



September 29, 2016

Mr. Craig Harting, Chairperson
Northern Tier Workforce Development Board
1000 Buffalo Road
Lewisburg, PA 17837

Dear Mr. Harting,

The Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry (Department) has approved the Northern Tier Region Program Year (PY) 2016 Transitional Regional Plan. Per the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), this approval extends to the local plan associated with the local workforce development area that comprises the planning region. Such approval is effective through the end of PY 2016 (i.e., June 30, 2017).

Approval of this plan does not constitute approval of any practice that conflicts with federal and state statutes, regulations or policies, nor does approval preclude the commonwealth from, at its discretion, readdressing any part of the plan if the content is found to conflict with such statutes, regulations or policies.

Please note that each planning region, through collaboration with its local workforce development area boards and partners, must submit a "multi-year" (i.e., PY17-PY19) regional plan, to include multi-year local plans. Each plan must be complete; consistent with the Department's forthcoming planning guidance and the Pennsylvania's WIOA Combined State Plan; and compliant with applicable federal, state, and local statute, guidance, policy and procedure.

Please direct specific questions regarding the PY 2016 transitional plans and/or the upcoming multi-year plans and planning processes to Michael White at (717) 214-7173 or michwhite@pa.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Eileen Cipriani".

Eileen Cipriani
Deputy Secretary for Workforce Development

cc: The Honorable Thomas S. Henry, Chief Elected Official
Mr. Frank Thompson, Northern Tier Workforce Development Board Executive Director



Northern Tier Workforce Development Board

PY 2016 Transitional Regional Plan

PY 2016 Transitional Local Plan

Appendix A: PY 2016 Transitional Regional Plan Template

WIOA requires regional planning— a broad strategic approach to planning focused on the overarching vision, goals, alignment and shared responsibilities within the region. Pennsylvania intends to implement WIOA by employing a two-tiered approach to meeting this requirement by allowing a 1-year WIOA transitional plan followed by a more comprehensive multi-year plan. This approach provides latitude for regions that may not yet be able to fully address all of the outlined elements required in a four-year regional plan.

In addressing the elements outlined below, if the planning region is not prepared to provide a complete response to a specific element at the time of plan submission, a response must be provided that indicates how the region plans to fully address that particular element in the multi-year plan.

Please provide a separate response for each of the elements listed below. **Transitional regional plans are not expected to exceed 20 pages.**

1.1 Provide the following:

- A. A reference name for the planning region;
- B. Identification of the local workforce development areas that comprise the planning region;
- C. Identification of the county(s) each local workforce development area serves;
- D. Identification of the key planning region committee members charged with drafting the regional plan;
- E. Indication of the local workforce development area each committee member is associated with; and
- F. A list of key planning region committee meeting date(s). [WIOA Sec. 106(a) and (c)]

- A. Northern Tier Region
- B. Northern Tier Workforce Development Area
- C. Bradford, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga, Wyoming
- D. Frank Thompson, NT WDB
- E. The entire Northern Tier Workforce Development board and Executive Committee participated
- F. Following the release of the first draft of the WSG No. 05-2015 on December 23, 2015, and the release of the state combined plan for public comment the next week, workforce staff began discussing and seeking input for the transitional plan. There was specific discussion on service delivery and priorities, goals, input and feedback was sought at partner meetings (1/26, 3/29), PA CareerLink® management meetings (1/29, 3/26), meetings with local (1/29, 2/19) and state elected officials and their staff (1/20, 1/27). The issues were raised at the PREP partnership meetings (3/4), economic development strategic planning meetings (3/9), meetings with providers and career and technology centers (3/11, 4/6). There were two public WDB meetings (2/10, 4/13) and two public Executive Committee meetings (2/19, 4/15) held since the original release, one of each occurred following the release of the second version of WSG 05-2015 on March 1.

1.2 Provide a labor market and economic analysis of the workforce development planning region. This regional analysis must include:

- A. The economic conditions;
- B. Labor force employment and unemployment data;

- C. Information on labor market trends;
- D. Workforce development activities;
- E. The educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers; and
- F. The development and implementation of sector initiatives for existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the region.

Indicate the sources of regional labor market and economic data. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)]

The Northern Tier Region covers more than 4,000 square miles in rural Pennsylvania consisting of Bradford, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga and Wyoming Counties, three of which border New York State to the north. While outside the Northern Tier, four cities act as supporting regional service centers to the Northern Tier: Elmira and Binghamton, NY to the north; Williamsport, PA to the southwest; and Scranton/Wilkes-Barre, PA to the southeast. Each of the counties are influenced by the respective cities which they are closest. Because of the region's highly rural nature and its historic economic growth problems, the area is included in the Appalachian Regional Commission's (ARC) development area.

The National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) determined that a national economic recession began in December 2007 and officially ended in June 2009. As the effects deepened in the Commonwealth, Northern Tier's unemployment rate increased from 4.9 percent in 2007 to 7.8 percent in 2010. The Great Recession may be officially over, but its lasting effects continue to provide challenges for Northern Tier's workforce and employers. Signs of recovery became evident in 2011 as the local unemployment rate fell to 7.0 percent. The indicators of an economic recovery continue into 2012 and are beginning to manifest into reductions in the unemployment rate, increases in jobs, or increases in the size of the labor force. The graph below illustrates Northern Tier's unemployment trend as compared to the State rate since 2007. The rise and decline of the natural gas industry also took place during and since the recession.

The labor force of 90,300 increased to 94,400 from 2007 to 2012 before lowering again, likely due to the impact of the natural gas exploration. The number of employed also peaked in 2012 with a high of 87,200 before reducing to the current 86,100.

Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment for Northern Tier WIA in Multiple Time Periods

Labor Force Table

The table below shows the annual not seasonally adjusted Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment data for Northern Tier WIA in Multiple Time Periods.

Time Period	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate	Preliminary
2007	90,300	85,800	4,400	4.90%	No
2008	91,400	86,200	5,200	5.70%	No
2009	91,000	83,100	7,900	8.70%	No
2010	89,900	82,600	7,300	8.10%	No
2011	92,500	85,700	6,800	7.30%	No
2012	94,400	87,200	7,200	7.60%	No
2013	92,800	85,600	7,300	7.80%	No
2014	90,400	85,000	5,500	6.00%	No
2015*	91,400	86,100	5,300	5.80%	

Source: PA Dept of Labor and Industry

The labor force and employment and unemployment data for the region has fluctuated in recent years, which can be attributed to the rise and decline of the natural gas exploration and drilling over that timeframe.

Change 2007 - 2015				
Year	Civilian Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	Unemployment Rate (%)
2007-2015	1,100	300	900	0.9%
	1.2%	0.3%	20.5%	--
<i>The important thing here is to identify if the labor market has returned to pre-recession levels. Also, how has the unemployment rate changed and why. Consider the changes in the employed and unemployed populations.</i>				
Change 2010 - 2015				
Year	Civilian Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	Unemployment Rate (%)
2010-2015	1,500	3,500	-2,000	-2.3%
	1.7%	4.2%	-27.4%	--
<i>This shows how the labor market has changed since the end of the recession. One thing to consider here is why the unemployment is changing. Are jobseekers dropping out of the labor force (discourage jobseekers)? Or are jobseekers transitioning to the employed population (i.e., are they finding jobs)? Consider how the labor force has changed as well.</i>				

The trends of the region’s economy have, in the past five years, fluctuated more significantly than historically. Because of the region’s relatively low population, the impact of a significant layoff from one large employer can have an effect. When activity as significant as the natural gas industry exploration occurs, there is an immediate, noticeable, and measurable impact on the region’s economy. Low natural gas prices caused a slowdown in drilling activity over the past two years, but with the increase in price, an increase in activity takes place, which impacts the drilling, the support sectors, and other local employers. This has created a more volatile labor market trend for our region.

The LWDB continues to develop and strengthen the partnerships and participation in the workforce development system of three major groups: employers, educators and service agencies. The Northern

Tier Workforce Development Board will develop and maintain an effective and efficient workforce system that uses the power and influence of the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board to attract partners, build alliances and coordinate resources. All of the meetings and regular discussions with these partners and management share the common goal of meeting the strategic and operational plans of the region. LWDB staff meet regularly with the PA CareerLink® staff, there are monthly meetings of the PA CareerLink® management team and the directors of the WIOA Title I programs. The ABLE providers and EARN providers meet as well. Strategy, performance, problems, solutions and protocol are all discussed. Business services, with an emphasis on partnerships and long-term sector strategies are an evolving process within the region as we work to understand employers who are willing to work with our customers with barriers and allow us to be a part of their planning. The Business Education Partnership (BEP) is creating a better connection between the area businesses and educational opportunities and the region's school system

The area's strengths are the cooperation and effectiveness in operating within the unique system of a rural area. These same attributes are weaknesses with the lack of training providers and opportunities due to the small numbers.

Within the local PA CareerLink® system, there is a commitment to quality and an understanding that the system is customer-driven. The PA CareerLink® provides universal service for everyone. As such, the local design of the PA CareerLink® centers is focused on: universality; customer choice; integrated systems and results-based accountability. In addition to meeting the required performance standards, PA CareerLink® partners must ensure that customers have easy access to services without being hindered by the obstacles related to funding streams and agency distinctness. Customers must also be afforded an opportunity to investigate all of the available services and training options, including statistics and satisfaction rates prior to choosing a career path. Services, including the Career Resource Center, are available to anyone coming through our doors without eligibility restrictions.

Individual Training Accounts (ITA), On-the-Job Training (OJT), incumbent worker training as well as work experience for youth are different types of training and employment activities offered. There also are workshops offering a variety of skill upgrades and assistance to aid in the employment search. Supportive services are available to customers attending intensive or training services for child care and transportation needs.

The chart below depicts the educational levels of the region's population.

Education Level	2015 Population	2025 Population	2015 % of Population	2015 State % Population	2015 Nat. % Population
Less Than 9th Gra	3,973	3,602	3%	4%	7%
9th Grade to 12th	11,185	11,501	9%	8%	8%
High School Diplor	61,377	62,004	48%	37%	28%
Some College	19,573	19,190	15%	16%	21%
Associate's Degree	10,169	10,200	8%	8%	8%
Bachelor's Degree	14,065	14,341	11%	17%	18%
Graduate Degree a	8,391	8,783	7%	11%	11%
Total	128,733	129,622	100%	100%	100%

Source: QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees & Self-Employed - EMSI 2015.4 Class of Worker

By comparing the POPULATION education levels to the Jobs by Typical Entry Education Level, you can determine if there are gaps or surpluses in the types of jobs in your region. This could lead to individuals seeking employment outside of the region that better matches their skills or taking on lower-skilled jobs in the region (Underemployment).

POPULATION by Educational Attainment Level		
Educational Attainment	2015	2015 Jobs %
Less than high school diploma	15,158	11.8%
High school diploma or equivalent	61,377	47.7%
Some college, no degree	19,573	15.2%
Associate's degree	10,169	7.9%
Bachelor's degree	14,065	10.9%
Master's degree	--	--
Master's, Doctoral, or Professional degree	8,391	6.5%
N/A (Military Occupations)	--	--
Total	128,733	100.0%

Jobs by Typical Entry Education Level		
Educational Attainment	Workforce (2015)	2015 Jobs %
Less than high school	18,705	28.3%
High school diploma or equivalent	27,417	41.5%
Postsecondary non-degree award	5,335	8.1%
Some college, no degree	731	1.1%
Associate's degree	2,424	3.7%
Bachelor's degree	7,760	11.7%
Master's degree	--	--
Doctoral or professional degree	2,040	3.1%
N/A	474	0.7%
Total	66,049	100.0%

(Estimated) WORKFORCE Composition by Educational Attainment Level		
Educational Attainment	Workforce (2015)	2015 Jobs %
Less than high school diploma	7,583	11.5%
High school diploma or equivalent	19,984	30.3%
Some college, no degree	14,966	22.7%
Associate's degree	5,901	8.9%
Bachelor's degree	10,528	15.9%
Master's degree	--	--
Master's, Doctoral, or Professional degree	5,441	8.2%
N/A (Military Occupations)	474	0.7%
Total	66,049	100.0%

Long-Term Industry Projections for Northern Tier WDA (2012-22)				
Industry	Employment (2012)	Projected Employment (2022)	Employment Change (2012-2022)	
			Volume	Percent
Total Jobs	70,580	76,620	6,040	8.6%
Goods Producing Industries	19,300	20,340	1,040	5.4%
Agriculture, Mining & Logging	7,370	7,710	340	4.6%
Construction	2,510	3,070	560	22.3%
Manufacturing	9,420	9,560	140	1.5%
Services-Providing	43,630	48,200	4,570	10.5%
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	12,910	13,470	560	4.3%
Information	630	570	-60	-9.5%
Financial Activities	2,230	2,370	140	6.3%
Professional & Business Services	1,460	1,900	440	30.1%
Education & Health Services	14,860	17,740	2,880	19.4%
Leisure & Hospitality	4,780	5,190	410	8.6%
Other Services, Except Public Admin.	2,430	2,620	190	7.8%
Federal, State & Local Government	4,330	4,340	10	0.2%

Source: Long-Term Industry Employment Projections (2012-22)

The drilling of natural gas rapidly raised the energy sectors employment numbers, but the high supply and low demand have driven costs down and there is a significant slowdown occurring throughout the industry. Based on employment figures, the largest industries for the region area are Health Care, Public Administration, Manufacturing and Retail Trade. When reviewing figures for the largest average wages by industry, manufacturing, education, health care, and information technology have the largest salaries. Industries that have high location quotients in the area include manufacturing, health care, energy, and building and construction. Therefore, the LWDB focuses on industry partnerships as a crucial strategy in identifying skills needs, promoting career pathways, matching jobseekers to available jobs and training. In addition, the LWDB utilizes the High Priority Occupation List when reviewing regional and sector strategies.

Industry Cluster Statistics for Northern Tier WDA												
	AFP	AM	BC	BM	BSV	ED	ENGY	HC	HLE	LT	REFI	WWP
2014 Employment	2,755	5,261	4,632	110	3,107	5,854	4,853	9,053	4,992	2,430	1,580	4,197
Percent WIA Employment	4.69	8.95	7.88	0.19	5.28	9.96	8.25	15.40	8.49	4.13	2.69	7.14
Employment Growth (2009-2014)	163	128	313	38	1,127	-401	3,592	-71	354	1,008	-21	-178
Percent Growth (2009-2014)	6.3	2.5	7.2	52.8	56.9	-6.4	284.9	-0.8	7.6	70.9	-1.3	-4.1
2014 Average Wage (\$)	38,211	46,332	40,052	46,794	47,302	40,554	81,117	43,685	13,194	47,888	44,639	53,020
2014 National Location Quotient	1.30	1.19	1.25	0.16	0.42	1.03	3.67	1.06	0.71	1.21	0.49	4.60

1.3 Based upon the regional labor market and economic condition analysis as described in Appendix A's element 1.2 and *Pennsylvania's Workforce Development Plan (PY 2016 – PY 2019)*, describe the planning region's economic and workforce development oriented vision and strategic goals.
[WIOA Sec. 106(c) and Sec. 107(d)]

The vision of the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board is that the local area will be a destination of choice for employers and jobseekers, where existing businesses experience growth and where new businesses are eager to locate because of the excellent job opportunities, economic vitality, quality of life and the presence of a skilled workforce. Therefore, the local workforce system will increase the employment, retention, and earnings of customers, and, as a result, improve the quality of the workforce, reduce welfare dependency, and enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the five-county workforce area.

The Northern Tier's economic future depends on a workforce able to compete in today's global economy. In order for the region to be economically competitive and its residents to acquire careers that pay family-sustaining wages, the region needs to ensure that its workforce system is steered by business and job seeker needs. A skilled and well-trained workforce can be achieved by better aligning the workforce development system with industry and education.

The mission of the LWDB is to provide responsive and innovative leadership that meets the current and future needs of employers and jobseekers.

The current key workforce priorities of the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board are to:

- Strengthen the system's impact on the secondary school system which will increase awareness of job opportunities, necessary skills, PA CareerLink®, and help create a youth talent pipeline.
- Strengthen relationships with economic development and education partners
- Strengthen the relationships between the PA CareerLink® and the business community
- Ensure the workforce development system meets the needs of its customers, both businesses and jobseekers

The local area's mission, vision, and strategic goals, the local area as well as the state seek a business focused workforce system with a special care given to those with barriers in alignments with the state plan. This focus creates a better link between business and jobseekers. It allows business to grow and create more jobs. At the same time, it allows jobseekers to be trained in the skills that employers need. Both the state and the local area supports training for high priority occupations, career pathways, better job matching, and programs that address skill gaps.

1.4 Describe regional strategies used to facilitate engagement of businesses and other employers, including small employers and in-demand industry sector occupations. Describe methods and services to support the regional workforce system in meeting employer needs. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)]

The LWDB cooperation with the Local Development District (LDD), the Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission (NTRPDC), which is the agency housing services of both the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) and the LWDB, creates a partnership that is efficient and well-rounded for employer engagement. Employer outreach is necessary for both groups and the shared information helps identify challenges and develop solutions to those strategies. By further developing these partnerships, engagement is improved as well. There are six employers in the region with more than 500 employees, so beyond those six, every other employer is considered a small business.

Staff outreach, meeting and participation in events with businesses will be crucial as the area works to implement new programs such as apprenticeship models, career pathways initiatives, and transitional employment while enhancing the more traditional OJTs and incumbent worker training.

The LWDB works closely with Partnerships for Regional Economic Performance (PREP) which include the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), Northeast Pennsylvania Industrial Resource Center (NEPIRC), and county economic development partners among others to offer support and outreach to meet the needs of employers and jobseekers and identifying in-demand sectors and employers.

Working with employers in existing or emerging industries to determine their skill needs is crucial in meeting the workforce needs of the local area. When skill needs for high-growth occupations are known, the local area is better prepared to work with the needs of under-skilled workers. In order to meet workforce needs, the local area works with educational entities and businesses to design training programs with the skills that businesses need. In addition, the local area works with jobseekers to identify the types of job opportunities that are available and what transferrable skills that they have. This allows the businesses to get the candidates that they need. By working together in industry partnerships, employers can more easily learn the resources available to help with business startup, hiring, and finance. In addition, the local area works with the local Small Business Development Centers in the region and often refer businesses to them for assistance. When possible, employers are encouraged to work together for cost savings and to develop training programs together when similar needs are present.

The LWDB's use of funds is geared to serving both the job seeker and the employer and to support the local area's vision for workforce development. The LWDB supports the PA CareerLink® and attempts to eliminate duplication of services and funds through the coordination of services in the one-stop centers. The LWDB offers ITAs to qualified individuals in the high priority occupations in order to gain better employment, wages, and retention. The LWDB leverages WIOA funds to serve as many people as possible. The LWDB is active with the industry clusters in the five counties which assist in training jobseekers in the skills that employers need. As a result of the successful consortium groups, members have received additional sources of training funds for their respective clusters. The work of the LWDB in industry partnerships in health care, technology, and manufacturing has helped the group to attract new participants and allowed them to focus on both higher and lower order activities.

The Northern Tier Workforce Development Board is cognizant of the need to leverage WIOA funds where possible and allowable to support the local workforce development plan beyond the constraints of WIOA. The LWDB's support of the industry cluster consortia is an excellent model of how the LWDB used its resources to capture seed money for the establishment of the groups, provided coordination to ensure support for the groups and leveraged funds to allow the groups to secure additional funding to assist in workforce development and staff capacity building. Because the LWDB has developed a level of local trust, many partners share information about potential funding streams with the LWDB staff. The LWDB works closely with the local economic development corporations to remain current on economic designations and needs in the area which could affect eligibility for grant monies. Our vision of a responsive system, greater service of employers, increased outreach to education, and a prepared workforce is what leads the LWDB, the staff, and the communication throughout the public workforce system.

By guiding workforce investments to the skill needs of the employers, the local area will be able to accomplish its vision of people being self-sufficient, a growing economy, and a trained workforce that attracts business to the community.

1.6 Describe how the planning region will define and establish administrative cost arrangements, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate, for the region. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)]

The planning region is a local area with administrative cost arrangements.

1.8 Outline regional transportation issues related to workforce development and ways the region will address needs identified. Include a description and/or map of the regional commuting patterns. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)]

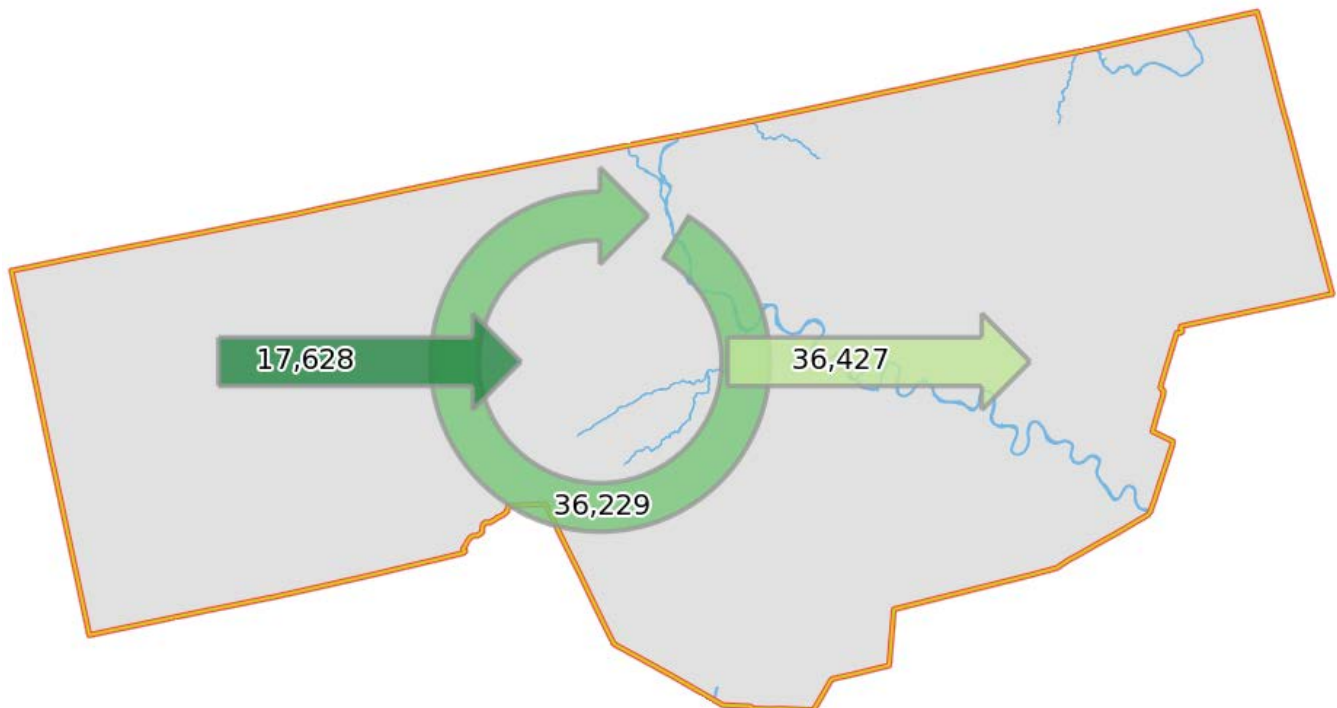
The transportation issues related to workforce development revolve around the lack of a local or regional transportation system. The system that does exist visits most communities twice daily at most. Any workforce customer without a vehicle or driver's license must rely on others for a ride, or face extremely restrictive windows to get to the PA CareerLink®, training, or employment. While the system provides the best service possible under the circumstances, the financial hurdles and lack of demand makes expanding these systems extremely cost prohibitive. There is a ride-share, low-income, and senior transportation program which serves Bradford, Tioga and Sullivan Counties. All transportation providers are partners with the system.

The area plans to address the issue with an increase in the hub and spoke concept, which will send staff to other community partners on a regular basis that will extend the services without bricks and mortar. The Title I providers are going to begin traveling to community facilities, like libraries, where they can meet with customers and provide services.

While the issues revolve around a lack of transportation opportunities, the following data and map outline the commuter patterns for the Northern Tier.

Inflow/Outflow Report, Northern Tier County, 2013		
	2013	
	Count	Share
Selection Area Labor Market Size (Primary Jobs)		
Employed in the Selection Area	53,857	100.0%
Living in the Selection Area	72,656	134.9%
Net Job Inflow (+) or Outflow (-)	- 18,799	-
In-Area Labor Force Efficiency (Primary Jobs)		
Living in the Selection Area	72,656	100.0%
Living and Employed in the Selection Area	36,229	49.9%
Living in the Selection Area but Employed Outside	36,427	50.1%
In-Area Employment Efficiency (Primary Jobs)		
Employed in the Selection Area	53,857	100.0%
Employed and Living in the Selection Area	36,229	67.3%
Employed in the Selection Area but Living Outside	17,628	32.7%
Outflow Job Characteristics (Primary Jobs)		
External Jobs Filled by Residents	36,427	100.0%
Workers Aged 29 or younger	7,675	21.1%
Workers Aged 30 to 54	19,941	54.7%
Workers Aged 55 or older	8,811	24.2%
Workers Earning \$1,250 per month or less	7,386	20.3%
Workers Earning \$1,251 to \$3,333 per month	13,080	35.9%
Workers Earning More than \$3,333 per month	15,961	43.8%
Workers in the "Goods Producing" Industry Class	7,492	20.6%
Workers in the "Trade, Transportation, and Utilities" Industry Class	9,161	25.1%
Workers in the "All Other Services" Industry Class	19,774	54.3%
Inflow Job Characteristics (Primary Jobs)		
Internal Jobs Filled by Outside Workers	17,628	100.0%
Workers Aged 29 or younger	4,003	22.7%
Workers Aged 30 to 54	9,766	55.4%
Workers Aged 55 or older	3,859	21.9%
Workers Earning \$1,250 per month or less	3,521	20.0%
Workers Earning \$1,251 to \$3,333 per month	6,091	34.6%
Workers Earning More than \$3,333 per month	8,016	45.5%
Workers in the "Goods Producing" Industry Class	5,489	31.1%
Workers in the "Trade, Transportation, and Utilities" Industry Class	4,315	24.5%

Industry Class		
Workers in the "All Other Services" Industry Class	7,824	44.4%
Interior Flow Job Characteristics (Primary Jobs)		
Internal Jobs Filled by Residents	36,229	100.0%
Workers Aged 29 or younger	8,019	22.1%
Workers Aged 30 to 54	19,820	54.7%
Workers Aged 55 or older	8,390	23.2%
Workers Earning \$1,250 per month or less	8,296	22.9%
Workers Earning \$1,251 to \$3,333 per month	14,156	39.1%
Workers Earning More than \$3,333 per month	13,777	38.0%
Workers in the "Goods Producing" Industry Class	10,955	30.2%
Workers in the "Trade, Transportation, and Utilities" Industry Class	6,947	19.2%
Workers in the "All Other Services" Industry Class	18,327	50.6%
Source: U.S.Census Bureau, LED OnTheMap, 2013 Annual Average		



In-Commuting Patterns

Northern Tier Commuting Patterns					
<i>Where Workers Live Who Are Employed in Central PA</i>					
Home County	2011	2012	2013	Average	
				Count	Percent
Bradford County, PA	14,989	15,865	15,491	15,448	28.6%
Sullivan County, PA	1,134	1,172	1,072	1,126	2.1%
Susquehanna County, PA	6,680	6,824	6,804	6,769	12.5%
Tioga County, PA	9,353	9,083	8,452	8,963	16.6%
Wyoming County, PA	4,076	4,443	4,410	4,310	8.0%
Other Counties	16,991	17,630	17,628	17,416	32.2%
Total Jobs Held in REGION	53,223	55,017	53,857	54,032	100.0%

Northern Tier Commuting Patterns					
<i>Where Workers Live Who Are Employed in Central PA</i>					
Home County	2011	2012	2013	Average	
				Count	Percent
Northern Tier	36,232	37,387	36,229	36,616	67.8%
Luzerne County, PA	2,154	2,123	2,212	2,163	4.0%
Lackawanna County, PA	2,002	2,021	2,106	2,043	3.8%
Tioga County, NY	1,705	1,753	1,764	1,741	3.2%
Chemung County, NY	1,036	1,143	1,173	1,117	2.1%
Lycoming County, PA	1,127	999	1,040	1,055	2.0%
Other Counties	8,967	9,591	9,333	9,297	17.2%
Total Jobs Held in REGION	53,223	55,017	53,857	54,032	100.0%

1.9 Describe strategies and services the planning region will employ to coordinate workforce development programs/services with regional economic development services and providers. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)]

The LWDB works closely and collaboratively with the state and local areas and economic development for the sustainability of existing businesses and the growth and creation of small, new and emerging industries. The LWDB continues to strengthen ties to economic development and supports all the local industry partnerships. The one stop centers also work closely with new and emerging industries, the LWDB, and economic development to determine and meet critical needs. By learning about workforce needs from data, economic development, and employers themselves, LWDB is able to better design workforce and training programs with service providers and educational entities. The collaboration allows a case management system that communicates employer needs across multiple entities and

allows for the leveraging of resources to meet those needs. Ongoing efforts between economic development and the LWDB are crucial in order to achieve regional prosperity. A region that has a strong workforce that is adaptable to new technologies and has success in attracting business is better able to retain business. This will allow the community to grow. By working with business to determine their skill needs for existing and emerging employers to prepare for high-growth occupations, the local area is better prepared to work with the needs of under-skilled workers. Workers that are under-skilled can be assessed to their aptitudes and skills levels and then advised of career pathways. The workers are then presented with training opportunities as well as supportive services.

Partnerships include the Governor's Action Team (GAT), of Partnerships for Regional Economic Performance (PREP) which include the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), Northeast Pennsylvania Industrial Resource Center (NEPIRC), and county economic development partners among others offer support to meet the needs of employers and jobseekers.

1.10 Describe how the planning region will establish an agreement concerning how the planning region will collectively negotiate and reach agreement with the Department on local levels of performance for, and report on, the performance accountability measures described in WIOA Section 116(c), for local areas and the planning region. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)]

Note: The Department, the local board and the CEO reach agreement on local targets and levels based on the negotiation process before the start of each program year. While the CEO remains ultimately responsible for ensuring the local area meets or exceeds such local targets and levels, performance negotiations must be coordinated regionally, requiring each planning region to establish an agreement describing how the region will collectively negotiate performance goals with the Department.

[proposed 20 CFR 677.210(b) and (c)] and [proposed 20 CFR 679.510(a)(2)]

The Northern Tier is a regional and local area, which already works across five counties and its local elected officials to meet performance and serve the area.

1.13 Describe how the planning region will connect any regionally targeted populations to occupational demands, especially individuals with barriers to employment. [proposed 20 CFR 679.540(b)]

Our goal is to enhance the ability of workforce development and lifelong learning systems to service the underemployed worker and those with additional barriers. This includes participating in dialog with agencies in the community who are the primary point of contact for those issues.

The communication and referrals between PA CareerLink® partners and the many different agencies assisting those with additional barriers is the key to providing a comprehensive system. These groups include, but are not limited to: the county assistance offices, community action agencies, probation offices and non-profits such as Serve Inc, Futures, YMCA, and Area Agency on Aging.

Continuously educating PA CareerLink® staff, service agencies and the community regarding the spectrum of available services both inside and out of the PA CareerLink® system is necessary to avoid duplication of services and maximize and leverage resources. The PA CareerLink® management team continuously examines ways to align the PA CareerLink® service delivery system to more directly address issues involving underemployment, business services, and service to special populations. This population includes dislocated workers including displaced homemakers, migrant/seasonal workers, TANF customers, veterans, minorities, women and those with additional barriers to employment including older individuals, ex-offenders, persons with disabilities and persons with limited English proficiency. The PA CareerLink® Management Team assists the LWDB in ensuring availability of employment and training services to these special populations. Services for these individuals are equal to any other including all of the PA CareerLink® workshops, one-on-one services with staff, testing, referral process, as well as online opportunities such as JobGateway.

PA CareerLink® partners from Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Veterans, Trade and Department of Public Welfare assist in accessibility and availability to these populations. Each individual is assessed by PA CareerLink® staff and referred to appropriate services. Options for skills training are explored utilizing various partnerships with Educational Opportunity Center (EOC), Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), school district guidance departments, post-secondary education provider admissions offices and the WIOA Title I program. These same partners will assist in outreach services directly to special populations, and involve reasonable efforts to include members of both sexes, various racial and ethnic groups, individuals with disabilities, and individuals in differing age groups. Such efforts may include, but are not limited to: Advertising provider programs and/or activities in media, such as newspapers or radio programs, that specifically target various populations; Sending notices about openings in the programs and/or activities to schools or community service groups that serve various populations; and Consulting with appropriate community service groups about ways in which the providers may improve its outreach and service to various populations.

Appendix B: PY 2016 Transitional Local Plan Template

WIOA requires each local workforce area to develop a local plan that supports and is submitted as a component of its associated regional plan. The narratives framed in the local plan will include more detailed, actionable plans and objectives, consistent with the local plan’s respective regional plan strategic visions and goals.

In addressing the elements outlined below, if the local board is not prepared to provide a complete response to a specific element at the time of plan submission, a response must be provided that indicates how the local board plans to fully address that particular element in the multi-year plan.

Transitional local plans are not expected to exceed 75 pages.

Section 1: Workforce and Economic Analysis	8
Section 2: Strategic Vision and Goals	9
Section 3: Local Area Partnerships and Investment Strategies.....	10
Section 4: Program Design and Evaluation	13
Section 5: Compliance	15

Section 1: Workforce and Economic Analysis

Please provide a separate response for each of the elements listed below.

1.1 Provide an analysis of the economic conditions, including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and the employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations.

[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(A)] and [proposed 20 CFR 679.560(a)]

Note: Per WIOA Sec. 108(c), existing economic regional and/or local area analyses may be used if sourced data and/or derived analyses are economically relevant and current (i.e., within two years of the issuance of this guidance).

The Northern Tier is a region and a local area, please see the Regional Plan, section 1 for the economic analysis. However, it should be noted that there are elements currently not captured in any data. The Northern Tier is the home to the cheapest natural gas in the world at this point of 2016. There are tremendous opportunities for diversified and advanced manufacturing across the counties as the pipeline infrastructure catches up. The demand for natural gas and its elements are considerable. Methane, ethane, propane, butane, carbon dioxide, nitrogen, hydrogen sulphide, all elements of natural gas, can all be used in the manufacturing of fabrics, glass, steel, plastics, paint and other products.

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

[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(B)] and [proposed 20 CFR 679.560(a)]

The in-demand industries and occupations are individual and family services and the healthcare sector through 2022. Individual and family services have 550 openings, nursing care facilities has 320 openings and general medical and surgical hospitals have 230 openings. The fastest growing occupations are personal and home help aides, and there is a continuing demand for those with commercial drivers licenses and those to work within the service industry.

Top 20 Certifications from Help Wanted OnLine Job Postings, 2015 November

Certification	Job Postings for Certifications
Certified Registered Nurse	420
Driver's License	290
Certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation	239
Commercial Driver's License	214
Continuing Education	129
Advanced Cardiac Life Support	124
Licensed Practical Nurse	120
Physical Therapist Certification	107
Food safety programs	75
Physical Therapy Assistant Certification	71

Occupational Safety & Health Administration Certification	71
Basic Life Support	71
Board Certified	68
Graduate Nurse	55
Six Sigma Green Belt - LEAN	48
Certified in Nursing Administration	46
HAZMAT	44
Board Eligible	31
Certified Practical Nurse, Long-term care	30
Pediatric Advanced Life Support	29

Source: The Conference Board, Help Wanted OnLine,
01/04/2016

Skills	Job Postings for Skill
Pediatrics	143
Geriatrics	88
Electronic Health Record	84
Security administration	75
Critical care	71
Medical-Surgical Nursing	62
Quality Assurance	53
Behavioral health	42
Pharmacy Benefit Management	38
Preventative maintenance inspections	34
Preventive maintenance	33
Bilingual	27
Food preparation	26
Quality control	25
Epic software	18
Technical support	18
Medical imaging	16
Equipment Maintenance	15
Instrumentation	15
Prescription processing	14

Source: The Conference Board, Help Wanted OnLine,
01/04/2016

Top 20 Work Activities and Projected Needs, 2012-2022				
Work Activity	Number of Occupations	Total Annual Openings Needing this Skill	Growth Annual Openings Needing this Skill	Replacement Annual Openings Needing this Skill
Getting Information	191	1,097	382	715
Communicating with Supervisors, Peers, or Subordinates	143	957	318	639
Performing for or Working Directly with the Public	57	600	135	465
Making Decisions and Solving Problems	115	519	186	333
Interacting With Computers	112	482	147	335
Documenting/Recording Information	80	466	203	263
Identifying Objects, Actions, and Events	83	425	154	271
Organizing, Planning, and Prioritizing Work	81	405	150	255
Establishing and Maintaining Interpersonal Relationships	76	348	136	212
Updating and Using Relevant Knowledge	76	342	136	206
Assisting and Caring for Others	38	337	185	152
Inspecting Equipment, Structures, or Material	42	316	107	209
Performing General Physical Activities	26	310	122	188
Evaluating Information to Determine Compliance with Standards	57	271	100	171
Monitor Processes, Materials, or Surroundings	34	238	80	158

Handling and Moving Objects	26	214	66	148
Processing Information	60	212	70	142
Operating Vehicles, Mechanized Devices, or Equipment	26	202	58	144
Communicating with Persons Outside Organization	55	161	55	106
Thinking Creatively	35	158	61	97
Source: The Center for Workforce Information & Analysis				

1.3 Provide an analysis of the local workforce, including current labor force employment (and unemployment) data, and information on labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment.
 [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(C)] and [proposed 20 CFR 679.560(a)]

The Northern Tier is a region and a local area, please see section 1 of the Regional Plan for an analysis and data on the local workforce.

1.4 Provide an analysis and description of workforce development activities, including type and availability of education, training and employment activities. Include analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of such services, and the capacity to provide such services, in order to address the education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers in the region.
 [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(D)] and [proposed 20 CFR 679.560(a)]

The LWDB continues to develop and strengthen the partnerships and participation in the workforce development system of three major groups: employers, educators and service agencies. The Northern Tier Workforce Development Board will develop and maintain an effective and efficient workforce system that uses the power and influence of the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board to attract partners, build alliances and coordinate resources. All of the meetings and regular discussions with these partners and management share the common goal of meeting the strategic and operational plans of the region. LWDB staff meet regularly with the PA CareerLink® staff, there are monthly meetings of the PA CareerLink® management team and the directors of the WIOA Title I programs. The ABLE providers and EARN providers meet as well. Strategy, performance, problems, solutions and protocol are all discussed. Business services, with an emphasis on partnerships and long-term sector

strategies are an evolving process within the region as we work to understand employers who are willing to work with our customers with barriers and allow us to be a part of their planning. The Business Education Partnership (BEP) is creating a better connection between the area businesses and educational opportunities and the region's school system.

The area's strengths are the cooperation and effectiveness in operating within the unique system of a rural area. These same attributes are weaknesses with the lack of training providers and opportunities due to the small numbers. Within the region, there are two career and technical centers that provide hands-on training. Mansfield University is located in the region as are branch campuses of Keystone College, Lackawanna College, Penn College and Penn State Extension. Other training providers outside the region offer training services as well.

Within the local PA CareerLink® system, there is a commitment to quality and an understanding that the system is customer-driven. The PA CareerLink® provides universal service for everyone. As such, the local design of the PA CareerLink® centers is focused on: universality; customer choice; integrated systems and results-based accountability. In addition to meeting the required performance standards, PA CareerLink® partners must ensure that customers have easy access to services without being hindered by the obstacles related to funding streams and agency distinctness. Customers must also be afforded an opportunity to investigate all of the available services and training options, including statistics and satisfaction rates prior to choosing a career path. Services, including the Career Resource Center, are available to anyone coming through our doors without eligibility restrictions.

Individual Training Accounts (ITA), On-the-Job Training (OJT), incumbent worker training as well as work experience for youth are different types of training and employment activities offered. There also are workshops offering a variety of skill upgrades and assistance to aid in the employment search. Supportive services are available to customers attending training services for child care and transportation needs.

Section 2: Strategic Vision and Goals

Section 2 responses will require input from members of the local workforce development board and other local stakeholders. Please provide a separate response for each of the elements listed below.

2.1 Describe local board's strategic vision and goals for 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 described in section 116(b)(2)(A) in order to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E)]

The vision of the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board is that the local area will be a destination of choice for employers and jobseekers, where existing businesses experience growth and where new businesses are eager to locate because of the excellent job opportunities, economic vitality, quality of life and the presence of a skilled workforce. Therefore, the local workforce system will increase the employment, retention, and earnings of customers, and, as a result, improve the quality of the workforce, reduce welfare dependency, and enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the five-county workforce area.

The Northern Tier's economic future depends on a workforce able to compete in today's global economy. In order for the region to be economically competitive and its residents to acquire careers that pay family-sustaining wages, the region needs to ensure that its workforce system is steered by business and job seeker needs. A skilled and well-trained workforce can be achieved by better aligning the workforce development system with industry and education. A skilled and well-trained workforce can be achieved by better aligning the workforce development system with industry and education.

The mission of the LWDB is to provide responsive and innovative leadership that meets the current and future needs of employers and jobseekers.

The current key workforce priorities of the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board are to:

- Strengthen the system's impact on the secondary school system which will increase awareness of job opportunities, necessary skills, PA CareerLink®, and help create a youth talent pipeline.
- Strengthen relationships with economic development and education partners
- Strengthen the relationships between the PA CareerLink® and the business community
- Ensure the workforce development system meets the needs of its customers, both businesses and jobseekers

The local area's mission, vision, and strategic goals, the local area as well as the state seek a business focused workforce system with a special care given to those with barriers in alignments with the state plan. This focus creates a better link between business and jobseekers. It allows business to grow and

create more jobs. At the same time, it allows jobseekers to be trained in the skills that employers need. Both the state and the local area supports training for high priority occupations, career pathways, better job matching, and programs that address skill gaps.

2.2 Describe how the local board's vision and goals align with and/or supports the governor's vision and goals for the commonwealth's workforce development system. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E)]
(See Appendix C: *Transitional Planning References and Resources*)

- The Commonwealth seeks to establish career pathways as the primary model for skill, credential and degree attainment and provide all Pennsylvanians, with an emphasis on Pennsylvanians with barriers to employment, an opportunity to a job that pays.
 - The Northern Tier must strengthen the relationships between the PA CareerLink® and the business community. That relationship is what provides the opportunity to develop pathways and the opportunity for jobs. The LWDB will work with the state to follow, and enhance, the Career Pathways the state is establishing, to best suit the local demands and needs. The first goals will be healthcare and construction Career Pathways.
- The Commonwealth seeks to expand the state's pipeline of workers for targeted industry sectors from entry level skills to middle skills through Industry Partnerships, WEDnetPA, and other innovative strategies.
 - The Northern Tier seeks to ensure the workforce development system meets the needs of its customers, both businesses and jobseekers. The LWDB continues to sustain its Industry Partnerships and will create a series of training opportunities, such as industry-recognized stackable credentials for entry-level workers into targeted industries.
 - The Northern Tier seeks to strengthen relationships with economic development and education partners with an annual goal of increasing outreach to employers by the Business Services Team and partners by five percent annually.
- Increase opportunities for all youth to participate in work based learning through summer employment, pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship and other similar experiences.
 - Strengthen the system's impact on the secondary school system which will increase awareness of job opportunities, necessary skills, PA CareerLink® The NTWDB will have Career Coaches working within the schools, and business community, to make the connection between learning opportunities and the businesses.
 - The Northern Tier must strengthen the relationships between the PA CareerLink® and the business community. That relationship is what provides the opportunity to develop the opportunity for jobs.
- Engage employers directly to ensure we are closing the skills gap and able to more quickly upskill or reskill the workforce to meet the current and future needs.
 - The Northern Tier must strengthen the relationships between the PA CareerLink® and

the business community. That relationship is what provides the opportunity to develop the opportunity for jobs. The LWDB, NTRPDC, and PREP will coordinate to utilize DCED's Executive Pulse system, which is their system of record for tracking businesses served and business services

- The Northern Tier seeks to ensure the workforce development system meets the needs of its customers, both businesses and jobseekers
- Strengthen data sharing across state agencies and workforce development partners to understand education and employment outcomes and more effectively evaluate our efforts.
 - The LWDB, NTRPDC, and PREP will coordinate to utilize DCED's Executive Pulse system, which is their system of record for tracking businesses served and business services

2.4 Describe how the local board's goals relate to the achievement of federal performance accountability measures. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E)]

The emphasis on strengthening relationships with businesses and partners will go a long way towards meeting the new WIOA performance measures. Many of the measures are built upon the foundation of the business partnerships. A factor in length of employment, our effectiveness and the wages all are directly impacted by the types of businesses and the relationships we develop to send the businesses the most fitting customers possible.

Tracking the entered employment rate and average earnings leads programs to make sure that they are training participants for the jobs in high priority occupations where participants can make a family-sustaining wage. Retention rates track and can ensure that participants and jobseekers become a productive part of the labor force for a long time. Youth receive career pathway information which leads them to placement in education or employment. The attainment of a degree or certificate ensures that youth are on a career pathway that will lead to a future job with the family sustaining wages. This all leads to a better prepared workforce of higher quality, which helps business grow in the local area and thus supports the local vision.

Section 3: Local Area Partnerships and Investment Strategies

Many of the responses in this section, such as targeted sector strategies, should be based on strategic discussions with the local board and partners. Please provide a separate response for each of the elements listed below.

- 3.1 Taking into account the analysis described in Appendix B - Section 1, describe the local board's strategy to work with the entities that carry out the core programs to align resources available to the local area, in order to achieve the strategic vision and goals described in element 2.1. This analysis should include:
- A. A descriptive overview of the local workforce development system; include key stakeholders and entities associated with administrative and programmatic/service delivery functions. Examples include elected officials, advocacy groups, local workforce development board and committee structure, fiscal agent, operator(s), required program partners, and major contractors providing Adult/Dislocated Worker/Youth program elements. Describe respective roles and functional relationships to one another;
 - B. A list of all local area PA CareerLink® centers; include address, phone numbers, and hours of operation; and
 - C. An attached organization chart that depicts a clear separation of duties between the local board and programmatic/service delivery entities. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(F)]

The board of Local Elected Officials maintains administrative oversight and liability for funds through participating on the NTRPDC Executive Board; designates a sub grant recipient or fiscal agent; appoints local board members; assists in the development of the local plan; and other duties set forth by the Act. The NTRPDC serves as the grant recipient/fiscal agent as well as staffs the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board. Trehab Inc. and Bradford County Action are the WIOA Title I Contractors. A PA CareerLink® Center is in two of the five counties. The PA CareerLink® Operator Consortium consists of the PA CareerLink® partners who are to provide oversight for the daily operation of the PA CareerLink® system. The Operator Consortium members include: the Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Operations (BWPO); Trehab, Inc., Bradford County Action, Department of Public Welfare (DPW) and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR).

The Executive Committee is comprised of two county commissioners from each of the five counties and six private sector members for a total membership of 16. The third commissioner from each county serves as an alternate. These functions of the executive committee include, but are not limited to: maintaining administrative oversight and liability for funds through participating on the Executive Board; designating a sub grant recipient or fiscal agent; appointing local board members; assisting in the development of the local plan; and negotiating local performance standards and other duties set forth by the Act. The Local Elected Official/ LWDB Agreement spells out the specific relationship between the LEO and the LWDB.

The Northern Tier Workforce Development Board shall provide, in partnership with the NTRPDC Executive Board, the policy, program guidance and independent oversight services for all activities under the plan for this workforce development area pursuant to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. In addition, the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board, in mutual agreement

with the NTRPDC Executive Board, is designated the administrative entity to conduct oversight responsibility in the course of normal and customary activities pursuant to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. This consent in no way circumscribes or limits the Executive Board's authority to exercise independent oversight activities.

Staff serves the Executive Committee and LWDB by providing monitoring, oversight, policy and strategy development, technical assistance, project development and additional funding opportunities.

Under the LWDB, the PA CareerLink® Services Committee reviews PA CareerLink® as the retail side of the workforce system, its current benchmarks, who the partners are and services provided. The committee consists of LWDB Staff, private sector, and non-profit groups. Based on this, the committee will evaluate both sites and offer input for improving services (employer and individual) and provide new ideas. This could include outreach opportunities, the process for engaging employers, etc.

The Youth Council provides oversight for employment and training activity, program outreach, and helps integrate career awareness and youth participation into the industry partnership activities.

The Fiscal Committee approves budgets, reports, and oversees the expenditures and revenues of the agency. The committee consists of board members and Commissioners from each county.

Title II programs are provided by local Adult Literacy Training Providers, depending on the availability of literacy training in the individual counties. The Title I provider, Bradford County Action (BCA), has utilized this entire region to ensure the delivery of high-quality services. As one of the leading service providers, BCA is aligned with Tech Prep, and youth initiatives.

The PA CareerLink® consortium of operators consists of the paying partners in the PA CareerLink® which are representatives from the WIOA Title I contractors, Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Operations, Department of Human Services and Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. The PA CareerLink® consortium is chaired by a WIOA Title I representative and organized by the site administrators, who are responsible for both the comprehensive PA CareerLink® sites in the region. The consortium of partners, which serves as the one-stop Operator Consortium has been so designated by the LWDB/local elected official agreement. Additional operator partners can be considered in the future depending on the length of the commitment, but historically when a partner's funds get reduced there is a fiscal need for that partner to both withdraw from the PA CareerLink® and to relinquish their role as an operator partner. The consortium performs its management functions through operator consortium meetings held every two months. Meeting agendas, minutes and comprehensive reports are provided at every Operator's Consortium meeting.

The purpose of the PA CareerLink® is to create a seamless system of service delivery that will enhance the access to individual program services while improving long term employment outcomes for both job seeker and employer customers receiving assistance. The Consortium designs the integration of systems and coordination of services, develops in cooperation with the fiscal agent an acceptable Resource Sharing Agreement utilizing equal access as the cost allocation methodology, evaluates

performance and customer needs, maintains the one stop service plan, acts as a liaison with the LWDB, promotes the PA CareerLink®, recruits partners, assures adherence to the provisions of Memorandum of Understanding, defines and provides means to meet operational goals, share and maintain data, responds to community needs, facilitates team building, and recommends to the LWDB when necessary the need for additional affiliate sites. The LWDB determines the number and type of PA CareerLink® sites in the area, defines minimum requirements for each site, sets performance standards, reviews, monitors, and evaluates performance, charters PA CareerLink® sites, and negotiates the memoranda of understanding of the PA CareerLink® partners to provide services.

There currently are two comprehensive PA CareerLink® sites in the Northern Tier region. PA CareerLink® – Bradford/Sullivan is located at 312 Main Street, Towanda, 570-265-2171, 8:30 to 4:30 and PA CareerLink® Tioga is located at 56 Plaza Lane, Wellsboro, 570-724-1939, 8:30-4:30. The PA CareerLink® Site Administrator is responsible for oversight of both comprehensive sites and affiliated sites within the region. There is one BWPO Supervisor at each comprehensive site.

Due to the rural nature of our region, three affiliated sites are strategically located in our remaining counties ensuring representation throughout the Northern Tier. These sites make it possible to provide services in those areas in which it is not conducive for customers to access one of the comprehensive sites. All three sites are operated by WIOA Title I and EARN and provide full-time WIOA service staff offering WIOA and EARN services as well as links to services provided by other partners through the comprehensive sites such as Veteran and RESEA services. All three sites fall under the umbrella of the comprehensive PA CareerLink® Bradford/Sullivan.

Affiliated sites have a Trehab WIOA Supervisor on site and the locations are as follows:

- Sullivan County: 210 Center Street, Dushore 570-928-8144, M-W: 7-5 Thurs: 7-4:30
- Susquehanna County: 18 Public Avenue, Montrose 570-278-3819, M-Th 7-5 Friday: 7-4:30
- Wyoming County: 1 Kim Avenue, Suite # 10, Tunkhannock, 570-836-6840, M-W: 7-5 Thurs: 7-4:30

Please see Attachment A: Organizational chart

3.2 Describe the workforce development system in the local area that identifies the programs that are included in that system and how the local board will work with the entities carrying out core and other workforce development programs to support alignment to provide services, including programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, that support the strategy identified in the State plan under section 102(b)(1)(E). [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(2)]

Note: The six (6) core programs identified by WIOA are: Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Adult Education and Literacy, Wagner-Peyser Programs, and Vocational Rehabilitation.

The NTWDB’s vision and policy directs investment in workforce preparation, skill development, education and training. These investments are targeted and align with assisting youth, job seekers and employers. The NTWDB aligns regional resources and acts as the intermediary to promote partnerships

among businesses, non-profit agencies, economic development providers, educational institutions, community-based organizations, and employers. Through working together, stakeholders enhance the skills needed for workforce inclusion, employability, and educational and training levels of the current and future workforce.

The NTWDB is responsible for setting the standards of operations of the PA CareerLink® sites and overall workforce systems in the Northern Tier. The PA CareerLink® Operators Consortium is responsible for conveying the standards set by the LWDB by developing and implementing policies and procedures that coordinate partner activities and resources into a seamless, non-duplicative delivery system.

To accomplish this vision, the following resources and programs are utilized in accordance with federal and state regulations:

WIOA Adult

The WIOA Adult program is designed to assist those 18 and older who are in need of employment or career advancement. Priority of service is given to participants that are recipients of public assistance, low-income or basic skills deficient. Career services include assessments, individual employment plans and career counseling. If a participant is determined unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment which leads to self-sufficiency they may be in need of training services.

WIOA Dislocated Worker

Dislocated Worker programs assist workers before or after a layoff in identifying needs in order to develop a streamlined service strategy to facilitate rapid reemployment. This includes identifying training opportunities that may be needed to re-enter the workforce.

WIOA Youth

Youth programming is designed to service eligible youth and young adults through high-quality case management support toward educational attainment. Services include career guidance and exploration, summer and/or year-round work experience, skills training opportunities and support service. The goal for youth participants is advancement into post-secondary education or gaining employment with a self-sustaining wage. Youth programs are prioritized for out of school youth and youth with significant barriers to success, such as youth with a disability, pregnant or parent and those subject to the juvenile/adult justice system.

These three Title I programs are operated by Bradford County Action and Trehab throughout the region and are available within the PA CareerLink® System.

- *Wagner-Peyser Act Programs*

Services under the Wagner-Peyser Act are provided by partners from the Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Operations, Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. These services are provided within the PA CareerLink® System and include vocational counseling, employee profiling, job matching, job search assistance, and posting of employer job orders.

- *Programs authorized under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973*

Programs authorized under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are provided by the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and available through the PA CareerLink® System. These program services include vocational counseling and guidance, vocational evaluation, restoration, training, job placement and pre-employment training services for eligible and potentially eligible high school students with disabilities.

- *Programs authorized under Section 403(a)(5) of the Social Security Act (as added by Section 5001 of the Balanced Budget Act of 1977)*

The local County Assistance Offices through the State Department of Public Welfare provide services through TANF, authorized under Section 403(a)(5) of the Social Security Act. These services are targeted to welfare recipients and include information dissemination of welfare benefits. The services act as the sole determinant for eligibility of those benefits and are the referral resource to a multitude of local services, programs, and training options.

- *Activities authorized under Title V of the Older American's Act of 1965*

Activities authorized under Title V of the Older American's Act of 1965 are provided within the local PA CareerLink® system by the local Area Agencies on Aging and older work organizations, such as Experience Works and AARP. These services are targeted to seniors through the PA CareerLink® system and include vocational counseling, paid work experience programs, employment training, and independent living counseling.

- *Postsecondary vocational education activities authorized under Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act.*

Vocational Technical School and Career and Technology Center partners provide these services as part of the PA CareerLink® services. Program services include the dissemination of information relative to financial assistance to attend post-secondary training and the provision for post-secondary occupational skills training.

- *Activities authorized under Chapter 2 of Title II of the Trade Act of 1974*

These activities include Trade Readjustment Act Program administration, including tuition assistance to Dislocated Workers who have lost their jobs due to imports. Program services, authorized under this funding and provided within the PA CareerLink® system, include rapid response to employees in the event of massive layoff or plant closure, tuition assistance for post-secondary occupational skills training, and income subsidies to assist candidates while in training. This service is provided by BWPO, Department of Labor and Industry.

- *Veteran's activities authorized under Chapter 41 of Title 38 United States Code*

Veterans' activities are provided by Veterans Representatives from BWPO, Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. Services include career counseling, information on veterans' benefits, and tuition assistance for skill training.

- *Employment and Training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant Act*

These services are available within the PA CareerLink® System through local community action agencies or limited-purpose agencies (e.g. farm worker organizations).

- *Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)*

Where applicable, employment and training activities are provided by the existing Housing Authorities through the PA CareerLink® System. Services include information on HUD-funded employment and training activities, housing assistance, and housing subsidies.

- *Programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws*

BWPO operates programs authorized under the State Unemployment Compensation laws. Services include dissemination of information on the State Unemployment Compensation Law, claim assistance, and access to unemployment compensation benefits.

- *Programs authorized under Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (adult basic education and literacy training).*

Bradford County Action (BCA) is the Title II provider in our region. Adult basic education establishes career pathways for adults that are basic skills deficient and provide a full range of adult basic education ranging from literacy through activities that support post-secondary and career readiness goals. Services include English language acquisition when needed. As one of the leading service providers, BCA is aligned with Tech Prep, and youth initiatives.

Second Chance Act of 2007 Programs authorized under section 212 Reentry employment programs are being developed in partnership with the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections and offered through the PA CareerLink® System.

3.3 Describe how the local board, working with the entities carrying out core programs, will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(3)]

The LWDB utilizes integrated cross-program strategies. All populations are referred to the PA CareerLink® for service. Even in special projects, the PA CareerLink® is the point of entry. Then partner services are made available through the PA CareerLink® through the seamless delivery system. Partners focus on offering a seamless continuum of services for jobseekers and employers, sharing responsibility for improved performance and ensuring informed customer choice. Local employer and job seeker customers have complete access to the entire continuum of basic, individualized career and training services at the PA CareerLink® centers. In addition, the LWDB utilizes the High Priority Occupation List and CWIA Data throughout all of its programs including the PA CareerLink®, WIOA programs, industry partnerships, youth, and special programs. This forms an integrated cross-program strategy.

3.4 Identify and describe (for each category below) the strategies that are and/or will be used to:

- A. Facilitate engagement of employers, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations, in workforce development programs in addition to targeted sector strategies;
- B. Support a local workforce development system described in element 3.2 that meets the needs of businesses;
- C. Better coordinate workforce development programs with economic development partners and programs; and

This must include the implementation of incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, work-based learning programs, apprenticeship models, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives or utilization of effective business intermediaries and other business services and strategies that support the local board's strategy in element 3.1.

[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(4)(A) and (B)].

Based on employment figures, the largest industries for the region area are Health Care, Public Administration, Manufacturing and Retail Trade. When reviewing figures for the largest average wages by industry, manufacturing, education, health care, and information technology have the largest salaries. Industries that have high location quotients in the area include manufacturing, health care, energy, and building and construction. Therefore, the LWDB focuses on industry partnerships and communication as a crucial strategy in identifying skills needs, promoting career pathways, matching jobseekers to available jobs and training. In addition, the LWDB utilizes the High Priority Occupation List when reviewing regional and sector strategies.

These strategies link to the state as Pennsylvania promotes a workforce system based on the needs of employers, promotes career pathways, promotes industry partnerships, plans to better connect jobseekers and employers, and wants to utilize the HPO List more effectively.

The LWDB cooperation with the Local Development District (LDD), the Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission (NTRPDC), which is the agency housing services of both the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) and the LWDB, creates a partnership that is efficient and well-rounded. Employer outreach is necessary for both groups and the shared information helps identify challenges and develop solutions to those strategies. By further developing these partnerships, engagement is improved as well.

Staff outreach, meeting and participation in events with businesses will be crucial as the area works to implement apprenticeship models, career pathways initiatives, and transitional employment while enhancing the more traditional OJTs and incumbent worker training.

3.6 Describe the workforce activities, including activities for youth with disabilities. Identify successful models and best practices for youth workforce activities relevant to the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(9)]

The Northern Tier Workforce Development Board acts in a number of ways to provide activities beneficial to all youth and young adults of the region. There is and will continue to be promotion of an intensive network of services to address the special educational and employment needs of persons on the margins of the mainstream workforce (dropouts, those with disabilities, persons reentering the workforce after long absences). The workforce system will provide the emerging workforce with adequate career guidance that leads to a successful school-to-work transition.

The Northern Tier LWDB works with ISY and OSY in a number of ways. Currently, the Summer Program provides participants work experience, soft skills, career exploration activities and academic enrichment. This program is made possible by a number of community partnerships and collaboration in each of the five counties that it operates in.

Through the Business Education Partnership, the local WDB has been fostering relationships with local high schools and has linked numerous youth with businesses in the Northern Tier to educate our students about employment opportunities available to them in their own areas. Both workforce staff and provider staff participate in regular Transition Council meetings to educate local school support staff about what is available through our programs that will benefit those that they serve with disabilities. Collaboration has begun and will continue to improve with the LWDB and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) to better serve those with disabilities both in and out of school.

The LWDB and Youth Committee distributes labor market information regularly to local school districts, parents, and it is shared with program participants. Youth and young adults are exposed to career and training opportunities throughout their program participation. Employer visits, career fairs, trips to post-secondary trainers and speakers from local industry are provided to educate youth on in-

demand occupations. Both the LWDB and Youth Committee will continue to provide ongoing labor market information and look to increase efforts by reaching out to churches and other community based organizations that serve youth and young adults. The committee will begin to evaluate and revamp existing programs to stay current with employment trends and employer needs.

Collaboration between workforce staff, the Youth Committee, local school districts, OVR, welfare and many human service agencies ensure that youth and young adults most in need of services are identified and provided with the activities and support needed to achieve employment success. Building a strong relationship between participants and their career advisors is an important part of the overall strategy to keep youth and young adults engaged in the program long enough to attain their goals. Using the ISS as a roadmap to achieve their goals, the youth/young adult participates in a wide variety of activities designed to prepare them for a career success.

Recognizing that students with disabilities are too often unprepared to transition into post-secondary education or employment, OVR has started to provide a pool of services called Pre Employment Transition Services (PETS) to better prepare these students for life after high school. These skills gains will help to meet one of the intentions of WIOA, to better prepare students with disabilities to graduate high school and work toward meaningful careers.

3.7 Describe how the local board coordinates education and workforce investment activities with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(10)]

A goal of briefing school administration on the work and priorities of the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board has been established. All skill and career path materials developed in the sector strategy have a well-defined linkage with regard to skill development that reaches back into school curricula. Those connections are regularly discussed with curriculum planners and school guidance counselors. LWDB staff will continue to provide labor market materials and HPO lists regularly to our school districts, technology centers and community colleges.

The Youth Committee and Northern Tier Workforce Development Board encourages the use of recently developed multi-media resources to illustrate examples of employment opportunities in the region, including CWIA's initiatives, and distributes those to schools and other community resources around the region. The Youth Committee includes representatives from OVR, Job Corps, Lackawanna College, local school districts, Title I, Title II, GED and the Northern Tier Career Center. The educational experience and expertise of the members of the committee is unique and invaluable in planning and coordinating youth programming and activities.

Workforce staff meet regularly with transition councils, school administrators, guidance counselors and teachers to educate them on programs and accept feedback/input about what youth and young adults in the Northern Tier need in terms of career planning and preparation. Regular discussion, updates and open communication prevent duplication of services.

3.8 Describe efforts to coordinate supportive services provided through workforce investment activities in the local area, including facilitating transportation for customers. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(11)]

Supportive services are available to customers attending training services for child care and transportation needs. In order to help determine which support services are most effective in our area, monthly support service reports are generated by the WIOA provider. LWDB staff review reports monthly to ensure appropriateness of services, trends and cost analysis to determine if change to current policy is needed. Economic conditions and availability of funding are also a determining factor. Information is provided to the LWDB and any change in policy must have LWDB approval prior to implementation. Customers are also eligible for a gas incentive based on attendance for training services to offset the travel costs. The LWDB continually evaluates supportive service and needs-based payment policies to determine whether the current policies are sufficient for the economic conditions.

3.9 Describe strategies to implement the operational goals of the local one-stop system, maximizing coordination of services provided by the Department's merit staff, and the local board's contracted service providers in order to improve services and avoid duplication. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(12)]

The purpose of the PA CareerLink® is to create a seamless system of service delivery that will enhance the access to individual program services while improving long term employment outcomes for both job seeker and employer customers receiving assistance. The Consortium designs the integration of systems and coordination of services, develops in cooperation with the fiscal agent an acceptable Resource Sharing Agreement utilizing equal access as the cost allocation methodology, evaluates performance and customer needs, maintains the one stop service plan, acts as a liaison with the LWDB, markets the PA CareerLink®, recruits partners, assures adherence to the provisions of Memorandum of Understanding, defines and provides means to meet operational goals, share and maintain data, responds to community needs, facilitates team building, and recommends to the LWDB when necessary the need for additional access points. The LWDB defines the role of the Operator Consortium, determines the number and type of PA CareerLink® sites in the WIOA, defines minimum requirements for each site, sets performance standards, reviews, monitors, and evaluates performance, charters PA CareerLink® sites, and negotiates the memoranda of understanding of the PA CareerLink® partners to provide services.

3.10 Describe how the local board will carry out a review of local applications submitted under WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy, consistent with the local plan (as described in WIOA Sec. 107(d)(11) and WIOA Sec. 232). [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(13)]

The NTWDB fully supports the vision of WIOA and the Commonwealth for improved coordination and collaboration across WIOA programs and partners, including Adult Education and Literacy. Just as the board has engaged with adult education providers through meetings during the development of this local plan, we will continue to engage with eligible adult education providers throughout the

implementation of WIOA. As a part of this process, staff and board members review local adult education provider applications under WIOA Title II, taking into consideration their alignment with the strategies, vision, and goals outlined in the local workforce development plan for the region.

3.11 Based on the analysis described in Appendix B - Section 1, identify the targeted populations that the local board plans to focus additional effort and resources towards. In terms of the targeted populations, briefly describe the local board's objectives, goals, and strategies.

Serving any customer, especially working with those with barriers, requires cooperation and partnership with not just the business community, but the other service providers across the area. There are often multiple barriers, which require multiple providers to address.

The board will broaden the opportunities for those with barriers by expanding the sector strategies concept and become a part of long-term planning, which includes creating a pipeline of new employees. We need to better identify employers willing to hire those with a poor work history, criminal background, etc. because without those employers, meeting any goals will be impossible.

3.14 Briefly describe any additional funding outside of WIOA title I and state general funds, and how such funding will be leveraged in support of the local workforce system.

Whenever possible, other funding sources are leveraged with WIOA funds to provide training opportunities in high priority occupations for eligible Adults, Youth and Dislocated workers. As a participating LWDB in the Northeast PA Advanced Materials and Diversified Manufacturing Industry Partnership as well as the lead of the Northeast Regional Healthcare Industry Partnership, worker training grant funds are used to upgrade the skills of incumbent workers as well as new hires. TANF Youth Development funds are used to pay for testing fees for CNA certification. In Tioga County WATCH Project funding assists low-income residents to become nurses, CNA's, EMT's and Paramedics. ShaleNet funding is utilized for training that leads to employment in the natural gas industry. Clients with a disability are referred to OVR funded training. If a participant is found to be ineligible for Title IV, the participant would be referred back to their career navigator for assistance. Trade Act Assistance is used for participants that qualify. NEG and Jobs Driven Funds are used to supplement training costs.

Section 4: Program Design and Evaluation

Many of the responses below should be based on strategic discussions between the local board and one-stop partners. Please provide a separate response for each of the elements listed below.

4.1 Describe the one-stop delivery system in the local area including:

- A. The local board's efforts to ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services, including contracted service providers and providers on the eligible training provider list, and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, workers and jobseekers. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(A)]
- B. How the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system in remote areas, through the use of technology, and through other means. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(B)]
- C. How entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA section 188, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.
[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(C)]
(See Appendix C: *Transitional Planning References and Resources*)

A. The board and partners regularly seek ways to improve and increase the training opportunities for the region. There are industry partnership discussions, Business Education Partnership meetings, employer meetings, business services, partner meetings, all of which revolve around meeting the needs of the employers, workers, and job seekers.

The WIOA Title I Contractor is Trehab, Inc. in Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga and Wyoming Counties. Bradford County Action is the WIOA Title I contractor in Bradford County. The contracts are awarded following a Request for Proposal (RFP) process, which is completed by staff and an ad hoc committee of the LWDB. The contracts with the contractors are for one year with the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board voting on a second year. The contractors meet with and report to the LWDB at every meeting and all statistics are presented in monthly reports.

Only training programs that appear on the ETPP list and lead to a high priority occupation in the Northern Tier are funded with WIOA training dollars.

Through the ETPP list, customers can compare performance measures, program costs, and curriculum information from various schools to assist them in selecting the best training option in their selected field. Each training program on the ETPP list must meet the required performance measure levels, which ensures that workforce dollars yield the best possible results.

The High Priority Occupation list is reviewed annually with employers, industry partnership members and education. Feedback is shared with training providers to help them align their programs of study with needed employment skills and job openings in the current economy. The petition process is used to refine the initial High Priority Occupation list, adding occupations based on input from business and educators. This allows training providers to submit programs that meet local employer demand for a skilled workforce.

The Local Board shall identify eligible providers of youth activities by awarding grants or contracts on a competitive basis, based on the recommendations of the youth committee. Therefore, the Northern

Tier Workforce Development Board conducts a competitive procurement process for youth providers of youth activities every two to three years depending on provider performance. A Request for Proposals is developed and then advertised on the website and in local papers. Proposals are received and reviewed by Youth Committee members to determine the best provider or providers who can meet federal guidelines of the required program elements, State and Local goals, performance measures, program feasibility, and costs. The Youth Committee recommendation is then forwarded to the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board for approval or disapproval. Current WIOA youth contractors are Trehab, Inc. and Bradford County Action.

The same process is followed every two to three years for the Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs. An RFP is advertised in the newspapers and online, proposals are received, scored by members of the LWDB, approved by the full LWDB and contracts are then negotiated.

B. The Title I providers are going to begin working within a “hub and spoke” concept in which staff travel and provide time at community facilities, like libraries, where they can meet with customers and provide services. There are many obstacles to utilizing technology remotely across the region. There are many areas that still lack broadband internet services, and many customers lack the skill set and confidence to participate online. We plan to provide a blend of staff assistance and technology through the area’s library systems. The LWDB also is exploring virtual workshops with these partners to increase service availability.

C. Most PA CareerLink® required partners, with some exceptions, provide core services to our customers. At a minimum, required partners contribute staff to PA CareerLink® Resource Centers, conduct workshops or initial assessments and referrals. These services are universally accessible to all customers. PA CareerLink® sites are certified as ADA compliant every three years and materials in alternative format for persons with disabilities are available. Interpretive services are also made available for persons with limited English proficiency. Efforts are made to ensure that persons with disabilities are afforded access to all services provided within the PA CareerLink® sites. The OVR plays a significant role in recruitment and outreach to this special population. OVR serves on the Northern Tier LWDB, further ensuring that service barriers for persons with disabilities are identified and eliminated. Financial resources of the PA CareerLink® sites and OVR are coordinated in order to cover shared customer training and supportive service costs. In addition, the PA CareerLink® utilizes customer assessments conducted by OVR. The Northern Tier has funded and continues to support sensitivity training for PA CareerLink® staff. Monthly PA CareerLink® staff meetings provide an open forum for all partnering staff to discuss solutions in the provision of service. Front line staff participate in cross-training to educate each other about the specific populations they focus on from a programmatic standpoint offering insight for appropriate referrals. As with all customer groups, referrals are also made to non-PA CareerLink® partner service agencies in an effort to bridge service gaps. PA CareerLink® staff work with OVR partner staff on an on-going basis to take a proactive approach to ensure that the one-stops retain their ADA compliance status with its adaptive technologies, the TTY line, and the availability of resource materials in alternative formats (Braille, large print). A region-wide

inventory is currently taking place to ensure the most up to date resource materials are made available in each of our centers.

4.2 Describe the local board's assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(7)]

The same RFP process is followed every two to three years for the Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs. The contracts are awarded following a Request for Proposal (RFP) process, which is completed by staff and an ad hoc committee of the LWDB. The contracts with the contractors are for one year with the Northern Tier Workforce Development Board voting on a second year. The contractors meet with and report to the LWDB at every meeting and all statistics are presented in monthly reports. Training activities, new opportunities, new needs are reviewed and discussed amongst the staff, board, and partners on a regular basis. There are not many training providers, which increases the need to compile and track the activities.

4.3 Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(8)]

The Northern Tier region has had a unified strategy/approach to the integration of Rapid Response, Dislocated Worker and Trade services. PA CareerLink® staff and the LWDB have worked closely with the Rapid Response Coordination Services of the Bureau of Workforce Partnership and Operations in organizing Rapid Response events and in continuously developing service strategies to best suit the needs of displaced workers. Efforts include creating a unified system and sharing duties to provide services to dislocated workers, including initial assessments, determining training needs, career guidance, case management to job development, support services and on-site customized workshops.

4.4 Provide an analysis and description of youth workforce activities, including activities for youth with disabilities. Identify successful models and best practices, for youth workforce activities relevant to the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(9)]

Note: This section must include a description of the program design elements as well as how the local area will implement the 14 program elements.

The Northern Tier provides youth with effective and comprehensive activities that encourage school completion, improving educational attainment, and promoting effective linkages to employers. Because of the strong connections that exist between our program providers, CAO's, school districts, training providers, OVR, PA CareerLink® and numerous human service agencies, youth and young adults most in need of services are identified and provided with activities and support needed to achieve academic and employment success.

Youth program services are designed to facilitate academic and employment success. Activities and services are provided that help youth and young adults build their employment potential by increasing

skills employers seek and setting them on the path toward a career that leads to independence and self-sufficiency. Dropout prevention is a priority and services are provided to help youth stay in school and obtain their high school diploma. GED instruction is provided for OSY that lack a diploma and is the first step in helping them with their employment and career goals. Additional services are available to help youth further their education or connect them to a job. Working closely with the participant, OVR, parents and school staff, we can determine special needs of our youth with disabilities and work together to help them overcome barriers to their future careers. Recently, Trehab Inc. worked directly with OVR in Tioga County to eliminate barriers for a youth with disabilities during the Academic Enrichment portion of the Summer Employment Program. Working together with OVR and Trehab, Inc. staff, the youth was able to overcome barriers in the classroom with the help of an aide to successfully complete that portion of the Summer Employment program. Other participants have utilized aides while participating in work experiences to overcome their individual barriers while on the job.

Potential program participants are required to complete a common application which helps the Career Advisors identify eligible participants and the services they may need. An interview with the youth/young adult and their parents/guardian (if under 18 years old) is the next step in determining program eligibility, and to explain the services available through the program. Once program eligibility has been determined it must be verified with required documentation. Such documentation includes information to verify family size, family income in the previous 6 months, residence, citizenship or eligibility to work in the US, disability status, age, barrier status, and Selective Service Registration status (if applicable). After program eligibility is determined by the Youth Career Advisor, it is reviewed and verified by WIOA Title I Supervisor before program services are provided.

The Career Advisor will perform an assessment of the individuals' academic levels, skill levels, and service needs to develop an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) for the client. The ISS is a detailed, unique, individual strategy for each youth participant that is the basis for the overall case management strategy. A successful case management approach includes assessing and interpreting needs; developing strategies to help reach educational, training and employment goals; providing tools and resources to help overcome personal barriers; documenting youth participation, referral outcomes, service decisions, summaries of one-on-one meetings and achievements; and providing follow-up services. Case management provides an opportunity for staff to build a working relationship with the participant and with key organizations in order to assist youth in meeting their objectives.

All program elements are designed to permit access and appropriate activities for youth with disabilities. These elements assist all youth in attaining academic and employment success. LWDB staff will monitor program systems to ensure that the required program elements are being offered and that program eligibility requirements are followed.

- 1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies leading to secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent or for recognized post-secondary credential**

Youth Career Advisors work closely with high school guidance staff and are notified when a student has dropped out of school or if a student may be in danger of dropping out. Activities intended to educate students on the advantages of staying in school are offered. ISY found to be in need of additional academic assistance are enrolled in a tutoring program for more intensive, individual academic services where they receive one-on-one tutoring. OSY in need of a high school diploma attend GED instruction, or are assisted in re-entering high school.

2. Alternative Secondary School Services or drop-out recovery services as appropriate

Services are coordinated with school districts that have alternative school services within their curriculum. Career Advisors will work closely with clients who may need alternative secondary school services.

3. Paid and unpaid work experiences that have academic and occupational education as a component of the work experience which may include the following types of work experiences:

- a. Summer employment opportunities and other opportunities available throughout the school year;**
- b. Pre-apprenticeship programs;**
- c. Internships and job shadowing**
- d. On the job training opportunities**

Work experiences such as participation in pre-apprenticeship programs, OJT's, internships and job shadowing are planned structured learning experiences that take place in a work environment for a limited period of time. These experiences are offered throughout the program year in the private for profit sector, the non-profit sector or the public sector. They are designed to enable youth to gain exposure to the working world and its requirements. Work experiences help youth acquire the personal attributes, knowledge and skills needed to obtain a job and advance in employment. The purpose is to provide the youth/young adult with the opportunities for career exploration and skill development. Work experiences may be subsidized or unsubsidized. Summer experiences are part of the year-round comprehensive strategies for addressing the youth/young adult's employment and training needs. The program allows young people to earn a paycheck while exposing them to the real world of working. When possible, summer employment opportunities are directly linked to academic and occupational learning. In addition to working, they participate in career readiness activities such as instruction on resumes and job interview skills, labor market information, job search techniques and visits to employers and post-secondary schools. Both participants and employers involved in a work experience activity are surveyed on the overall effectiveness of the program and provide input on any changes that they feel may be beneficial. Assessment tools are used to measure foundation and worksite specific skills. Incentives are awarded for successful completion of the summer employment component.

4. Occupational skill training, which includes priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized post-secondary credentials that align with in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the Northern Tier

Individualized Training Accounts are used as a mechanism for providing eligible OSY with the means to finance and obtain occupational skills training in order to obtain unsubsidized employment. The training program must lead to a high priority occupation in the Northern Tier Region and the training program must appear on the ETPL. The Career Advisor provides information and counseling that allows the young adult to make informed decisions. They also advise the young adult by suggesting choices relevant to their assessed needs and the goals determined appropriate.

5. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster

Career Advisors will evaluate pathways for youth/young adult participants and offer education opportunities for specific occupations or occupational clusters along with workforce preparation activities for the chosen occupation or cluster. Our program service providers work in partnership with local CTC's to offer classes such as basic computer skills or remedial math to those that may benefit prior to enrolling in post-secondary education/training.

6. Leadership development opportunities, including community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors

Leadership development opportunities are provided for the youth through team building activities, peer tutoring, community service activities and linkages with other youth programs. Youth have participated in community beautification projects, wrapped presents for Toys for Tots, volunteered at a food pantry and other various non-profit organizations.

7. Supportive Services

Linkages to community service programs, assistance with transportation costs, assistance with childcare costs, referral to medical services and assistance with uniforms (including items need for on-the-job safety) and work related tool costs are provided.

8. Adult mentoring for a duration of at least 12 months that may occur both during and after program participation

Adult mentoring is offered during and after program participation.

9. Follow up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation

Follow-up services are provided for not less than 12 months after the youth/young adult completes program participation and are based on the needs of each individual. Follow-up services can include: 1) support and case management that encourages job retention; 2) supportive services as needed; 3) PA CareerLink® workshops; 4) regular contact with the youth/young adult customer's

employer including assistance in addressing work related problems as they arise; 5) assistance in obtaining better paying jobs; 6) career development and further education; 7) adult mentoring 8) tracking progress of youth in employment after training.

10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling as well as referrals to counseling as appropriate to the needs of the individual youth

Guidance and counseling is provided on an on-going basis through the Youth Career Advisor, linkages with school guidance counselors and referrals to outside counseling needs when appropriate. Youth also receive comprehensive counseling on work maturity skills (attendance, punctuality, quality of work, communication, etc.) and pre-employment skills (interviewing, resume writing, etc.).

11. Financial literacy education

Career Advisors will utilize existing curricula, such as GCF Learn Free's Everyday Life Money Module, to provide financial literacy education. They will also reach out to area banking institutions to schedule workshops for presentations throughout the year.

12. Entrepreneurial skills training

Career Advisors will utilize existing information such as beresource.com, information on the SCORE websites, etc. to provide entrepreneurship training to interested youth/young adults. They will also work to engage local entrepreneurs in presentations and possibly mentoring for those interested participants.

13. Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the Northern Tier Region such as career awareness, career counseling and career exploration services

Career Advisors ensure that youth are counseled on occupational trends, skill levels needed for jobs as well as other Labor Market Information. Youth/young adults also receive information and counseling on High Priority Occupations of the Northern Tier.

14. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training

Our program service providers work in partnership with local CTC's to offer classes such as basic computer skills or remedial math to youth that may benefit prior to enrolling in post-secondary education.

4.8 Describe the process utilized by the local board to ensure that training provided is linked to in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area, or in another area to which a participant is willing to relocate. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(22)] and [WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(G)(iii)]

Only training programs that appear on the ETPL and lead to a high priority occupation in the Northern Tier are funded with WIOA training dollars.

Through the ETPL, customers can compare performance measures, program costs and curriculum information from various schools to assist them in selecting the best training option in their selected field. Each training program on the ETPL must meet the required performance measure levels therefore ensuring that workforce development dollars yield the best possible results.

The High Priority Occupation List is reviewed annually with employers, industry partnership members and education. Feedback is shared with training providers to help them align their programs of study with needed employment skills and job openings in the current economy. The petition process is used to refine the initial High Priority Occupation list, adding occupations based on input from business and educators. This allows training providers to submit programs that meet local employer demand for a skilled workforce.

4.9 Describe the process and criteria the local board will use to include a wide range of providers and opportunities through the Local Training Provider List (LTPL). [Workforce System Policy 04-2015, *Eligible Training Providers*]

Note: Such criteria must include the factors listed in the WSP 04-2014 in addition to any criteria established by the local board. Eligibility of a provider and/or program must be based solely on measurable factors.

The LWDB will include a number of local training providers on the list that meet requirements outlined in WSP 04-2015. Policy will be developed in compliance with WSP-04-2015 and final regulations.

Section 5: Compliance

Responses are focused on the local area's compliance with federal or state requirements. Please provide a separate response for each of the elements listed below.

5.1 Describe the replicated cooperative agreements, as defined by WIOA 107(d)(11), in place between the local board and the Department of Labor & Industry's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(14)]

The language in the Resource Sharing Agreement outlines PA CareerLink® staff work with OVR partner staff. There is an on-going evaluation and all efforts are taken to have a proactive approach to ensure that the staff enhance the services to individuals with disabilities. This includes the maintenance of the Career Resource Area, with its adaptive technologies, the TTY line, and the availability of resource materials in alternative formats (Braille, large print). OVR staff also sits in on PA CareerLink® offices monthly meetings to discuss service strategies and participates in cross training of front line staff to discuss program specific services and appropriate referrals. OVR now has an employer representative that sits on our Business Services Team. Our OVR representative has partnered with other staff to provide employer workshops throughout the region.

5.3 Describe the competitive and non-competitive processes, as well as the process for sole-sourcing, used for procuring goods and services within the local area. This includes, but is not limited to, the process used to award funds to a one-stop operator and other sub-recipients/contractors of WIOA title I adult, dislocated worker, and youth services. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(16)]

The competitive process for services includes a request for proposal, which are then reviewed and scored by the local board, which makes a recommendation to the executive board of local elected officials for approval.

Bidding Procedures and Quotations

NTRPDC and all **sub recipients** are responsible for implementing a bidding procedure to obtain quotes. Proper bidding procedures must be adhered to, regardless of the method of procurement. The established procedure must ensure that a linkage is maintained with the Small Business Administration and other agencies that are able to assist in identifying small and minority-owned businesses. Formal Bidding procedures involve establishing levels for dollar amounts that require such procedures as advertising, sending out formal letters requesting bids from vendors, obtaining sealed bids, etc. The unit cost should reflect the lowest price quote received. If the lowest price is not utilized, justification must be documented. Formal procurement procedures must be described in the approved Local Operational Plan.

Invitations for bids or RFP's shall be based on a clear and accurate description of the technical requirements for the material, product or service to be procured. Such descriptions shall not, in competitive procurements, contain features that restrict, eliminate or otherwise restrain competition.

In order to ensure compliance with requirements set forth in the Act and Federal Regulations, the use of specific "brand names" must be avoided when developing a description of the property open for bid. However, sub recipients may use a "brand name or equal" description to define performance or other prominent requirements of a procurement. The practice of using specifications developed by manufacturers inherently places restrictions on other bidders, unless it is clearly stated that other bidders may use similar standards of equal functions. The solicitation must make it clear that the description is used to establish standards and that other vendors meeting the standards are eligible to submit proposals or bids.

If the unit cost of the item to be acquired is \$5,000 or more, **NTRPDC** and its **sub recipients** are required to obtain at least three (3) written quotations, prior to submitting the request for approval. However, BWPO may waive this requirement, for property purchased with WIOA funding when it has been determined that **NTRPDC** and/or sub **recipients** are purchasing from State contracts. If Fiscal Agents wish to determine whether they qualify for State contract purchasing privileges, they must contact the Department of General Services, Bureau of Purchases, telephone (717) 787-5733. When submitting the **Property Acquisition Request and Report Form (Attachment 1)** to BWPO for approval, this information must be included on the form. Failure to include the required information may delay the approval process.

Each Fiscal Agent is required to submit a Property Acquisition Request and Report Form to the Bureau for approval to purchase property with a unit acquisition cost of \$5,000 or greater, as outlined in the TAG. When the lowest quotation is not utilized or sole source procurement is requested, a detailed justification must be provided on a separate page. A separate form should be used for each item of a different description. Because this form is a request and report form, it is completed on a sequential basis, as indicated below.

5.4 Describe the local area’s negotiated local levels of performance for the federal measures and their implications upon the local workforce system; attach the completed Performance Targets Template. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(17)]

Note: See Appendix C: Transitional Planning References and Resources “Performance Targets Template”.

The Northern Tier is utilizing the state’s proposed levels. The region currently is being greatly affected by the natural gas industry slowdown, which had raised our unemployment rate and increased decreased earning levels for many residents.

5.6 Describe the process used by the local board for the receipt and consideration of input into the development of the local plan in compliance with WIOA section 108(d). Describe the process to provide an opportunity for public comment prior to submission of the local plan. Be sure to address how members of the public, including representatives of business, labor organizations, and education were given an opportunity to provide comments on the local plan. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b)(20)]

Following the release of the first draft of the WSG No. 05-2015 on December 23, 2015, and the release of the state combined plan for public comment the next week, workforce staff began discussing and seeking input for the transitional plan. Input and feedback was sought at partner meetings, PA CareerLink® management meetings, meetings with local and state elected officials and their staff. The topics were raised at the PREP partnership meetings, economic development strategic planning meetings, meetings with providers and career and technology centers. There were two public WDB meetings and two Executive Committee meetings held since the original release, one of each occurred following the release of the second version of WSG 05-2015 on March 1.

5.7 Prior to the date on which the local board submits a proposed local plan (i.e., no later than Thursday, June 2, 2016), the proposed local plan must be made available to members of the public through electronic and other means.

- A. Describe how the local board made the proposed local plan available for public comment. [WIOA Sec. 108(d)(1)];
- B. Describe how the local board collected and considered public comments for inclusion in the proposed local plan. [WIOA Sec. 108(d)(2)]; and
- C. If any comments were received that represent disagreement with the proposed local plan, include such comments within the local plan’s attachments. [WIOA Sec. 108(d)(3)]

The regional and local plans were available for public from May 2 through May 31. The plan was available on northerntier.org and public notices were posted in newspapers in each of the five

counties. Comments were accepted in any form including electronic, verbal, hard copy. Comments and the responses are attached.

5.8 List the name, organization, and contact information of the designated equal opportunity officer for each PA CareerLink® center within the local area.

The EO officer for the
Bradford site is Allen Hubler, PA CareerLink® Site Supervisor, BWPO, ahubler@pa.gov
Tioga site is Joe Brelo, PA CareerLink® Site Supervisor, BWPO, jbrelo@pa.gov

5.9 By checking adjacent to each line item, the local board attests to ensuring the compliance components/documents listed are in place and effective prior to July 1, 2016.

Copies of the listed compliance components/documents are not required at this time, but may be requested during monitoring and/or auditing.

- X Agreement between all counties and other local governments, if applicable, establishing the consortium of local elected officials
- X Agreement between the chief elected official(s) and the fiscal agent, if a fiscal agent is designated
- X Agreement between the local elected official(s) and the local workforce development board
- X One-Stop Partner Agreement(s)
- X Resource Sharing Agreement(s)
- X Resource Sharing Agreement Budget(s)
- X Local workforce development board policy and process that provides for nomination, appointment and removal of board members; resolutions; bylaws; code of conduct; and conflict of interest
- X Financial management policy and process including cost allocation plan; internal controls; cash management; receipts of goods; cost reimbursement; inventory and equipment; program income; travel reimbursement; audit requirements and resolution; annual report; property management; debt collection; and allowable costs
- X Local procurement policy
- X Program management policy and process including equal opportunity for customers; supportive services; needs related payments; file management; eligibility; self-sufficiency criteria; individual training accounts; layoff assistance; priority of services; grievance for eligible training providers list; transitional jobs; stipends; and training verification/refunds
- X Risk management policy and process including records retention and public access; public records requests; monitoring, grievance; incident; and disaster recovery plan
- X Human resources policy and process including employee classification; benefits; holidays and PTO; recruitment and selection; employee development; discipline; layoffs, terminations and severance; sexual harassment; and equal opportunity/non-discrimination
- X Professional services contract(s) for administrative services such as staffing and payroll, if applicable

Appendix C: Transitional Planning References and Resources

I. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Combined Workforce Development Strategic Plan (*State Plan*)

Governor Wolf's Strategic Vision for Workforce Development in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

On July 22, 2014, President Obama signed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) providing a framework for Governors and states to make changes to their workforce systems. The federal law sets the parameters for the workforce system which is an integral part of the commonwealth's ability to serve jobseekers and employers. WIOA will enable the commonwealth to align workforce priorities across multiple partners, training providers, employers and others to ensure we are creating a skilled workforce for today and the future.

An effective workforce development system will be built on a foundation of alignment, innovation, employer engagement, accountability structures and improved data. Pennsylvania will look beyond WIOA to set broad goals for a comprehensive workforce development system that ensures access for all to "jobs that pay, schools that teach, and government that works." We will do this by providing the highest quality of service to jobseekers and employers through well-coordinated approaches at the state and local levels. System access will be enhanced through the use of technology and creative partnerships with community organizations and other service providers. While access will be improved for all jobseekers, the provision of services and training will be focused on those most in need and hardest to serve.

Our five broad goals for the commonwealth's workforce development system are:

- Establish career pathways as the primary model for skill, credential and degree attainment and provide all Pennsylvanians, with an emphasis on Pennsylvanians with barriers to employment, an opportunity to a job that pays.
- Expand the state's pipeline of workers for targeted industry sectors from entry level skills to middle skills through Industry Partnerships, WEDnetPA, and other innovative strategies.
- Increase opportunities for all youth to participate in work based learning through summer employment, pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship and other similar experiences.
- Engage employers directly to ensure we are closing the skills gap and able to more quickly upskill or reskill the workforce to meet the current and future needs.
- Strengthen data sharing across state agencies and workforce development partners to understand education and employment outcomes and more effectively evaluate our efforts."

A. PY 2016 Combined State Plan to be found at [PA Workforce Development-Policy Documents](#)

B. [PA State Workforce Development Board](#) information

II. Department Policy and Guidance.

- A. Methods of Administration (MOA) will be accessible on a public site being established.
- B. Department Policy and Guidance (includes new and revised policies designed for initial implementation of WIOA) will be posted on the Labor & Industry website.

III. Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA).

The Department's Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA) will provide required labor market information and other economic data to assist in the development of regional and local plan economic analysis.

CWIA presents a wide range of data and information on their website: [CWIA Home Page](#)

CWIA staff will provide technical assistance regarding planning elements that necessitate an economic analysis.

IV. PY 2016 Performance Targets Template. (Attached)

V. Other Resources.

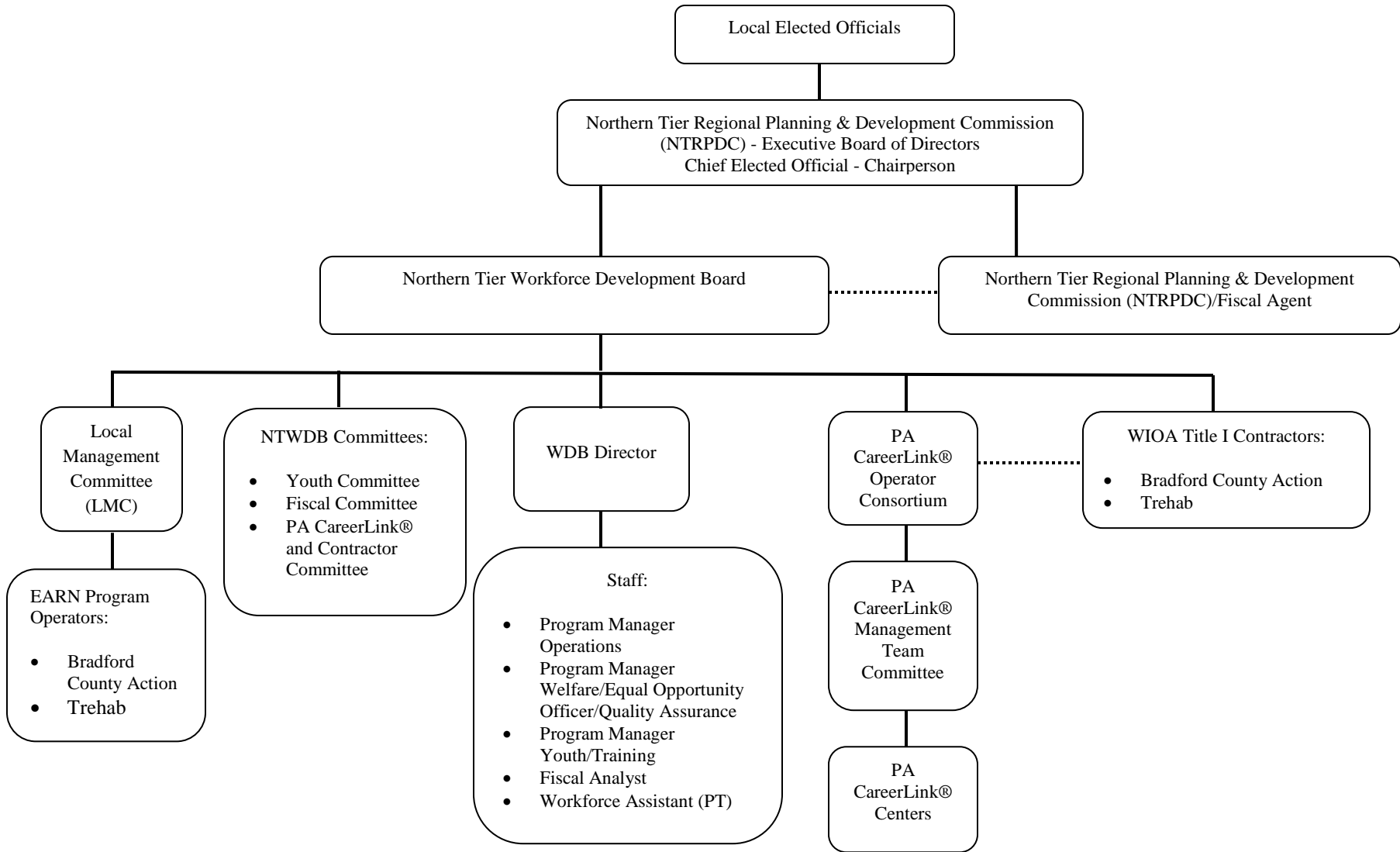
- [TEN 1-15; Promising Practices in Achieving Universal Access and Equal Opportunity: A Section 188 Disability Reference Guide; July 6, 2015](#)
- [TEGL 37-14; Update on Complying with Nondiscrimination Requirements: Discrimination Based on Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Stereotyping are Prohibited Forms of Sex Discrimination in the Workforce Development System; May 29, 2015](#)
- [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#)

Transitional PY16 Local Plan
Appendix C: Local Area WIOA Negotiated Performance Goals

Name of local workforce development area:

WIOA Performance Measures	Local Area PY15 Performance Goals
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	Negotiated Goals
Adult	59%
Dislocated Worker	67%
Youth	58%
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	Negotiated Goals
Adult	58%
Dislocated Worker	63%
Youth	57%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter after Exit)	Negotiated Goals
Adult	5,000
Dislocated Worker	6,300
Youth	2,100
Credential Attainment Rate	Negotiated Goals
Adult	68%
Dislocated Worker	71%
Youth	60%
Measurable Skill Gains	Negotiated Goals
Adult	48%
Dislocated Worker	48%
Youth	48%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Negotiated Goals
Adult	25%
Dislocated Worker	25%
Youth	25%

Northern Tier Workforce Development Area (NT130) Organizational Chart



The Northern Tier Regional and Local Plans were available for public comment from May 2 through May 31. The comments received below were from the Community Justice Project of Harrisburg on May 23, 2016.

The NTWDB Plan misses the point of priority of service. Those entitled to priority are not to receive equal access, they are to receive **priority** access to career and training services. In other words, they stand first in line for these services, as is clearly explained in Pennsylvania's WIOA State Plan. This misunderstanding must be corrected.

Needless to say the NTWDB Plan fails to address **any** of the priority of service implementation details set forth in the WIOA State Plan, despite the clear mandate to do so. This deficiency must also be addressed.

Each of the issues related to successful implementation of priority of service implementation that LWDBs and PA CareerLinks are required to address is listed below. For each one, we explain why the issue in question is important to successful implementation of priority of service, and we offer suggestions as to how it might be effectively addressed.

Comment: The NTWDB Plan should:

- Include county by county data easily obtained from DHS showing the number of persons receiving public assistance (TANF and SNAP) -- a core group of those entitled to priority -- from the Department of Human Services (DHS).
- State how it will obtain data reflecting the number of other low-income persons, as well as those who are basic skills deficient.

Response: We appreciate the comment and will more clearly articulate the difference between equal services and priority of services. The issue presented is that guidance provided for Priority of Service in the transitional local/regional plans is different from what is outlined within the State Plan. The purpose for this plan is to provide for the overall strategy with regard to WIOA transitional implementation. Please note the multi-year local/regional plans, projected to be completed over the next year, will include a more operational perspective, and as such will come with guidance that outlines the local area's priority of service in more detail in alignment with the State Plan. (As a result, State and local Priority of Service policies will undergo revision in the future for consistency as well).

The outreach [the LWDB and CareerLink] will do to inform the public of Pennsylvania's priority of service policy and how they will target this outreach to best reach those potentially eligible for priority of service and any agencies that serve them.

Because public assistance recipients and other low-income persons have been chronically and historically underserved, many in this community have little or no idea that training services are available to them through the LWDBs and CareerLinks, much less that they have priority for training. Local agencies will have to take specially tailored measures to reach this population. (Doing so will not only provide training opportunities for populations not previously served, but will help local agencies

reach priority of service benchmarks established by the Commonwealth.) (WIOA State Plan, pp. 10-11 and 68).

The NTWDB Plan lacks any strategy for outreach to public assistance recipients and other low-income persons entitled to priority of service.

Perhaps the best strategy for outreach is for local agencies to connect with the Department of Human Services and work cooperatively with DHS state level policy makers and local County Assistance Offices to explore the needs of TANF and SNAP recipients within their service area for adult and postsecondary education, transitional jobs, and other services and to develop a collaborative system for those in need of such services to be screened, referred to, and served by the local agency.

Response: The NTWDB and its Title I partners also provide the Employment Advancement and Retention Network (EARN) and the Work Ready Program through the DHS. Both programs have strong cooperative efforts through the County Assistance Offices, which provide valuable outreach on behalf of our services and PA CareerLink®. The site administrator and board director serves on the Local Management Committee with the CAOs as well. The issue presented is that guidance provided for Priority of Service in the transitional local/regional plans is different from what is outlined within the State Plan. The purpose for this plan is to provide for the overall strategy with regard to WIOA transitional implementation. Please note the multi-year local/regional plans, projected to be completed over the next year, will include a more operational perspective, and as such will come with guidance that outlines the local area's priority of service in more detail in alignment with the State Plan. (As a result, State and local Priority of Service policies will undergo revision in the future for consistency as well). We will more clearly articulate the efforts of our DHS programs as well.

The NTWDB Plan should include a commitment by the agency to work in partnership with DHS and its CAOs to develop a plan for outreach and provision of training services to persons receiving TANF and SNAP benefits that includes:

- A process for informing TANF and SNAP clients of the opportunities for training services available to them through WIOA, in addition to those available through DHS and its welfare to work contractors, or through both.¹
- A process for assessing TANF and SNAP clients interested in WIOA training opportunities to determine their education level, aptitudes, barriers, career interests, and training needs/goals -- along with a breakdown of what agencies/contractors will be responsible for each aspect of this process.
- The provision of career counseling to inform TANF and SNAP clients about training and job opportunities in High Priority Occupations suited to their interests, aptitude, and experience.
- A system for referral of TANF and SNAP clients to the local WIOA agency for training services.²
- A process for sharing data regarding activities pursued by TANF and SNAP clients and the progress that have made.

¹Career Pathways programs are a good example of an important opportunity available through the WIOA system that is not available through DHS or its contractors. Transitional jobs may be another, depending on location.

²Under WIOA this can now be done by contract with DHS, an option that should be seriously considered.

How [the LWDB and CareerLink] will inform individuals seeking to access WIOA services of their priority of service, such as through posters and prominent placement of other information.

This is important in order to ensure that those who contact the local agency for training services and do not know they are entitled to priority of service will be able to identify themselves as such and receive the priority to which they are entitled.

The WIOA State Plan, itself, suggests a couple of methods to educate the public about priority of service, but there are many more. A local agency could develop and play a video in the office waiting room, run public service announcements, place advertisements at bus stops, etc.

Response: We welcome this comment and are working with the Local Management Committee (LMC) to develop better handouts and placement of information. The NTWDB and its Title I partners also provide the Employment Advancement and Retention Network (EARN) and the Work Ready Program through the DHS. Both programs have strong cooperative efforts through the County Assistance Offices, which provide valuable outreach on behalf of our services and PA CareerLink®. The issue presented is that guidance provided for Priority of Service in the transitional local/regional plans is different from what is outlined within the State Plan. The purpose for this plan is to provide for the overall strategy with regard to WIOA transitional implementation. Please note the multi-year local/regional plans, projected to be completed over the next year, will include a more operational perspective, and as such will come with guidance that outlines the local area's priority of service in more detail in alignment with the State Plan. (As a result, State and local Priority of Service policies will undergo revision in the future for consistency as well). We will more clearly articulate the efforts of our DHS programs as well.

The NTWDB Plan should describe a range of strategic methods it will use to educate the public about priority of service.

When otherwise deemed eligible for program participation, how [the LWDB and CareerLink] will affirmatively identify persons entitled to priority of service and inform those individuals of the full array of services available.

While issue (iii), above, relates to self-identification, issue (iv) is concerns the problem of how to identify persons entitled to priority of service who seek WIOA services and who either do not know they have priority or have not disclosed this. Use of a screening tool may be the most effective way for the local agency to determine whether a client may be entitled to priority.

The NTWDB Plan should describe:

- The screening or other tool it intends to use to identify persons entitled to priority of service; and
- The counseling and written materials it will use to inform them of the range of services available to them and how priority of service works.

Response: Every customer who walks through the door fills out a Customer Information Survey, which serves as an initial assessment and gives the customers the opportunity to self-identify. As stated above,

we welcome and agree with this comment and are working with the Local Management Committee (LMC) to develop better handouts and placement of information. We have a PA CareerLink® navigator in each site, who is the first evaluator to match needs with services. The navigator meets one-on-one with everyone. The NTWDB and its Title I partners also provide the Employment Advancement and Retention Network (EARN) and the Work Ready Program through the DHS. Both programs have strong cooperative efforts through the County Assistance Offices, which provide valuable outreach on behalf of our services and PA CareerLink®. The CAO's help identify, educate and refer customers to us, but a more formal screening tool and process will enhance the system moreso. The purpose for this plan is to provide for the overall strategy with regard to WIOA transitional implementation. Please note the multi-year local/regional plans, projected to be completed over the next year, will include a more operational perspective, and as such will come with guidance that outlines the local area's priority of service in more detail in alignment with the State Plan. (As a result, State and local Priority of Service policies will undergo revision in the future for consistency as well). We will more clearly articulate the efforts of our DHS programs as well.

The assessments [the LWDB and CareerLink] will use to identify barriers to employment among those entitled to priority of service and the services needed to address them.

Many of those entitled to priority of service have barriers to employment, such as those listed in the WIOA statute's definition of this term.³ The assessment process and tools employed by local agencies should include screening for barriers to employment, done in a manner that respects privacy, but nevertheless informs the client of the types of barriers for which assistance can be provided.

Comment: The NTWDB Plan should:

- Describe the process and tools that it uses or will use for assessment; and
- Explain how this process will inform clients of the range of barriers to employment for which services or accommodations may be available, while respecting the client's right not to disclose personal information should she prefer not to do so.

Once a barrier to employment has been disclosed, services to address or accommodate that barrier will normally be needed. So, for example, a victim of domestic violence might be referred to an agency that can provide appropriate counseling services or safety planning while she is pursuing training services through the local agency. An ex-offender with a criminal history might be counseled and/or referred to a legal services provider for help with expungement. Properly addressing barriers requires knowledge of services available in the community for the range of barriers the agency is likely to encounter and developing relationships with service providers to facilitate referral.

³ "Individuals with barriers to employment" include: displaced homemakers; Indians, Alaskan Natives and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities including youth with disabilities; older individuals; ex-offenders; homeless individuals; youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system; individuals who are English language learners, individuals with low levels of literacy and individuals facing cultural barriers; eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers; individuals within two years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under TANF; single parents to include single pregnant women; and long-term unemployed individuals.

Comment: The NTWDB Plan should describe how it will identify and facilitate access to appropriate services in the community to address the range of barriers to employment listed in WIOA.

Response: We welcome this comment, and we have a PA CareerLink® navigator in each site, who is the first evaluator to match needs with services. The navigator meets one-on-one with everyone who is new to the site. The NTWDB and its Title I partners also provide the Employment Advancement and Retention Network (EARN) and the Work Ready Program through the DHS. Both programs have strong cooperative efforts through the County Assistance Offices, which provide valuable outreach on behalf of our services and PA CareerLink®. The CAO's help identify, educate and refer customers to us, but a more formal screening tool and process will enhance the system moreso. The issue presented is that guidance provided for Priority of Service in the transitional local/regional plans is different from what is outlined within the State Plan. The purpose for this plan is to provide for the overall strategy with regard to WIOA transitional implementation. Please note the multi-year local/regional plans, projected to be completed over the next year, will include a more operational perspective, and as such will come with guidance that outlines the local area's priority of service in more detail in alignment with the State Plan.

The process by which [the LWDB and CareerLink] will develop Individual Employment Plans for persons entitled to priority of service that will address, in addition to training needs, any barriers to employment they may have.

WIOA eliminated sequential service requirements for those seeking Title I training services. This was a significant change and should serve to improve access to training services, especially for those entitled to priority of service.

Comment: The NTWDB Plan should describe each step in its simplified procedure for processing requests for Title I training and other services under Title I of WIOA. In doing so, the Plan should:

- Explain the role of assessments and how they are used;
- Spell out the content and specific steps involved in developing Individual Employment Plans;
- Describe the factors involved in deciding upon and developing plans for training services;
- Explain how the local agency will incorporate plans for addressing barriers to employment.

Response: We welcome this comment, and we have a PA CareerLink® navigator in each site, who is the first evaluator to match needs with services. The navigator meets one-on-one with everyone who is new to the site. The purpose for this plan is to provide for the overall strategy with regard to WIOA transitional implementation. Please note the multi-year local/regional plans, projected to be completed over the next year, will include a more operational perspective, and as such will come with guidance that outlines the local area's priority of service in more detail in alignment with the State Plan. We will utilize this opportunity to spell out the process as in an operational plan. (As a result, State and local Priority of Service policies will undergo revision in the future for consistency as well).

How [the LWDB and CareerLink] will ensure that they are serving the spectrum of persons entitled to priority of service, including those, such as English language learners, who may require more resources to serve.

This issue is similar to element (v), dealing with barriers to employment, but is more focused on those needing special services or accommodations, such as persons with limited English proficiency (LEP) and disabilities. These needs are common in the high needs groups covered by priority of service requirements. Addressing the needs of such persons is required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Americans with Disabilities Act and, thus, the importance of ensuring services to these groups goes without saying.

Access to Career Pathways programs, with their emphasis on adult education including English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL), is especially valuable for those with limited English proficiency. But identifying LEPs and providing interpretation and translated documents will be critical in order to facilitate equitable access and provide meaningful training services. Special attention to language access by LWDBs and CareerLinks in their local plans is warranted given the importance of these services to persons with this particular barrier to employment and considering also Pennsylvania's poor performance in the past in serving LEPs:

While new provisions in WIOA do target workforce services to these basic skills deficient individuals, the record of career pathways models and other training programs in providing equitable access to individuals who are low-educated and/or LEP is very weak. This is an especially urgent concern in Pennsylvania, for example, where **only 2.5% of those exiting from Title I Adult intensive or training services in the 2014-15 program year were LEP.**⁴

The NTWDB Plan provides no information on how the agency will identify and serve LEP persons. The Plan does somewhat better with regard to how it will serve persons with disabilities.

Comment: The NTWDB Plan should describe:

- How it identifies and tracks, through the education, training, and employment process, the primary language of people with limited English proficiency so staff will be prepared to provide accessible services;
- How it provides notice of the right to language services (oral communication through bilingual staff and/or interpretation as well as translated documents);
- How it affirmatively identifies persons with limited English proficiency, so as not to rely entirely on self-identification through notice of the right to language services. (This could include, for example, training of staff to recognize signs that a person is not sufficiently fluent in English to navigate the local agency's WIOA process.)
- How it provides notice to persons with disabilities of their rights under the ADA, including the right to reasonable accommodation.
- How accommodations may be requested and how they are determined.

Response: We welcome this comment, and we have a PA CareerLink® navigator in each site, who is the first evaluator to match needs with services, including language barriers. The navigator meets one-on-

⁴ Margie McHugh and Madeleine Morawski, "Immigrants and WIOA Services, Comparison of Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Native and Foreign Born Adults in Pennsylvania" (National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy, March 2016), p. 4 (emphasis added).

one with everyone who is new to the site. The purpose for this plan is to provide for the overall strategy with regard to WIOA transitional implementation. Please note the multi-year local/regional plans, projected to be completed over the next year, will include a more operational perspective, and as such will come with guidance that outlines the local area's priority of service in more detail in alignment with the State Plan. We will utilize this opportunity to spell out the process as in an operational plan. (As a result, State and local Priority of Service policies will undergo revision in the future for consistency as well).

How [the LWDB and CareerLink] will address the special needs of individuals with barriers to employment in the delivery of services, such as by assuring that appropriate career planning services are provided. This should include a detailed description of how appropriate career planning services will be provided, or arranged for, through collaboration with other agencies in the event that the LWDB or PA CareerLink® center lacks the required expertise.

WIOA defines "career planning" as:

[T]he provision of a client-centered approach in the delivery of services, designed—
(A) to prepare and coordinate comprehensive employment plans, such as service strategies, for participants to ensure access to necessary workforce investment activities and supportive services, using, where feasible, computer-based technologies; and
(B) to provide job, education, and career counseling, as appropriate during program participation and after job placement.

(WIOA Sec. 3 (8))

We see this as involving two essential components -- career counseling and case management. Career counseling is key to making wise decisions about training services and training providers and should be a central component of the assessment and training program selection process for anyone seeking services from the local WIOA agency, including especially low-income persons, who may have lacked meaningful access to such assistance in their past.

Effective case management, as described in Section 3 (8) of WIOA, is critical to ensure that clients receive support, advice, and assistance, not only in the development of their training plan, but as they pursue their training program and must deal with the need for child care, transportation, and other supportive services, as well as barriers to employment that impact on their participation.

Comment: The NTWDB Plan should:

- Explain whether case management services, as described in Section 3 (8)(A), will be provided directly by the local agency and, if not, by whom it will be provided and under what arrangements;
- Describe the case management services that will be provided, how they will be provided, and how clients will access these services;
- Explain whether career counseling will be provided directly by the local agency and, if not, by whom it will be provided and under what arrangements;

- Describe how and at what points in a client’s participation in the WIOA program process career planning is provided.

Case management and career counseling are provided to anyone receiving individualized and/or training services. The issue presented is that guidance provided for Priority of Service in the transitional local/regional plans is different from what is outlined within the State Plan. The purpose for this plan is to provide for the overall strategy with regard to WIOA transitional implementation. Please note the multi-year local/regional plans, projected to be completed over the next year, will include a more operational perspective, and as such will come with guidance that outlines the local area’s priority of service in more detail in alignment with the State Plan. (As a result, State and local Priority of Service policies will undergo revision in the future for consistency as well).

How [the LWDB and CareerLink] will ensure access to services, i.e., interpreters and translated documents, for English language learners, as well as for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing.

This is similar to issue (vii), but is more focused on how bi-lingual staff, language line or other telephone interpretation services, in-person interpreters, and translation services are used and whether adequate resources are devoted to these services.

Comment: The NTWDB Plan should:

- Identify the five most common languages spoken in the local agency’s service area and the approximate number of persons who speak these languages;
- Identify how the local agency will document LEP persons’ primary language in case records or files so staff will be prepared to provide accessible services;
- State the number of bi-lingual agency staff who speak any of the five most commonly spoken languages and their positions in the local agency;
- Explain whether and how it provides interpretation to LEP persons who seek training services;
- Explain how it trains staff to identify and meet the needs of LEP persons.

How [the LWDB and CareerLink] will train staff to ensure that staff members have an understanding of who is entitled to priority of service and that the office is responsive to the needs of these groups.

Priority of services is only meaningful to the extent local agency staff understands and properly implement its requirements.

Comment: The NTWDB Plan should:

- Describe the curriculum it will use to train staff on priority of service requirements; and
- Explain who will receive this training (e.g., reception staff, line workers, management) and how often the training will be provided.

Response: We welcome this comment, and we have a PA CareerLink® navigator in each site, who is the first evaluator to match needs with services, including language barriers. The navigator meets one-on-one with everyone who is new to the site. The purpose for this plan is to provide for the overall strategy

with regard to WIOA transitional implementation. Please note the multi-year local/regional plans, projected to be completed over the next year, will include a more operational perspective, and as such will come with guidance that outlines the local area's priority of service in more detail in alignment with the State Plan. We will utilize this opportunity to spell out the process as in an operational plan. (As a result, State and local Priority of Service policies will undergo revision in the future for consistency as well).

The Northern Tier Workforce Development Board WIOA Transition Plan references career pathways only in the sense of career ladders and says nothing about how it will design, develop, and operate Career Pathways **programs**.

Comment: The PCWDA Plan should:

- Specify the elements of the Career Pathways programs it intends to operate, which should include at a minimum those required by WIOA;
- Identify the partners (such as Department of Education, Department of Human Services, Community Colleges, Career and Technical Schools) with whom the local agency intends to partner in operating Career Pathways programs;
- Explain the process that will be used to develop Career Pathways programs;
- State the number, location, and estimated time frame for operationalizing each Career Pathways program the local agency plans to establish.
- Explain how the local agency will provide priority of service to public assistance recipients and other low-income persons for Career Pathways slots.
- Explain how the local agency will ensure that the first step on its career pathways (Literacy, ESL or GED) is accessible to those entitled to priority of service.

Response: The Title II and GED providers operate in each of our facilities and the navigators are trained with knowledge of all of the services provided. Career Pathways within the region need to be developed in conjunction with the Commonwealth which will help guide partnerships. The purpose for this plan is to provide for the overall strategy with regard to WIOA transitional implementation. Please note the multi-year local/regional plans, projected to be completed over the next year, will include a more operational perspective, and as such will come with guidance that outlines the local area's priority of service in more detail in alignment with the State Plan.

The NTWDB Plan does not mention any kind of transitional jobs program.

Comment: The NTWDB Plan should:

- State the amount of Title I funds that it will dedicate to transitional jobs and the percentage this represents, as well as the total number of jobs that it anticipates will be funded;
- Describe its plans and goals for raising additional funds for transitional jobs;
- Describe in detail the design of its transitional jobs program (Local agencies that operated Way to Work programs with TANF Emergency Funds in 2010 may want to look back to those programs and explain what they would do the same or do differently from Way to Work.)
- Describe how it will recruit employers to participate in the transitional jobs program, and if there are particular employers that it anticipates will participate;

- State whether the local agency will be the employer of record for clients in the transitional jobs program and, if not, whom the employer(s) of record will be.
- State whether the transitional jobs program will be incorporate “wraparound” or complementary services (e.g., job skills training), and describe the services provided, if so.
- Explain how the local agency will provide priority of service to public assistance recipients and other low-income persons for transitional jobs slots.

Response: We appreciate this comment on Transitional Jobs and the area fully intends to take advantage of the new opportunity for funding these positions, once guidance and guidelines are available. The purpose for this plan is to provide for the overall strategy with regard to WIOA transitional implementation. Please note the multi-year local/regional plans, projected to be completed over the next year, will include a more operational perspective, and as such will come with guidance that outlines the local area’s priority of service in more detail in alignment with the State Plan.