5.0%; Hispanic or Latino is 1.8% compared to 4.8%.

The above South Central Region percentages were derived using the information from the chart below. The Missouri percentages were not used in the formula. The twelve South Central Region counties were used to determine the correct percentage for the eight race population columns. Each race category column was added and then the total was divided by twelve. Once all eight averages were computed, they were added together and it totaled 100%.

State Region County	South Central				Region		Total Population							
	Under 24 years	Age 25-34	Age 35-54	Age 55+	Male	Female	White	Black or African American	American Indian and Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	Hispanic or Latino	Some other race	Two or more races
Missouri	31.9%	13.3%	24.4%	30.4%	49.0%	51.0%	75.7%	11.3%	0.4%	2.2%	0.2%	4.8%	0.4%	5.0%
South Central	29.1%	10.3%	23.3%	37.4%	49.7%	50.3%	91.3%	1.0%	0.5%	0.3%	0.0%	1.8%	0.2%	4.9%
Butler	31.1%	12.5%	23.9%	32.5%	49.1%	50.9%	84.8%	5.8%	0.5%	0.7%	0.0%	2.1%	0.3%	5.8%
Carter	33.1%	7.4%	24.7%	34.8%	49.5%	50.5%	92.1%	0.2%	0.3%	0.4%	0.0%	1.9%	0.1%	5.0%
Douglas	27.9%	9.2%	21.8%	41.1%	50.3%	49.7%	91.6%	0.3%	0.6%	0.2%	0.0%	2.1%	0.2%	5.0%
Howell	31.5%	11.7%	23.7%	33.1%	48.6%	51.4%	90.5%	0.5%	0.4%	0.6%	0.0%	2.3%	0.3%	5.4%
Oregon	29.1%	9.8%	22.5%	38.6%	49.2%	50.8%	92.5%	0.3%	0.8%	0.1%	0.0%	1.4%	0.2%	4.7%
Ozark	24.6%	8.2%	21.4%	45.8%	49.3%	50.7%	93.5%	0.2%	0.4%	0.2%	0.1%	1.3%	0.5%	3.8%
Reynolds	25.4%	10.4%	24.8%	39.4%	52.3%	47.7%	93.0%	0.5%	0.4%	0.3%	0.0%	1.6%	0.0%	4.2%
Ripley	29.5%	12.0%	23.3%	35.2%	49.3%	50.7%	92.5%	0.3%	0.4%	0.3%	0.0%	1.2%	0.0%	5.3%
Shannon	28.5%	11.3%	23.0%	37.2%	49.4%	50.6%	91.8%	0.0%	0.5%	0.2%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	5.5%
Texas	29.0%	11.0%	24.2%	35.8%	51.9%	48.1%	89.8%	3.2%	0.6%	0.3%	0.0%	2.1%	0.2%	3.8%
Wayne	26.5%	9.6%	23.4%	40.5%	49.1%	50.9%	92.0%	0.5%	0.6%	0.2%	0.0%	1.4%	0.0%	5.3%
Wright	32.8%	10.6%	22.4%	34.2%	48.7%	51.3%	91.6%	0.6%	0.4%	0.3%	0.0%	2.0%	0.3%	4.8%

Sources: 2020 U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey

**Relevant Growth Trends**

The South Central Region in recent years has seen a steady decline in its population with a 12.5% loss of population according to the 2020 U.S. Census. Even though the projections show we have counties that will see some growth in population, other counties will see decreases. We believe that we can help turn this trend around if we are able to bring more industry to our region.

**11. Local Facility and Information**

- a. Identify the local comprehensive One-Stop Center(s), including current mailing and street addresses, telephone and fax numbers and list them in **Attachment 1** to the Plan.
- b. Identify the local affiliate sites, including current mailing and street addresses, telephone and fax numbers and list them in **Attachment 1** to the Plan.
- c. Identify the local specialized sites, including current mailing and street addresses, telephone and fax numbers and list them in **Attachment 1** to the Plan.
- d. If your LWDA has any other additional service sites and the LWDA refers to them as anything other than comprehensive, affiliate or specialized centers, please list the service sites by the title your LWDA uses and describe the services provided in **Attachment 1**. Also, list the one-stop partners providing services at those locations.

See **Attachment 1**

## 12. Local One-Stop Partner/MOU/IFA Information

### a. One-Stop Partners

Identify the **One-Stop Partners in Attachment 2** to the Plan. Please indicate the contact name, category, physical location, phone and email address. Indicate the specific services provided at each of the comprehensive, affiliate, or specialized job centers.

See **Attachment 2**

### b. Memorandums of Understanding (MOU)

Include a copy of each MOU between the Board and each of the One-Stop partners (or one “umbrella” MOU for the same purpose) concerning the operation of the One-Stop Delivery System in the LWDA. The MOU must be up-to-date, signed and dated. Include the MOU(s) as Attachment 3. Missouri Job Centers must ensure that equal access to employment and training services are provided to the farm workers and agricultural employers in their LWDA. See **OWD Issuance 01-2019 One-Stop Center Memoranda of Understanding and Infrastructure Funding Agreements for Local Workforce Development Boards**.

See **Attachment 3**

### c. Cost Sharing Agreement/Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA)

Include as part of the MOU in Attachment 3 the Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) and negotiated cost-sharing worksheet/workbook for each Missouri Job Center that includes the line items, dollar amounts and percentage rates for One-stop partners, OWD and the Board. Indicate the number of FTEs present and the amount of space (sq. footage) utilized by the partner. See **OWD Issuance 01-2019 One-Stop Center Memoranda of Understanding and Infrastructure Funding Agreements for Local Workforce Development Boards**.

See **Attachment 3**

## 13. Sub-State Monitoring Plan

Include the sub-state monitoring plan, as defined in **OWD Issuance 16-2018 Statewide Sub-State Monitoring Policy**, as **Attachment 4** to the Plan.

See **Attachment 4**

## 14. Local Workforce Development System

Describe the workforce development system in the LWDA.

### a. Identify the programs that are included in that system and how the Board will work with the entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs.

For initial local approval of an Eligible Training Provider (ETP) program the following conditions must be satisfied:

- All eligibility criteria required by OWD to be listed as an Eligible Training Provider must be complete and approved by the state including the ability for the Eligible Training Provider to:
  - Demonstrate they have been in business teaching a program for at least 12 months;
  - Show documentation that they are certified by the appropriate governing body; and

- Maintain a website including the program descriptions, tuition, fees, and supplies.
- Eligible Training Providers must agree to comply with all provisions listed in the Eligible Training Provider System Training Provider Applicant – Assurances Agreement.
- The program must be listed as approved on the Missouri Eligible Training Provider List. The program must be approved, not just the provider.
- The training program must be an in-demand occupation for the South Central Region and classified with a Career Outlook grade of B or above. In-Demand occupations can be found in MERIC publication.
- The Eligible Training Provider must meet all local policy qualifications for approval in the South Central Region.

When the above criterion has been met, the Compliance Manager at the WDB will select the Training Provider as locally approved in the Eligible Training Provider website interface so the program can be selected in the data system. The South Central Compliance Manager maintains the access to locally approve or deny training programs within the state. These programs are reviewed and approved/denied on an as needed basis.

**b. Describe how the Board plans to support alignment to provide services, including programs of study authorized under the *Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act of 2018* formerly the *Carl D Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.)*.**

Throughout our regional workforce system our partnerships, leadership teams, and Job Center staff all have an emphasis on “in-demand” industry sectors and occupations which include a spectrum of credentials available to the customers served. Industry-recognized credentials, certificates, or associate degrees ensure funding remains focused on the customer’s successful growth in their career. This also includes work-based learning, career exploration, and secondary-postsecondary connections to improve growth of the local region.

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

The WDB utilizes the South Central Workforce Coordinator in our area for various needed information. The South Central Workforce Coordinator is contacted at the first evidence or word that a lay-off is even being contemplated by any employer in our area. The South Central Workforce Coordinator will notify other area coordinators if their area could be affected. The South Central Workforce Coordinator first will utilize all elements of resources to prevent the layoff such as (but not limited to) Shared Work—Layoff Alternative. When the South Central Workforce Coordinator has determined with the employer that no other measures can be employed to avoid laying off workers, and then Employment Transition Team (ETT) services are provided and is available at no cost to businesses and affected workers. As part of the ETT, a Regional/ South Central Workforce Coordinator and local workforce system staff are available to provide guidance to the employer and reemployment services for the affected employees. ETT staff will provide information services, including:

- Conducting employee assistance meetings
- Providing Trade Act and other training program information for lay-offs affected by foreign trade
- Presenting Unemployment Insurance information
- Connecting employees with current job openings

- Assisting with employer layoff obligations including providing information concerning legal requirements under the federal Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act.
- d. Describe how the Board will ensure the expenditure of funds for training providers are selected from both the Eligible Training Provider List/System approved for use by the State of Missouri as well as approved from the State list by the local workforce development board.**

For initial local approval of an Eligible Training Provider (ETP) program the following conditions must be satisfied:

- All eligibility criteria required by OWD to be listed as an Eligible Training Provider must be complete and approved by the state including the ability for the Eligible Training Provider to:
  - Demonstrate they have been in business teaching a program for at least 12 months;
  - Show documentation that they are certified by the appropriate governing body; and
  - Maintain a website including the program descriptions, tuition, fees, and supplies.
- Eligible Training Providers must agree to comply with all provisions listed in the Eligible Training Provider System Training Provider Applicant – Assurances Agreement.
- The program must be listed as approved on the Missouri Eligible Training Provider List. The program must be approved, not just the provider.
- The training program must be an in-demand occupation for the South Central Region and classified with a Career Outlook grade of B or above. In-Demand occupations can be found in MERIC publication.
- The Eligible Training Provider must meet all local policy qualifications for approval in the South Central Region.

When the above criterion has been met, the Compliance Manager at the WDB will select the Training Provider as locally approved in the Eligible Training Provider website interface so the program can be selected in the data system. The South Central Compliance Manager maintains the access to locally approve or deny training programs within the state. These programs are reviewed and approved/denied on an as needed basis.

## 15. Alignment and Data Integration

- a. Describe how all partner agencies will strengthen their integration of services so that it provides a more seamless system.**

Seamless Service and Intake Integration will be accomplished by utilizing a common intake/referral form with all partner agencies. Our new WIOA provider is being tasked to develop a partner referral plan to include a common Intake/Referral Form with a Release of Information statement to aid in discussions of client issues among partner agencies. The Missouri Job Centers will function as the central hubs for service referrals when they are needed. Set procedures and timelines for making appointments with referred clients and follow-up procedures will be established. This will ensure referrals are handled in a prompt manner and that referring agencies follow-up for any additional requirements. In addition, all Partner Agencies must be able to be accessed within the Job Centers, either through on-site/cross-trained staff or through direct linkage. Training will be accomplished to ensure all staff are familiar with programs for Partner Agencies to aid in effectively referring and assisting clients.

**b. Describe the MOU/IFA/Cost Sharing Process.**

The cost of the Missouri Job Center that is available and shared by Partners are determined by the number of OWD/Vet Staff, WIOA Staff, and Partner Staff are at each site. Partners are notified and asked the number of staff, days of week, or monthly day/time they would like to be in their local Missouri Job Center. Once this is determined, the information is added to a spreadsheet using formulas to determine each organizations cost. An MOU/IFA is created and sent to the individual authorized to sign for each organization.

**c. Describe the process for data integration. How are the one-stop centers implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology enabled intake system for programs carried out under WIOA and by one-stop partners?**

For the Service/Intake Integration, we are looking at a standardized intake/referral form that all agencies will use and have set standards for making appointments and doing follow-ups on the referrals. We will have a standard intake sheet used by all partners during their initial interview with clients, this then doubles as their referral form.

**16. Accessibility**

Describe how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and one-stop partners will comply with WIOA section 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and service, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. (See OWD Issuance 12-2017 and the State of Missouri Non-discrimination Plan at [https://jobs.mo.gov/sites/jobs/files/ndp\\_2019\\_summary\\_all\\_sections\\_and\\_elements\\_final\\_copy\\_with\\_bookmarks.pdf](https://jobs.mo.gov/sites/jobs/files/ndp_2019_summary_all_sections_and_elements_final_copy_with_bookmarks.pdf) )

Each Comprehensive Job Center is required to maintain specific Assistive Technology including: Window Eyes Screen Reader, Zoom Text, Big Keys I-X Keyboard, Trackball Mouse, Phone Amplifier, and Ubi Duo (Face to Face Communication), TTY, and Relay Service. Updated Assistive Technology, along with training, is being provided by OWD. Annual reviews of ADA equipment in our offices, ensuring proper function and training in the use of the equipment, are ways we attempt to increase the value of our services to individuals with a disability. The State of Missouri contracts to provide interpretive (ASL) services at all locations upon request. Specifics and a staff desk aid for these services are found at: <https://jobs.mo.gov/dwdeo>

In addition, a partnership with the Missouri Rehabilitation Services for the Blind, allows Missouri to provide each Job Center with the EO Notice in Braille and "large print" formats for the individual customers with low vision or who are blind.

In compliance with Federal requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), it is policy that Missouri Job Center team members must not directly or indirectly deny a qualified individual with a disability the opportunity to participate in or benefit from the aid, benefits, services or training on the basis of disability. Additionally, steering individuals with disabilities to a certain occupation, partner agency, or training program based solely on their disability is not allowed and considered illegal. Staff members may consider the individual circumstances, needs, and assessment results to assist the

customer with finding a career path that matches with their employment goals and leads to self-sufficiency.

Reasonable accommodations will be made in services and procedures when necessary. Programs must be operated so that they are readily accessible to and usable by the individuals with disabilities in the most integrated setting. Communications with persons with disabilities must be as effective as communications with other individuals without a disability.

Reasonable accommodations will be made in policies, practices or procedures when modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability, unless making the modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program or activity.

Staff members have been encouraged to seek out resolutions for any reasonable accommodations that do not result in a funding cost and to act upon those requests immediately without the need of supervisor approval. Any request that would result in a funding cost should be requested in writing and sent to the South Central Workforce Investment Board Executive Director.

Staff are trained on a continuous basis on Equal Opportunity related topics including and addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. One Stop Centers in the local area are encouraged to reach out and attend meetings with other area resources and other agencies for opportunities to inform employees of multiple agencies about the resources in the area.

## **17. Assessment of One-Stop Program and Partners**

- a. Describe how the Board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers and participants.**

The WDB ensures continuous improvement of eligible providers of services by working closely with these agencies and organizations on a regular and continuing basis. Services like On-the-Job Training and/or Work Experience require Employment Specialist interaction throughout the employment period. The Employment Specialist visits the site for Mid-point and End-point monitoring as well as bi-weekly to collect the participant Timesheets for their payroll. Working with repeat employers allows us to assist with meeting the states Repeat Customer Performance Measure and allows us to build relationships with the employers so that we have an open line of communication for any issues that could arise. Eligible Training Providers are expected to meet the Governor's criteria for preliminary performance information per program, which includes: Institutional Credential Attainment Rate, Employment Six and Twelve Months after Exit, and Median Earning Six Months after Exit. In the South Central Region we have determined that if the state finds these expected performance levels to be acceptable, the South Central Region will deem them as acceptable as well. The South Central Region will also honor any waiver for Performance levels by an institution if it has been approved by the state.

All participants put through a fundable training or employment service must have the Training Appropriateness Questions answered in the Case Management System. These questions include linking the job placement and/or training program with the employment opportunities in the local area. Each service is a little different in considering what meets the definition for linking the employment opportunities in the local area and could have some extenuating circumstances that would allow for an approval outside of the In-Demand need as reported by MERIC.

**b. Describe the actions the LWDB will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performance WDB.**

The South Central Region will take action to remain a high-performance WDB. As felt across the state, WIOA funding changes mandates that the South Central Board continues to work on refining processes, building partnerships, and reviewing consolidations as necessary - to ensure that we can continue on a path of growth for the South Central Region. Actions to specifically improve local WIOA Performance Rates include but are not limited to:

- Continuous monitoring reviews being completed by the Employment Specialist, program staff, and compliance department. These monitoring target the case management entries for validity.
- Review of 100% of all new enrollments - The South Central Region Compliance Manager reviews 100% of all program enrollments during two rounds of the Sub-State Monitoring to ensure eligibility, service activities, case note entries, and other policy guidelines are in compliance.
- The South Central Compliance Manager tracks negative performance outcomes for the region through the MoPerforms Database System. This system allows us to see who is and will be coming up in performance measures and allows us to investigate accounts showing a negative outcome to ensure all necessary information was put into the system. Monitoring the performance outcomes on at least a quarterly basis has allowed us to change some participants from negative status to a positive status and so far, allows us to meet all negotiated performance levels.

## Local Administration

### 18. Chief Elected Official (CEO)

Please identify the CEO. List the name, title, address, phone number and email address. Place it on a cover sheet in **Attachment 5**.

**See Attachment 5**

### 19. CEO Consortium Agreement and Bylaws

If the LWDA includes more than one unit of local government, the Chief Elected Officials (CEO) may develop a CEO agreement; however, it is not mandatory under WIOA law. If the LWDA is including a CEO agreement, please specify the respective roles of the individual CEOs and include the **CEO Consortium Agreement as Attachment 5 including any CEO Bylaws** that are in effect.

**See Attachment 5**

**NOTE:** (The CEO membership should be reviewed after each county and/or municipal election. If there are changes in the CEO membership, or leadership, a new CEO agreement will need to be signed and submitted to OWD by the first day of June following the election.) OWD must be notified with the contact information as soon as the CEO takes office.

### 20. Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) Membership

Please list the LWDB members in **Attachment 6**. Identify the members of the Board, the organization or business they represent, and the category (i.e., business, labor, adult education and literacy, vocational rehabilitation, Wagner-Peyser/OWD, higher education, economic development, TANF, Other) The LWDB Certification Form may be used. **See OWD Issuance 10-2018 Local Workforce Development Board**

## Membership Requirements and Recertification Procedures under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

### a. LWDB Standing Committees

List of all **standing committees** on a separate page in **Attachment 6**.

### b. LWDB Certification Letter (2019)

Include in **Attachment 6** a copy of the current **LWDB certification letter**

See **Attachment 6**

## 21. LWDB Bylaws

The Board must review its by-laws annually and complete the “Local Workforce Development Board’s ATTESTATION FOR REVIEW OF BY-LAWS” form included near the end of this document. Include the Board’s current by-laws and the completed attestation form (copy is included in this guidance) as **Attachment 7** to the Plan.

See **Attachment 7**

## 22. Conflict of Interest Policy

Include the **Conflict of Interest Policy** as **Attachment 8** for Board members, staff, and contracted staff to follow. This should be the full COI policy that they sign, not just an attestation. See **OWD Issuance 19-2016 Ethical Requirements for Chief Elected Officials and Local Workforce Development Boards**.

See **Attachment 8**

## Local Planning & Fiscal Oversight

### 23. Local Fiscal Agent

Identify the **Local Fiscal Agent**. Include contact information. Include the information as **Attachment 9**. See **OWD Issuance 22-2015 Policy on Designation of a Local Fiscal Agent by the Chief Elected Official**.

See **Attachment 9**

### 24. Competitive Procurement

Describe the competitive (procurement) process used to award the grants and contracts in the LWDA for activities carried out under Title I of WIOA, including the process to procure training services for Youth and any that are made as exceptions to the ITA process. Include the information on the following processes: advertisement/notification to prospective bidders, time period bidders have to respond to the solicitation, evaluation and award/non-award notification. This may include those pages from the Board’s procurement guidelines that describe the competitive-procurement process and the process to procure Youth training providers. Include the **Financial Procurement Policy** as **Attachment 10**.

See **Attachment 10**

## 25. Duplicative Costs and Services

### a. Eliminating Duplicative Administrative Costs

Describe how the Board is working toward eliminating duplicative administrative costs to enable increased training investments

Quarterly benchmark performance is used to determine whether the sub-recipient is staying on task with meeting the designated benchmarks that are designed to increase participant rates in the South Central Region which in turn will increase the training investment. A 'check-in' with the sub-recipient Regional Director, Regional Program Manager, SCWIB Compliance Monitor, and SCWIB Executive Director will be held on a weekly basis where these benchmark performances will be reviewed and discussed. These benchmark performances will then be shared with the Executive Committee and the whole board at the board's quarterly meetings.

**b. Eliminating Duplicative Services**

Identify how the Board ensures that services are not duplicated.

Operating as a team with the sub-recipient and having the weekly 'check-in' will enable there to be an open dialog where plans can also be made to ensure that duplication or services are being avoided through processes that are developed and followed.

EDSI is aware that WIOA is the last resort for funding. They will work with the participants to determine what other funding sources are available to them, i.e., CSBG, Skill-Up, grants, scholarships, etc. Working with other partners also helps the sub-recipient to avoid duplicate administrative services.

**26. Planning Budget Summaries (PBSs)**

Include the Planning Budget Summaries for Program Year 2022 and Fiscal Year 2023 in **Attachment 11** to the plan. (Instruction for this planning item will be sent after the PY 2022 locally negotiated performance goals are finalized.)

**See Attachment 11**

**27. Complaint and Grievance Policy / EEO Policy**

Establish and define the local policy and procedure for Complaint and Grievance Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions of WIOA. Both policies should be incorporated into the MOU and disseminated throughout the LWDA for all workforce development professionals to understand and implement. This should adhere to federal and state complaint and grievance guidance and policy. Include either a statement that the Board will follow the state policy or develop a local policy and include a copy as **Attachment 12** to the Plan. (See the State of Missouri Non-discrimination Plan. [https://jobs.mo.gov/sites/jobs/files/ndp\\_2019\\_summary\\_all\\_sections\\_and\\_elements\\_final\\_copy\\_with\\_bookmarks.pdf](https://jobs.mo.gov/sites/jobs/files/ndp_2019_summary_all_sections_and_elements_final_copy_with_bookmarks.pdf) )

**See Attachment 12**

**28. Planning Process and Partners**

The expectation is that the Board will involve business, organized labor, local public officials, community-based organizations, WIOA service providers, and other stakeholders in the development and review of this Plan. Describe the local plan development process, including how input for the Local Plan was obtained by all the partners involved in the MOU. Also, see **Attachment 33 - Statement of Assurances**.

**See Attachment 33**

**29. Performance Negotiations**

Identify the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and CEO to be used to measure the performance of the Board and to be used by the Board for measuring the performance of the Local Fiscal Agent (where appropriate), eligible providers, and the One-Stop Delivery System in the LWDA.

Program Year 2021 and 2022 Performance Negotiations.

Performance Negotiations for Program Year 2022 and 2023 have not yet begun.

Program	Adult	Dislocated Worker	Youth
Employment Rate Q2	69%	69%	73%
Employment Rate Q4	69%	64%	60%
Median Earning	\$3,900	\$4,300	N/A
Credential Attainment	45%	60%	61.5%

**30. Public Comment**

Describe the process used by the Board to provide an opportunity for public comment, including comment by representatives of businesses and labor organizations, and input into the development of the Plan, prior to submission of the Plan. Provide an affidavit of proof of this public announcement for comment. See **Attachment 33 - Statement of Assurances**

As there is no full Board Meeting before the deadline to have the plan submitted to the state, the plan is shared with the Executive Committee and required partners via a link to our website. They will have the opportunity to review and prepare any questions they have to be sent to the Executive Director. Once all questions have been answered, the Executive Committee votes to approve or disapprove. When the plan has been approved, the plan including all attachments will be posted on WDB website, for the required number of days. After WDB has approved the plan and it's posted on our website, Executive Director will put an announcement on the board's website notifying interested parties of the public comment period.

See **Attachment 33**

**31. Assurances**

Complete and sign the **"Statement of Assurances Certification"** form located in this guidance and include this as **Attachment 33** to the Plan.

See **Attachment 33**

## POLICIES

### Local Policies and Requirements

#### 32. Supportive Services Policy

Please include the Board's policy for **Supportive Services as Attachment 13** to enable individuals to participate in Title I activities. This policy must address the requirements in **OWD Issuance 13-2017 Statewide Supportive Services Policy**.

See **Attachment 13**

#### 33. Adult - Priority of Service

Please include the Board's policy for **Adult Priority of Service as Attachment 14**. Describe the process by which any priority will be applied by the One-Stop Operator as stated under WIOA sections 133(b)(2) or (b)(3). The LWDB should explain its Adult Priority of Service to provide WIOA career services for jobseekers who are not low-income.

See **Attachment 14**

#### 34. Adult / Dislocated Worker - Training Expenditure Rate / Local Criteria for Training Recipients

Provide your Board's proposed training expenditure rates for both the Adult and Dislocated Worker regular formula fund allocations. In addition, describe the local process for determining who will receive training. Please include the **Training Expenditure Rates and Criteria Policy for Adults and Dislocated Workers as Attachment 15**.

See **Attachment 15**

#### 35. Youth – Eligibility

Please provide the **Youth Barriers Eligibility Policy (OSY ISY additional assistance barrier) as Attachment 16**.

See **Attachment 16**

#### 36. Youth- Out of School Youth (OSY)

Describe the Board's strategy for addressing Out-of-School Youth (OSY). WIOA section 129(a)(1)(B)(VIII) establishes that an eligibility criteria for Out-of-School Youth is "a low-income individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment." Please explain how the Board will define, identify, document, and serve youth participants meeting this eligibility criteria.

The WDB has defined needs additional assistance for youth who are low income and meet one of the following criteria:

##### Out of School Youth:

- Has failed to secure a job within the past thirty days after employment search. Documentation shall consist of a detailed job search log; or
- Is employed part-time (less than 30 hours per week) and has been unable to obtain full-time employment within the past three months after employment search. Documentation shall

- consist of at least two or more recent pay stubs within the last thirty days and a detailed job search log; or
  - Defined as not being able to hold a job for longer than a couple months, job-hopping, little work experience, or no previous work history. This would be determined by the objective assessment and also shown through the resume.
- Did not achieve the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC). Documentation that the individual did not obtain at least the Bronze NCRC will be required.
  - Defined as basic skills that prepare an individual for any job; these can include but are not limited to: Communication Skills, Listening Skills, Understanding & Following Directions, Dependability, Time Management, Comprehension Skills, Teamwork, Problem-solving, Lack of Technology Skills, Adaptability, Organizational Skills, etc. To qualify with this category under the Needs Additional Assistance Barrier, a youth must lack 6 or more of these skills as determined with the Objective Assessment with a plan to address these needs in the Individual Employment Plan.

When skills are lacking it is difficult for youth to obtain and retain employment. Lack of experience may not only pertain to a specific job but a lack of essential skills as well. These circumstances are difficult due to economic times and counties with considerable rural communities providing few employment and educational opportunities. Youth also find themselves competing with more mature and experienced workers for the same opportunities.

Often youth are lacking guidance and direction to pursue or succeed in completing education, securing employment or holding employment. WIOA youth services are provided by the local service provider with a multitude of available WIOA services. Previous efforts for youth who meet this criterion must be documented to assess and verify their need.

The signed WIOA Attestation will verify the employment component.

The Objective Assessment will be used to determine lack of work history or employability skills.

### **37. Youth- In School Youth (ISY)**

Describe the Board's strategy for addressing In-School Youth (ISY). WIOA section 129(a)(1)(C)(VII) establishes that an eligibility criteria for In-School Youth is "an individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment." Please explain how the Board will define, identify, document, and serve youth participants meeting this eligibility criteria.

The South Central Region WDB does not have a policy establishing eligibility criteria for In-School Youth that require additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure and hold employment. If a program operator has a need to serve an in school youth that only needs additional assistance, WIB approval is required. There is a set limit of 5% of youth per program year.

### **38. Youth- 14 Data Elements**

Describe how the region will provide the 14 data elements including: roles, responsibilities, how the system works, and what the system looks like when put into practice in the region. Also, list any organizations/entities that have an agreement with the region to provide one or more youth services.

<b>14 Required Elements</b>	<b>Who Provides Service</b>	<b>Describe Services Provided</b>
1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery.	AEL Partners, Local Schools/Institutions youth are attending, WDB Youth Employment Specialists, Tutor if needed	All staff provide individual tutoring, supervised on-line HSE and in 3 locations our Case Management staff are also certified AEL instructors providing AEL/HSE in our offices. Staff works with HS counselors to re-engage youth in HS when possible.
2. Alternative secondary school offerings or dropout recovery services.	AEL Partners, Local Schools/Institutions youth are attending, WDB Youth Employment Specialists	We do not operate Alternative Ed.; however, we work with AEL/HSE staff to provide those services in our region. We work with all the established Alt. Ed programs. Staff works with HS counselors to re-engage youth in HS when possible.
3. Work Experience	WDB Youth Employment Specialists using local employers	Twenty percent of WIOA budget goes towards paid work experiences. Additionally, youth can participate as appropriate in unpaid work experience and job shadowing as well as paid and unpaid internships and OJT.
4. Occupational Skills	Approved local providers and ETPS providers	After completing a series of career exploration exercises, we assist all youth in applying for available financial aid. If the program of study is non-Pell eligible then we can look at paying for short-term training expenses. Often, we provide supportive services to assist youth in getting started with schooling. We pay expenses like application and testing fees, deposits, etc. Periodic visits to area Higher Education and Vocational Ed campuses including Job Corp are arranged as the need arises.
5. Education-Workforce preparation, specific to occupation cluster	WDB Youth Employment Specialists working with various employer worksites/local schools/ institutions for work experience and job shadowing	We assist in all education-based programs for the youth. If the program of study is non-Pell eligible then program may be used to pay for some short-term training expenses. Youth will be referred to WIOA Adult services as appropriate. Most often we provide supportive

		<p>services to assist the youth in getting started with schooling. We pay expenses like, application and testing fees, deposits, etc. Occupational education for recognized post- secondary credentials aligned with in-demand industry will follow in the same manner as any other educational training program.</p>
6. Leadership Development	Local WIOA staff, local clubs in community and schools, online courses	Case Management staff provides leadership development through exposure to postsecondary education, community projects, etc. Workshops are also offered throughout the year to youth on a rotating basis that can include topics such as empowerment strategies, financial and credit management, buying or renting homes, social networking, the value of volunteering, community services, and top jobs.
7. Supportive Services	Local WIOA staff, local community resources	It is the responsibility of the Employment Specialist to coordinate these services with applicable community agencies. See attached supportive service and Incentive policy. Incentive money is earned through earning credentials, training and skill gains.
8. Adult Mentoring WDB	WDB Youth Employment Specialists, Community Resource Council	All workplace placements require youth be assigned an adult workplace mentor to work directly with the youth focusing on appropriate workplace habits and behaviors. Mentoring activities may include: Job shadowing and guidance provided by an adult to assist the youth to increase his/her academic performance; goal-setting; support meetings to increase youth motivation; career exploration assistance; world ethics and social skills improvement.
9. Follow-up Services	Local WIOA staff, local community resources	Follow-up services are offered for at least twelve months after exit. This may include Regular contact with a

		participant’s employer, including assistance in addressing work-related problems that arise; assistance in securing better paying jobs, career development and further education; work-related peer support groups; mentoring; tracking the progress and earnings of participants in employment after training; and credential attainment post-program.
10. Comprehensive Guidance & Counseling	SCMCAA using Robyn Collins  OAI refer and attempt with scheduling of appointment to local behavioral health counselors and programs	Case management staff provide a large amount of individual, group guidance and counseling related to career exploration, personal counseling, counseling, financial counseling, and goal setting as needed.
11. Financial Literacy Education	OAI – Alison. Com, FDIC website and Udemy  SCMCAA – University Extension/online course EDEMY	Case Management staff provides training through Financial Literacy module and outside training from financial resources to create budgets, initiate checking and savings accounts and learn how to effectively manage spending, credit and debt, teach the significance of credit reports and scores to include identity theft awareness and training. Additionally, The Missouri Extension office is working in partnership with local Job Centers to offer financial workshops, and we promote this to our youth population when available.
12. Entrepreneurial Skills Training	OAI – Research through OzSBI  SCMCAA – University Extension/online courses	Case Management provides training including a DVD presentation titled, “Entrepreneurship: Be Your Own Boss” to teach the basics of starting and operating a small business. Employment Specialists will track and offer Entrepreneurial training opportunities as they become available.
13. Services Provided for Labor Market and Employment Information	MERIC website, O’Net, and local area research	Case management provides training throughout the modules provided in the Work Readiness workshops as well as workshops provided by other outside resources such as the

		Missouri Job Center and the Missouri Extension Center, etc.
14. Transition to Post-Secondary Education and Training	WDB Youth Employment Specialists, local schools, AEL	Case Management provides extensive career development activities during work readiness, including reviewing and selecting an appropriate school, and applying for student aid. One on one guidance and counseling as well as leadership development workshops are incorporated in the training provided. Youth will be given the opportunity to participate in the workshop that will help them identify their learning style and identify reasons for staying in school.

**39. Youth- Incentive Payment Policy**

Describe the LWDA's youth incentive payment policy. Youth incentives must be tied to recognition of achievement related to work experiences, training, or education. Please include the **Youth Incentive Payment Policy as Attachment 17.**

See Attachment 17

**40. Veterans – Priority of Service**

Describe how veteran's priority, as required by Public Law 107-288, will be incorporated into all programs. Please include the **Veterans Priority of Service Policy as Attachment 18.** See [OWD Issuance 10-2016 Priority of Service for Veterans and Eligible Spouses.](#)

See Attachment 18

**41. Basic Skills Assessment (Testing) Policy**

Describe the basic skills assessments for the LWDA. Include the **Basic Skills Assessments (Testing) Policy as Attachment 19.** See [OWD Issuance 14-2016 Determining Basic Skills Deficiencies for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Applicants/Participants.](#)

See Attachment 19

**42. Individual Training Accounts (ITAs)**

Include a description of how training services outlined in WIOA sec. 134 will be provided through the use of individual training accounts, including, if contracts for training services will be used, how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of individual training accounts, and how the Local WDB will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided. Identify the funding limit for ITAs. Please include the **Individual Training Account (ITA) Policy as Attachment 20.** Also include the **Eligibility Policy for Individualized Career Services in Attachment 20.**

See [Attachment 20](#)

#### 43. Individuals with Disabilities

Describe how the Board will ensure that the full array of One-Stop services is available and fully accessible to all individuals with disabilities. In particular, identify those resources that are available to assist in the provision of these services. Include the **Accessibility Policy for Persons with Disabilities as Attachment 21**. See [OWD Issuance 12-2017 Minimum Standards for Assistive Technologies in Missouri Job Centers](#).

See [Attachment 21](#)

#### 44. Limited English Proficiency (LEP) – One-stop Services

Describe how the Board will ensure that the full array of One-Stop services is available to all individuals with limited English proficiency. In particular, identify those resources that are available to assist in the provision of these services. Include the **Accessibility Policy for Persons with Limited English Proficiency as Attachment 22**. See [OWD Issuance 06-2014 Access to Meaningful Services for Individuals with Limited English Proficiency \(LEP\) Policy](#).

See [Attachment 22](#)

#### 45. Co-enrollment

Describe how the Board promotes integration of services through co-enrollment processes. Please include your **Integration of Services Policy (Co-enrollment Policy) as Attachment 23**. See [OWD Issuance 03-2019 Co-enrollment and Provision of Services by Workforce Staff Policy](#).

See [Attachment 23](#)

#### 46. Title II: Adult Education and Literacy (AEL)

Provide a description of how the Board will coordinate workforce development activities with the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Title II provider(s) of AEL in the LWDA. Include a description of the alignment-review process for DESE Title II applications as required by WIOA section 108(b)(13). Please include the **Adult Education and Literacy Policy (AEL Policy) as Attachment 24**. See [OWD Issuance 26-2015 Adult Education Classes to Prepare Workforce Customers to Achieve a High School Equivalency](#).

See [Attachment 24](#)

#### 47. Title IV: Vocational Rehabilitation / Rehabilitation Services for the Blind (VR/RSB)

Title IV of the Rehabilitation Act includes both VR/RSB programs. Describe how the Board will coordinate workforce development activities with these programs. Boards are encouraged to develop a subcommittee on disability services. If the Board has a subcommittee, please describe it and the partnership activities with VR & RSB. Please include the **VR/RSB Coordination Policy as Attachment 25**.

See [Attachment 25](#)

#### 48. Registered Apprenticeship / ETPS

Describe how the Board will identify and reach out to the Registered Apprenticeship training program sponsors within its LWDA. Boards must verify that the program is a Registered Apprenticeship sponsor

with the DOL Office of Apprenticeship. Eligible Training Provider System guidance requires that Registered Apprenticeship training programs be contained in the state's system. Describe the strategy the LWDA will use for addressing the apprenticeship program and monitoring progress. [See OWD Issuance 21-2017 Statewide On-the-Job Training Policy and Guidelines](#). Please include the **Youth Apprenticeships Policy as Attachment 26**.

See [Attachment 26](#)

#### 49. Eligible Training Provider System (ETPS)

A description of how the Board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers and participants. Include the local workforce development board policy on selecting training providers from the State approved list for use by the local board; and include **Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) Policy Attachment 27**. [See OWD Issuance 11-2018 Local Eligible Training Provider Selection Policy](#).

See [Attachment 27](#)

#### 50. Follow-up Policy

Follow-Up Career Services must be available to all Adult program and Dislocated Worker program participants for as long as 12 months after the first day of unsubsidized employment. Provide a description of the local strategy for follow-up services. [See OWD Issuance 31-2017 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Follow-Up Career Services](#).

The following describes the South Central Region Follow-Up Services Policy that covers Adult program and Dislocated Worker program participants:

Follow-Up Career Services must be available to all Adult program and Dislocated Worker program participants for as long as 12 months after the first day of unsubsidized employment.

Examples of WIOA Adult and Dislocated Follow-Up Career services include:

- Career planning and counseling;
- Assistance with work-related problems;
- Peer support groups;
- Referrals; and
- Information regarding educational opportunities

Follow-up Career Services alone are not a qualifying service for the receipt of Supportive Services for WIOA Adults and Dislocated Workers. That is, an individual who is only receiving Follow-Up Career Services may not receive Supportive Services.

Staff must document the WIOA Follow-Up Career Services in the statewide electronic case management system by posting the appropriate activity or service and entering an accompanying Case Note.

The purpose of Follow-up Career Services is to ensure that the participant is able to retain employment, to obtain wage increases, and to advance in a career. While Local WDBs must make follow-up services available to employed participants, not every Adult program or Dislocated Worker program participant will need or want these services.

## PROGRAM ELEMENTS

### The WIOA Core Program Partners in Missouri are:

- Adult Program -(Title I)
- Dislocated Worker Program (Title I)
- Youth Program (Title I)
- Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program (AEL; Title II)
- Wagner-Peyser Act Program (Title III)
- Vocational Rehabilitation Program (VR; Title IV); and Rehabilitation Services for the Blind Program (RSB; Title IV)

### In addition to the above, the WIOA Combined State Plan Partners include employment and training activities carried out under:

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF; 42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)
- The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP; Programs authorized under Section 6(d)(4) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 [7 U.S.C. 2015(d)(4)]; and
- Community Services Block Grant (CSBG; Programs authorized under the Community Services Block Grant Act [42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.]

## Service Delivery

### 51. One-Stop Service Delivery

Describe how the LWDA is assisting customers in making informed choices based on quality workforce information and accessing quality training providers. Provide a list of one-stop partner products and services available at each Missouri Job Center.

Utilizing MERIC information, WorkKeys scores, and other assessments, the Job Center staff recognizes in-demand occupations and provides opportunities for consumer-choice training accordingly. The State determines eligibility of training providers and WDB adheres to that. Job Center Workshops, MoScores, and ACT Career Ready assists staff in guiding customer to make informed choices.

## Adult and Dislocated Workers

### 52. Title I - Employment and Training Products and Services

Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of all Adult and Dislocated Worker employment and training activities in the LWDA. Please include how the Board uses products and services, such as workshops, assessment products (Key Train, WorkKeys /National Career Readiness Certificate [NCRC], etc.) and jobseeker products (such as Résumé Builder, etc.), to engage customers and assist with their re-employment efforts.

AD and DW re-employment services will be accomplished through immediately engaging clients through career and training level services as eligibility, appropriateness, and funding allows. It is the goal of each Missouri Job Center staff to ensure customers leave the Job Center a better job applicant than when they walked in. To this end, staff-assisted services will be emphasized and Missouri Job Center services will be continuously promoted. Available employment and training activities include: eligibility determination; outreach, intake, and orientation to the information and services available through the one-stop delivery system; initial and specialized assessments including literacy, numeracy, English Language proficiency, aptitudes, abilities and supportive service needs; labor exchange services, job search and placement assistance; workshops, employment statistics information; performance information and program cost per eligible providers of training; local performance information; provision of information regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation; development of an individualized employment plan; short term pre-vocational services; adult work experience, occupational skills training; on-the-job training; skill enhancement services; adult education and literacy activities; retention assistance; and follow-up.

### 53. Unemployment Insurance Claimant Services (UI)

Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs. Provide a description of how Unemployment Insurance claimants will be provided reemployment services. Include how Worker Profiling and Re-employment Services (WPRS) will be delivered on a weekly basis between the Office of Workforce Development and partner staff.

Assistance with Unemployment Insurance is an important Missouri Job Center service to many of the visitors that come to a Center. When a customer comes to the Job Center for job search, the following will be checked:

- Job Center staff will explain how to apply for unemployment and give the customer information on unemployment.
- If a customer needs significant assistance OWD staff assist the customer filling their claim on the UIInteract website.
- When a customer has questions about their unemployment, they will be referred to the UI telephone bank to talk to a Regional Claims Center staff person.
- The RJS and RESEA activity (s) focus on identifying customers receiving UI benefits that may be expected to exhaust these benefits without skill development and job search assistance. This activity also has several direct linkages to UI services, since participation for identified customers is mandatory and UI benefits can be jeopardized if participation does not occur. As such, this activity will be managed by OWD staff to ensure that these critical UI linkages are maintained.
- Request RJS and RESEA Selection: The UI automated system will select worker profilers to be scheduled through the Missouri Job Center. In this letter, these customers will be informed of the specific services that they will receive from Missouri Job Center as part of the RJS and RESEA activity (s) as well as the specific date and time that they must attend an information session at the Missouri Job Center.
- RJS and RESEA enrollments: All customers that enroll in the program will have the following information entered into the MoJobs system (if it is not already entered): (1) their demographics, and (2) a career service. During enrollment customers will be given information that is required by the RJS and RESEA programs as well as job search advice and direction. Of critical importance, however, these customers will also be highly encouraged to participate in the services offered within the Missouri Job Center and these services will be described in some detail.

### 54. On-the-Job Training (OJT)

Describe the Board's on-going strategies for promoting and increasing the number of participants in work-based learning and On-the-Job Training (OJT). Provide a summary of the results.

The WDB has a strong network of ties in its community. The Job Center staff works with employers, community agencies and education institutions in order to promote the comprehensive programs that are available and enhances the region's economic stability and prosperity with focusing on the demands and needs of the region. They tackle the regular disparities in the local market by assisting businesses and jobseekers alike. The goal is to connect the jobseeker with employment opportunities and employers with a skilled labor force. The WDB team has networked with local employers to identify the skill demands for the local region. The WDB Team, WDB staff and the Missouri Job Center Staff work together as one unit, collaborating with each other to identify current underlying issues in the local workforce. The staff focuses on community outreach to local business and to the citizens. The goal is to provide the programs to the people and businesses it serves. The Job Center staff evaluates the skills,

knowledge and barriers of the job seekers while coordinating with local employers to collaborate on the obstacles and hurdles they face when hiring employees. By working in a partnership, the WDB is working towards developing the talent pipeline that is in demand while creating a bright career path for individuals/families.

### **55. Credential Attainment / WorkKeys Assessment**

Explain the Board's strategies for increasing the attainment of credentials, degrees, and certificates by participants in your LWDA and any accommodations you have made to make attainment easier (i.e., collocation of AEL centers, extended hours, etc.). In addition, please describe the Board's approach to ensuring every Missouri Job Center customer has the opportunity to take the WorkKeys assessments and obtain a NCRC. This should include how the Board collaborates with the local community college(s) in the LWDA to provide space and/or proctoring services for WorkKeys assessments on an as-needed basis.

WorkKeys Assessments are promoted to the job seeker as a valuable credential to be utilized in their job search and as an identifier of their abilities. WorkKeys is promoted to employers as a tool to assist in identifying foundational skills needed. Job Center staff encourages employers to include NCRC preferred when posting job orders. Introducing WorkKeys to students 18 and over, by proctoring on-site, allows for an increase in training achievements. WorkKeys are highly encouraged but due to some accommodation limitations through ACT requirements, WorkKeys cannot be required. Utilizing WorkKeys in this fashion is the first step to identifying abilities and interests that lead to a fulfilling career pathway for our customers.

Once a career pathway is recognized, the Job Center staff, and partners, jointly assists in the attainment of needed credentials, degrees or training.

Upon enrollment, every participant signs a Release of Information that allows us to contact the schools to get information on attendance and progress as well as the authorization to release required documents that needed for performance related documentation.

Partnerships with AEL, Career & Technology Centers, as well as Community Colleges allows for referrals, shared proctoring, and space.

### **56. ETT Services / Layoff Aversion**

Describe how the Board coordinates with the LWDA's Employment Transition Team Coordinators to ensure that information and services are delivered in a seamless fashion, including how pre-layoff services are coordinated and provided. In addition, please provide a description of the proactive measures that are taken to identify potential layoffs in the LWDA, how information is shared with LWDA's Employment Transition Team Coordinators and how layoff aversion strategies are coordinated. **See OWD Issuance 07-2015 Statewide Employment Transition Team Policy. Include as Attachment 28 the DW Employment Transition Team Policy.**

**See Attachment 28**

## Youth

### 57. Youth Standing Committee Requirements

WIOA allows for a Youth Standing Committee if its membership and expertise meets the WIOA requirements [(WIOA sec. 107(b)(4)(C)]. Please document whether the Board will designate a Youth Standing Committee. If a Youth Standing Committee is not designated, then the Plan needs to state that the Board is not using a Youth Standing Committee. Whether the Board retains responsibility and oversight of Youth services or a Standing Committee is established, the Board should describe how the Board or Youth Standing Committee will meet the requirements of 20 CFR §681.100 and §681.120.

The South Central WDB has established a Youth Committee. The Youth Committee provides information and assists with planning, operation, and oversight of the provision of services to youth in the South Central region.

### 58. YSC Composition / Services / Procurement of Providers / Meeting Schedule & Agenda items

#### a. Describe the composition of the Youth Standing Committee (if designated) and its participation in the design of Youth services in the LWDA

The South Central Region's Youth Committee contains representation of AEL, local apprenticeship, Department of Social Services, judicial system, and private sector WDB members with interest in serving to make a difference in the youth of our region.

#### b. Describe the development of the Plan relating to Youth services

The Youth Committee reviews the services offered, enrollment numbers and activities and performance. Plans are then put into place, with their input, regarding how best to service the WIOA youth population of the South Central region.

#### c. Provide an explanation of the YSC role in the procurement of Youth service providers, and recommending eligible Youth providers to the Board, ensuring the 14 elements are a part of the services planned and conducting oversight with respect to eligible Youth providers of Youth activities and the procurement of Youth service providers. **See OWD Issuance 16-2014 WIOA Standing Youth Committees Requirements.**

Request for Proposal (RFP) is reviewed, discussed, possibly revised, and approved by the Youth Committee. The Youth Committee then recommends the RFP to the full board. Notification is produced via email, social media, website, etc. of the request for bids. A pre-bid orientation is required for those who intend to bid. The Youth Committee reviews the received proposals, scores them, and makes a recommendation to the board. Once a provider has been voted on and approved by the full board, the awarded bidder gets a phone call or personal visit within 24 hours from the Executive Director to confirm acceptance of the contract. All other bidders get a letter within 3-5 business days notifying them of the decision. The awarded bidder is published on our website.

#### d. Also, provide information regarding the Youth Standing Committee meetings, such as any core agenda items that would be included, and the planned meeting schedule (i.e., the first Tuesday of every quarter, etc.).

The Youth Committee meets quarterly prior to the Board Meeting. Additional meetings may be scheduled should the need arise. The agenda varies, but most often includes any updates related to budgets, enrollments, and performance.

### 59. Youth Activities

Provide a description and assessment of the types and availability of Youth activities in the LWDA, including an identification of successful providers of such activities. This description should include:

**a. How the Youth activities in the LWDA are developed to ensure the 14 program elements are available within the LWDA;**

All program elements are provided by various individuals, state agencies, community action agencies, organizations, institutions, local schools, WDB Employment Specialists, etc. as applicable to the element that is being provided. Subcontractors will provide and/or coordinate services for the 14 elements; if coordinating with another entity procurement procedures will be followed and a MOU will be developed identifying the roles of each entity. (See Section 38. Youth – 14 Elements for a list of providers for each element.)

**b. The actual services provided by the LWDA for Youth, the element they represent, and how they fit within DOL's themes (see TEGl 05-12) for the emphasis on serving Youth within a comprehensive Youth development approach;**

-Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery: All staff provide individual tutoring, supervised on-line HSE and in 3 locations our Case Management staff are also certified AEL instructors providing AE/HSE in our offices. Staff work with HS counselors to re-engage youth in HS when possible.

- Alternative secondary school offerings or dropout recovery services: We do not operate Alternative Ed; however, we directly provide AEL/HSE services in 3 offices. We work with all the established Alt. Ed programs. Staff work with HS counselors to re-engage youth in HS when possible.

-Work Experience: 20% of WIOA budget goes towards paid work experiences. We also operate a Scholars@Work program, which employs youth the work of studying for their HSE. Additionally, youth can participate, as appropriate, in unpaid work experience and job shadowing as well as paid and unpaid internships and OJT.

-Occupational Skills Training: After completing a series of career exploration activities as a part of our work readiness curriculum, we assist youth in applying for available financial aid. If the chosen program of study is not Pell eligible, we have the option to pay for some short-term training expenses. Most often we provide supportive services to assist the youth in getting started with schooling. We pay expenses such as, application and testing fees. Periodic visits to area Higher Ed and Vocational Ed campuses including Job Corp are arranged as the need arises.

-Education-Workforce preparation, specific to occupation or occupational cluster: We assist in all education based programs for the youth. If the program of study is non-Pell eligible then program may be used to pay for some short-term training expenses. Youth will be referred to WIOA Adult services as appropriate. Most often we provide supportive services to assist the youth in getting started with schooling. We pay expenses such as application and testing fees, deposits etc. Occupational education

for recognized post-secondary credentials aligned with in-demand industry will follow in the same manner as any other educational training program.

-Leadership Development: Case Management staff provides leadership development through exposure to postsecondary education, community projects, etc. Workshops are also offered throughout the year to youth on a rotating basis that can include topics such as empowerment strategies, financial and credit management, buying or renting homes, social networking, the value of volunteering, community services, and top jobs.

-Supportive Services and Incentives: It is the responsibility of the Employment Specialist to coordinate these services with applicable community agencies. See attached supportive service and Incentive policy. Incentive money is earned through earning credentials, training and skill gains.

-Adult mentoring: All workplace placements require youth be assigned an adult workplace mentor to work directly with the youth focusing on appropriate workplace habits and behaviors. Mentoring activities may include: Job shadowing and guidance provided by an adult to assist the youth to increase his/her academic performance; goal-setting; support meetings to increase youth motivation; career exploration assistance; world ethics and social skills improvement.

-Follow-Up Services: Follow-up services are offered for at least twelve months after exit. This may include Regular contact with a participant's employer, including assistance in addressing work-related problems that arise; assistance in securing better paying jobs, career development and further education; work-related peer support groups; mentoring; tracking the progress and earnings of participants in employment after training; and credential attainment post-program.

-Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling: Case Management staff provides a large amount of individual and group guidance and counseling related to career exploration, personal counseling, counseling, financial counseling, and goal setting as needed.

-Financial Literacy Education: Case Management staff provides training through Financial Literacy module and outside training from financial resources to create budgets, initiate checking and savings accounts and learn how to effectively manage spending, credit and debt, teach the significance of credit reports and scores to include identity theft awareness and training. Additionally, the Missouri Extension office is working in partnership with local career centers to offer financial workshops, and we will promote this to our youth population when available.

-Entrepreneurial Skills Training: Case Management provides training including DVD presentation titled, "Entrepreneurship: Be Your Own Boss" to teach the basics of starting and operating a small business. Employment Specialists will track and offer Entrepreneurial training opportunities as they become available.

-Services Provided for Labor Market and Employment Information: Case Management provides training through the modules provided in Work Readiness workshops as well as workshops provided by other resources such as the Missouri Job Centers, Missouri Extension, etc.

**c. The process for identification of Youth service providers;**

Request for Proposal (RFP) is reviewed, discussed, possibly revised, and approved by the Youth Action Network. The Youth Committee then recommends RFP to the full board. Notification is produced via email, social media, website, etc. of the request for bids. A pre-bid orientation is required for those who intend to bid. The Youth Committee reviews the received proposals, scores them, and makes a recommendation to the board. Once a provider has been voted on and approved by the full board, the awarded bidder gets a phone call or personal visit within 24 hours from the Executive Director to confirm acceptance of the contract. All other bidders get a letter within 3-5 business days notifying them of the decision. The awarded bidder is published on our website.

**d. The evaluation of service providers for performance and impact (please provide details on frequency and criteria);**

WDB staff work at the direction of the WDB Executive Director and the board itself, to verify that the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) regulations are being upheld and the subcontractor or service provider are performing according to proposals submitted and contracts signed. WDB staff will monitor a percentage of all new WIOA past career enrollments per program (funding source-AD, DW, Youth) during the first and second quarter of each contract year based on the direction of the WDB Executive Director and the Board. WDB staff will also monitor appropriation programs during program operation to reduce compliance issues. A random technique will be used to identify the selection of files. All forms for eligibility documentation, services rendered, and payments are compared to MoJobs for data entry accuracy.

Process for and findings of the monitoring process are presented to and reviewed by the Youth Committee and then the full board. Participant files are reviewed for WIOA eligibility, priority of services, complaint and grievance procedures, employment plans, need for services past career, On-the-Job Training contracts, training plans, supportive services, assessments provided, outcome attainment, supplemental data and the appropriateness of participant payments. WDB staff also monitors for compliance with WIOA, NGCC, Fair Labor Standards Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, and Child Labor Laws. Process for and findings of the monitoring are presented, reviewed, and approved by the Youth Committee and ultimately the full board.

**e. The providers of the Youth services in the LWDA, including the areas and elements they provide;**

As of July 1, 2022, the new sub-recipient for South Central Region is Educational Data Systems, Inc., (EDSI) and serves as the service provider for youth in all twelve counties: Butler, Carter, Douglas, Howell, Oregon, Ozark, Reynolds, Ripley, Shannon, Texas, Wayne and Wright. Through referrals and partnerships, they are able to effectively connect the youth participants to training and employers for the following services:

- Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery
- Alternative secondary school offerings or dropout recovery services
- Work Experience
- Occupational Skills Training
- Education-Workforce preparation, specific to occupation or occupational cluster
- Leadership development
- Supportive services

- Adult mentoring
- Follow-up services
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling
- Financial Literacy Education
- Entrepreneurial Skills Training
- Services provided for labor market and employment information
- Transition to post-secondary Education and training

**f. How year-round services are provided to Youth 14–24 years of age that are still in high school or out of school;**

Each county has an established Employment Specialist. Working in conjunction with the CLEOs, off-site mobile offices are being established in all twelve counties. Workshops, activities, and meetings are conducted year-round. Outreach to schools, and other locations youth frequent, are intensified as summer draws closer to promote WIOA youth services to in and out of school youth year-round. For the past few years Employment Specialists have also had the privilege of promoting the Summer Jobs programs, offering summer employment opportunities for eligible youth, both in and out-of-school. Summer Jobs provides short term employment in a field the youth has expressed interest in, to provide the youth with work experience and soft skills. This has been a successful partnership with our local employers and has given much needed summer employment opportunities to rural youth.

**g. An example of the flow of services for a Youth in the LWDA (please include all aspects, including intake, objective assessment process, assessment, coordination of services, follow-up, etc.)**

Each county has an established Employment Specialist. Working in conjunction with the CLEOs, off-site mobile offices are being established in all twelve counties. Workshops, activities, and meetings are conducted year-round. Outreach to schools, and other locations youth frequent, are intensified as summer draws closer to promote WIOA youth services to in and out of school youth year-round. For the past few years Employment Specialists have also had the privilege of promoting the Summer Jobs programs, offering summer employment opportunities for eligible youth, both in and out-of-school. Summer Jobs provides short term employment in a field the youth has expressed interest in, to provide the youth with work experience and soft skills. This has been a successful partnership with our local employers and has given much needed summer employment opportunities to rural youth.

**h. The procedures for serving Youth that are most in need (homeless, disabled, offenders, etc.);**

The South Central area local agency partners, with many local agencies, address all at-risk youth through referrals and partnerships of committee involvement and community connections. This ensures that all areas of concern are addressed as available and includes youth that are most in need. Youth who are subject to the juvenile or adult justice system-after needs are determined, services needed and provided through WIOA are administered. For services needed and not provided under WIOA, youth are referred to appropriate partner agencies.

- Youth who are disabled- after needs are determined, services needed and provided through WIOA are administered. For services needed and not provided under WIOA, Youth are referred to appropriate partner agencies.

- Youth who are homeless- after needs are determined, services needed and provided through WIOA are administered. For services needed and not provided under WIOA, youth are referred to appropriate partner agencies.
- Youth who are pregnant or parenting- after needs are determined, services needed and provided through WIOA are administered. For services needed and not provided under WIOA, youth are referred to appropriate partner agencies.
- Youth who have dropped out of high school- after needs are determined, services needed and provided through WIOA are administered. For services needed and not provided under WIOA, youth are referred to appropriate partner agencies.

**i. The identification of the partnerships and describe the coordination of services with other agencies within the LWDA.**

The South Central area local agency partners, with many local agencies, address all at-risk youth through referrals and partnerships of committee involvement and community connections. This ensures that all areas of concern are addressed as available and includes youth that are most in need. Youth who are subject to the juvenile or adult justice system-after needs are determined, services needed and provided through WIOA are administered. For services needed and not provided under WIOA, youth are referred to appropriate partner agencies.

- Youth who are disabled- after needs are determined, services needed and provided through WIOA are administered. For services needed and not provided under WIOA, Youth are referred to appropriate partner agencies.
- Youth who are homeless- after needs are determined, services needed and provided through WIOA are administered. For services needed and not provided under WIOA, youth are referred to appropriate partner agencies.
- Youth who are pregnant or parenting- after needs are determined, services needed and provided through WIOA are administered. For services needed and not provided under WIOA, youth are referred to appropriate partner agencies.
- Youth who have dropped out of high school- after needs are determined, services needed and provided through WIOA are administered. For services needed and not provided under WIOA, youth are referred to appropriate partner agencies.

#### **60. Innovative Service-Delivery Projects for OSY**

Provide a description of any innovative service-delivery projects for OSY currently operating in the LWDA or a project the Board is planning to implement. Describe the Board's involvement in the projects, and the Board's efforts to continue involvement and funding for the continuation of these projects.

The Board oversees the Scholars@Work program, a program that allows part-time employment for out of school youth whose education has been interrupted and who have an adult responsibility. It is employment that demands responsible, focused, hard work. Obtaining their diploma is about 80% for the youth and going to the "next step" is the other 20%. The "next step" part focuses on the daily learning/working out the soft skills employers expect (punctuality and attendance, appropriate appearance, focus, following instructions, personal motivation and attitude, inter-personal communication skills, and personal adaptability); as well as a thoughtful, introspective, comprehensive work readiness course. This program is funded by WIOA Youth and is based on youth allocations.

## Agricultural Employment Services (AES)

### 61. Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers / Agricultural Employment Services

WIOA section 167 provides the framework for agricultural services delivery. National Farmworkers Jobs Program (NFJP) services and grants are implemented at 20 CFR Part 685, as proposed. The current Section 167 Grantee, UMOS—United Migrant Opportunity Services, must be included in the MOU as the NFJP partner. The Plan should address how the LWDB will cooperate with UMOS and the State Agricultural Employment Services office to provide employment and training services to this population.

Workforce Development Board of South Central Missouri has a MOU with UMOS/AES in accordance with WIOA section 167 to provide employment and training services to this population. When participants are eligible for WIOA and UMOS, we refer them to the agency for dual enrollment. Allowing the co-enrollment with both agencies allows us to offer a wider variety of services for that participant and allows the braiding of funding for any training and/or employment associated participant cost.

## Business Services

### 62. Employer Engagement

Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the LWDA facilitate engagement of employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

There was a need in one of our larger communities when a manufacturing facility announced it would be closing and 200+ employees would be affected. South Central WBD partnered with city officials, community business leaders, educational staff and career center personnel. South Central WBD then collaborated with workforce development state agencies, Job Center staff and WIOA staff to help organize an Employer Town Hall Meeting. During this meeting employers were shown many individuals would be affected, what the Trade Act, Job Center, WIOA, Apprenticeship, and educational opportunities were available to employers. The main emphasis was the Trade Act but it also included OJT, job posting, LMI, Incumbent Worker program, tax credits, bonding, etc. Because of the great turn out and response from the employers, we will be presenting this opportunity to other communities even if they do not have pending layoffs or closures. When the opportunity presents itself WDB staff also agrees to speak at engagements about services available through Job Centers. Economic Developers are at the table, meeting with companies as well as participating WDB meetings, Sector Strategy exercises, and other projects throughout the region.

### 63. Services to Meet the Workforce Needs of Employers

Describe how the Board coordinates and provides comprehensive and integrated workforce system services to businesses, including the development and delivery of innovative workforce services and strategies to meet the needs of area employers. Explain the collaboration with Missouri Job Center Jobs Teams to facilitate recruitment and meet business demand.

There was a need in one of our larger communities when a manufacturing facility announced it would be closing and 200+ employees would be affected. South Central WBD partnered with city officials, community business leaders, educational staff and career center personnel. South Central WBD then collaborated with workforce development state agencies, Job Center staff and WIOA staff to help organize an Employer Town Hall Meeting. During this meeting employers were informed how many individuals would be affected, what the Trade Act, Job Center, WIOA, Apprenticeship, and educational

opportunities were available to employers. The main emphasis was the Trade Act but it also included OJT, job posting, LMI, Incumbent Worker program, tax credits, bonding, etc. Because of the great turn out and response from the employers, we will be presenting this opportunity to other communities even if they do not have pending layoffs or closures. When the opportunity presents itself WDB staff also agrees to speak at engagements about services available through Job Centers. Economic Developers are at the table, meeting with companies as well as participating WDB meetings, Sector Strategy exercises, and other projects throughout the region.

#### **64. Economic Development**

Describe how the Board will better coordinate workforce development programs with economic development including how the LWDB will promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.

The South Central Region sits within two Regional Planning organizations, South Central Ozarks Council of Governments (SCOCOG) and Ozark Foothills Regional Planning Commission (OFRPC). The Regional Planning completed their Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy reports early this year. We have board members that sit on both of the Regional Planning Commissions. They are aware of our Job Center opportunities for business and job seekers. Economic Development leads the regional groups, working to bring growth, grant opportunities and an excellent resource for local information. The WDB staff are available to work directly with businesses in our region, customizing agreements to fit their needs. The WDB works in two-ways: coordinating the disbursement of Job Center information to businesses and in turn relays business needs to the Job Center. The South Central Region offers Incumbent Worker funds, On-Job-Training and Work Experience to our businesses.

The WDB works with local businesses and coordinates the implementation of its Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) program, which provides matching funds up to \$5,000 for those businesses who choose to train and upgrade the skills of its existing employees with the agreement that those so trained will be given raises in the near future. Job Center staff are available to host local Company sponsored Hiring Events to facilitate the recruitment of individuals for those companies participating in the Hiring Event and promote their services available.

#### **65. Sector Strategy Initiative / Career Pathways**

Describe the Board's sector-strategy initiative. Describe how the Board will be collaborating and aligning resources of all partners, public and private, toward developing a talent pipeline, and how that alignment will create meaningful career pathways for workers possessing skill levels serving important regional industries. Indicate how system services will be framed by industry sectors that are data driven, regionally designed, and guided by employers and how these strategies will be sustained. Include the methods the Board will be using to inform and engage key public and private stakeholders in the development of sector-strategies and career pathways.

The Local Targeted Industry Sectors Policy was last approved in April of 2016. Due to continued WIOA funding decreases, the policy was reviewed to better target additional sector strategies in the South Central Region identified as high growth and in demand occupations for our region. Information from the Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC) was used to determine these occupations. The updated and revised policy was approved by the board and became effective October 26, 2021.

There were seven (7) different SOC Codes that were identified. Using the SOC Codes allows for a better distinct career pathway. Individuals have the ability to explore the various options that are available in each of these seven (7) different SOC Codes. For example, SOC Code 33-0000 Protective Service Occupations can lead an individual toward the area of law enforcement, fire and rescue, EMT, etc. Within the law enforcement arena, an individual can explore a career with a police department, sheriff's department, conservation agent, Secret Service and the list goes on.

Our priority in the region is to help as many of our residents to obtain sustainable employment so they are able to give back to the community in a productive manner. Working with county and local government along with private sector employers will help to fill the many jobs that are available at this time. Helping these employers to understand our sector strategies and the career pathways that could help both the job seeker and employer obtain their goals is also our objective as South Central WDB.

### 66. Business Services Plan

Boards shall maintain a Business Services Plan, outlining team members, including WIOA core and combined partners, and the marketing and outreach roles and expectations of team members. The Business Services Plan also should outline the team's purpose, goals, and policies and procedures to ensure seamless delivery of services, avoid duplication, and ensure feedback to the Board's Job centers. The plan should explain how the services provided by business service staff will be recorded in the client case management system for the calculation of two types of Effectiveness in Serving Employers Measure. (1-number of businesses served and 2-market penetration of businesses in the area). Include the **Business Services Plan as Attachment 29**.

Business Service Plan – Part about Effectiveness in Serving Employers:

There are two Employer Performance Measures for Missouri. These two measures are:

1. Repeat Business Customers - the number of employer establishments that have used core program employer services during the current reporting period (current program year) that also have used core program employer services one or more times during the previous three program years. This can indicate whether employers who receive services from the core programs are satisfied with those services and become repeat customers. It also indicates the ability to develop and maintain strong relationships with employers over time.
1. Employer Penetration Rate - a percentage of employers using services out of all employers in the State. This tracks the percentage of employers who are using the core program services out of all the employers in the State. The number of employer establishments served within a program year will be compared to the aggregate total of State employers. That total will be based on the Bureau of Labor Statistics Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.

All staff in the South Central Region that provide employer services must accurately record those services in the statewide electronic case management system (Currently MoJobs). To "Record" a service means to select the appropriate activity code for the service(s) provided to each business. Staff must record all applicable services for each employer at the time the service was provided. The OWD has published Issuance 04-2018 which includes the Participant Activity Codes, Durations, and Definitions provides policy guidelines and instructions. The Attachment for the Activity Code Policy lists activities and their definitions that identify those activities as a staff-assisted service to an employer. Staff are required to use this as a reference to determine which term is the best fit for the services provided to the employer. The Employer Services recorded in the system are monitored by the WDB Compliance

Department. Training is provided on an as needed basis based on program requests, issues/concerns, or lack of recorded services.

See **Attachment 29**

### **Innovative Service Delivery Strategies**

#### **67. Missouri Re-entry Process /Ex-offender Initiative**

Describe how the LWDB will support the Missouri re-entry process / ex-offender initiative. Include the services to be provided for ex-offenders and the process to be used to identify employers willing to hire ex-offenders.

South Central WDB supports the Missouri Re-entry Process ex-offender initiative by closely partnering with Probation & Parole. We have employers in South Central region that specifically request these participants for employment with their business. The Job Centers continue to work with justice involved individuals, exposing them to all services available. Staff encourage assessments, WorkKeys testing, attendance in workshops, education/training and job placement.

#### **68. Work-based Learning / Transitional Jobs**

Describe the Board's innovative strategies for promoting and increasing enrollments in the work-based learning programs, such as Registered Apprenticeship, On-the-Job Training (OJT), Work Experience, Internships, Incumbent Worker Training, Transitional Jobs, and Customized Training. Include processes to target and encourage employer participation.

There was a need in one of our larger communities when a manufacturing facility announced it would be closing and 200+ employees would be affected. South Central WDB partnered with city officials, community business leaders, educational staff and career center personnel. South Central WDB then collaborated with workforce development state agencies, Job Center staff and WIOA staff to help organize an Employer Town Hall Meeting. During this meeting employers how many individuals would be affected, what the Trade Act, Job Center, WIOA, Apprenticeship, and educational opportunities were available to employers. The main emphasis was the Trade Act but it also included OJT, job posting, LMI, Incumbent Worker program, tax credits, bonding, etc. Because of the great turn out and response from the employers, we will be presenting this opportunity to other communities even if they do not have pending layoffs or closures. When the opportunity presents itself WDB staff also agrees to speak at engagements about services available through Job Centers. Economic Developers are at the table, meeting with companies as well as participating WDB meetings, Sector Strategy exercises, and other projects throughout the region.

#### **69. Certified Work Ready Communities Initiative (CWRC)**

Describe the Board's strategies for participating in the Certified Work Ready Communities initiative. Please include, if applicable, any counties in your LWDA that plan to apply for certification and what role the Board will play in the development and implementation of the plan.

The South Central Region is made up of twelve counties. Eight of the counties are Certified Work Ready Communities and are maintaining that certification. We have one county, Wright, working toward certification and is currently at 86% and continuing to move forward. The three remaining counties, Carter, Reynolds and Shannon are completing their applications and documentation to begin the process of becoming a Certified Work Ready Community.

### Certified Work Ready Communities

- Butler County certified January 2014 and maintaining
- Douglas County certified September 2017 and maintaining
- Howell County certified January 2016 and maintaining
- Oregon Girardeau County certified January 2019 and maintaining
- Ozark County certified August 2018 and maintaining
- Ripley County certified January 2014 and maintaining
- Texas County certified May 2018 and maintaining
- Wayne County certified December 2019 and maintaining

### Working toward Certification

- Wright County currently at 91%
- Carter County completing application and paperwork
- Reynolds County completing application and paperwork
- Shannon County completing application and paperwork

The South Central WDB continues to encourage the NCRC county committee leads as well as the Job Center Leads to continue providing WorkKeys testing. However, budget and staffing constraints present a challenge to the outreach of this service.

## **70. Trade Adjustment Assistance**

Describe the Board's strategies for ensuring customers are aware of the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program and are co-enrolled into both WIOA Dislocated Worker and TAA, except in extenuating circumstances? (**Integration of Services or Co-enrollment Policy should be Attachment 23**)

The South Central Workforce Development Region will make every attempt to co-enroll all eligible Trade Act Participants into the WIOA Dislocated Worker Program. Enrolling an individual into every program for which they are eligible is to maximize the options available to them to overcome barriers and successfully obtain self-sufficient employment. The Trade Act Staff Members and WIOA Staff Members in each comprehensive Job Center work together closely with participants that are eligible for both programs to ensure we are meeting co-enrollment requirements and offering the activities necessary to assist the participant with employment and training needs they are eligible to access. Participants enrolled into a program because of the OWD Co-Enrollment Policy are not given any special priority over other program participants. At times, there are extenuating circumstances that would not allow us to co-enroll a participant into both programs. These extenuating circumstances can include but are not limited to:

- If the participant does not live in the South Central Region, we would not enroll them into WIOA DW just because of the Trade Enrollment – Local policy states that because our funding is partially determined by the population of a region, we use the South Central Region funds for participants and businesses that live/located in the South Central Region Counties.
- If the Trade Participant has elected to go to a training program not approved by the Missouri State Eligible Training Provider System.
- If a participant was previously enrolled in the Trade Adjustment Act Program before the Co-Enrollment Policy went into effect on 7/29/2019, they were not co-enrolled unless it was requested/needed for the progress of the individual participant.
- If a participant is deemed ineligible for the WIOA DW Program based on information added to the Case Management System Application. (MoJobs WIOA Application)

Please see OWD Issuance 03-2019 FAQ for more information and OWD responses to extenuating circumstance concerns.

### 71. Missouri Community Colleges

Describe how the Board will coordinate with the local community colleges. Please describe in depth the referral process of participants between the Community Colleges and Job Centers. Please include the **MOU (cooperative agreement) between the Board and Community Colleges** if your LWDA has any as **Attachment 30** to the Plan.

As of June 1, 2022, the Missouri Job Center – Poplar Bluff, relocated its offices to Three Rivers College. We are currently working with Three Rivers College to establish a MOU that outlines a referral system that establishes a collaboration with this Community College partner, as well as, creates a mutual effort to ensure a strong partnership/referral system continues.

### 72. Incumbent Worker Policy

If the LWDB has an **Incumbent Worker Policy**, please include it as **Attachment 31**. If not please include a statement that the LWDB does not have an Incumbent Worker Policy.

See **Attachment 31**

## Strategies for Faith-based and Community-based Organizations

### 73. Faith-based Strategies

Describe those activities to be undertaken to:

(1) increase the opportunities for participation of faith-based and community organizations as committed and active partners in the One-Stop Delivery System; and

Through the MoWorks Together grant, we are reaching out to community organizations such as area Chambers of Commerce, mental health community organizations, and area Drug Task Force organizations. In the South Central Region, the Job Center staff, as well as the WDB staff, work on special projects and serve on committees through these community based organizations.

(2) expand the access of faith-based and community-based organizations' customers to the services offered by the One-Stops in the LWDA.

Strong partnerships are being built through the Job Center Leadership Teams. Most community based organizations and many faith-based organizations are present and collaborating with other members to plan outreach and educate regarding the Workforce Development System in their respective areas.

## REGIONAL PLANS

### Regional Planning Guidance

#### 74. Regional Plans

Missouri has designated 14 Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs). In accordance with WIOA sec. 106(c)(2), each of the LWDAs establish a Plan; however, collaboration must exist among the Kansas City and St. Louis Economic Regions for the creation of Regional Plans composed of the following:

- 1) For the Kansas City Region, one Regional Plan for the local planning areas of Kansas City and Vicinity Region and the East Jackson County Region; and
- 2) For the St. Louis Region, one Regional Plan for the local planning areas of: The City of St. Louis Region, the County of Saint Louis Region, the County of St. Charles Region, and the Jefferson/Franklin County Consortium Region.

While this establishes 14 Boards that are encouraged to collaborate, cooperate, and plan across common needs, they will not explicitly submit a Regional Plan. This establishes two Boards within the Kansas City Region that must contribute to a Regional Economic Plan for the Kansas City regional economy and four Boards within the St. Louis Region that must contribute to a Regional Economic Plan for the St. Louis regional economy.

Boards within the Kansas City and St. Louis regional economic planning areas must complete a regional planning requirement by including within each original LWDB Plan a Regional Economic Plan that is identically shared by all Boards in each economic region.

Include the **Regional Plan as Attachment 32**. Copies of Local Plans from other LWDAs in the region are not required for your Local Plan. Please submit the combined portion of the Regional Plan with signatures of the CEOs, Chairs and LWDB Directors.

#### NOTE:

Following approval of the Local Plan and Regional Plan, plans will be required to be posted on the LWDB website. Any updates or plan modifications will be required to be posted by the LWDB after approval. Please keep a current Local Plan and Regional Plan, if applicable, available on your website at all times.

No Regional Plan is required by South Central Region.