

TO: Local Elected Officials
Local Workforce Development Board Chairs and Executive Directors

FROM: New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission
New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development

SUBJECT: Regional Planning Guidance Framework for Implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

Date: February 28, 2019
[All changes from 2016 guidance are provided in blue font.]

- I. **Purpose.** The purpose of this regional guidance is to provide instructions to local workforce development boards regarding the coordinated submission of regional plans as required under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).
- II. **Background.** WIOA requires local workforce development boards and chief elected officials within each of New Jersey's three regions to complete a formal regional workforce plan which incorporates input and coordination from each of the local areas within the workforce planning region.

Regional plans must comply with the requirements outlined in WIOA (in particular [Section 106](#)) and align with and support the strategies described in the New Jersey WIOA Combined State Plan, [2018 Modification](#). Further, [WIOA Section 106 and Title 20-CFR 679.500](#) require that the four-year regional plan be modified after two years.

[The Regional WIOA four-year plan 2019 Modification will be effective July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2020.](#) The State shall provide technical assistance and labor market data, as requested by local areas, to assist with such regional planning and subsequent service delivery efforts. Each regional plan must adhere to all state and local public comment requirements and must be submitted [with any changes noted in blue font](#) to the State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) no later than [June 30, 2019](#).

- III. **Technical Assistance.** To ensure each Regional Plan is compliant with WIOA requirements and aligns with the New Jersey WIOA Combined State Plan, technical assistance for Local Plans will be provided by the State Employment and Training Commission, and in particular the Regional contact for the region in which the local area is located.

These Regional staff are:

Name and Contact Information	WDB Assignments
Gary Altman Acting Executive Director Phone: 609- 633-0605 Email: Gary.Altman@dol.nj.gov	NORTH: Bergen Newark Essex Morris/Sussex/Warren Greater Raritan Passaic Hudson/Jersey City Union
Maureen O'Brien-Murphy Sr. Policy Analyst Phone: 609- 633-0605 Email: Maureen.obrien-murphy@dol.nj.gov	CENTRAL: Monmouth Ocean Mercer Middlesex
Sheryl A. Hutchison Deputy Director Phone: 609- 633-0605 E-mail: Sheryl.hutchison@dol.nj.gov	SOUTH: Atlantic Burlington Camden Cumberland/Salem/Cape May Gloucester

IV. **Regional Planning Regulations.** WIOA requires Local Boards and chief elected officials within an identified planning region to participate in a regional planning process resulting in a comprehensive four-year plan which shall be modified every two years. This regional plan shall include:

- An overview of the region, including a list of local areas and counties that comprise the region;
- The collection and analysis of regional labor market data (in conjunction with the State)
- The establishment of regional service strategies, including use of cooperative service delivery agreements;
- The development and implementation of sector initiatives for in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the planning region;
- The establishment of administrative cost arrangements, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate, for the region;
- The coordination of transportation and other supportive services as appropriate;
- The coordination of services with regional economic development services and providers;
- The establishment of an agreement concerning how the planning region will collectively negotiate and reach agreement with the Governor on local levels of performance for, and report on, the performance accountability measures described in WIOA sec. 116(c) for local areas or the planning region; and
- The establishment of a process to review and modify the plan every two years.

The Regional Planning Guidance Framework outlines the above listed WIOA requirements. Local Boards and chief elected officials within an identified planning region shall participate in a regional planning process, adhering to the Framework, to assist in drafting the regional plan for each region.

- V. **Regional Plan Framework.** Each planning region shall adhere to the Framework while preparing the regional plan. In order to respond appropriately to each of the elements of the framework, regional plans are anticipated to be 20 – 25 pages in length. [The 2019 Plan Modification may replace some text and add new text, but the regional plan should still conform to the 20 to 25-page guideline. The 2019 Plan Modification may include Appendices that are not part of this page count.](#)

APPENDIX A: REGIONAL PLAN FRAMEWORK

Instructions:

Please address all of the elements outlined below. In doing so, if the planning region is not fully prepared to provide a complete response to the specified element at the time of plan submission, the plan must indicate how the region plans to address the respective requirement over the life of the regional plan timeline.

For the 2019 Plan Modification, under WIOA Section 106 and Title 20-CFR 679.500, the local WDBs within a planning region, in partnership with the appropriate chief elected officials, must review the regional plan and prepare and submit modifications to the regional plan to reflect changes:

- (1) In regional labor market and economic conditions; and
- (2) Other factors affecting the implementation of the local plan, including but not limited to changes in the financing available to support WIOA Title I and partner-provided WIOA services.

Also, to recognize the work of this new regional initiative, **please report any successes and notable accomplishments that have resulted from your regional WDB partnership over the last two years.** Please include a description of these items under any of the applicable Regional Plan Elements I – IX.

Please address the following elements in a narrative of approximately 20 to 25 pages.

Goals of New Jersey’s Talent Development Strategy:

New Jersey’s strategic talent development strategy is focused on two foundational goals:

1. Building an Innovative, Skilled Workforce to Power Economic Growth
2. Building Economic Opportunity for all New Jersey Residents

The Mission of New Jersey’s Talent Development Strategy:

New Jersey will increase the number of residents with an industry-valued credential or degree through high quality partnerships and integrated investments.

Five Strategic Themes:

New Jersey’s Talent Development Strategy is focused on five critical themes.

- Theme 1: Building Career Pathways with a focus on Industry-Valued Credentials
- Theme 2: Expanding High-Quality Employer-Driven Partnerships
- Theme 3: Providing Career Navigation Assistance through One-Stop Career Centers and Broad Partnerships
- Theme 4: Strengthening Governance through Effective Workforce Development Boards and Regional Collaborations
- Theme 5: Ensuring System Integrity through Metrics and Greater Transparency

The most important way to strengthen New Jersey’s workforce is to build lasting partnerships with a wide range of employers, state departments, local governments, educational institutions and community-based organizations that play critical roles in the labor market. Regional planning within the workforce development system provides an opportunity to strategically coordinate services, resources, and strategies that contribute to the development of talent throughout New Jersey.

Regional Plan Elements

- I. **Regional Overview and Regional Priorities - [Update as appropriate for the 2019 Modification](#)**
 - a. **Provide the following information relating to the composition of the planning region.**
 - i. A reference name for the planning region;
 - ii. Identification of the local workforce development areas and counties that comprise the planning region. [Identify any changes in the 2019 Modification. Review and update the regional WDB partner MOU, as appropriate, and provide the updated version as an Appendix to this plan.](#)
 - iii. Provide a description of the workforce development region's priorities for the next 4 years. [Update these priorities as part of the 2019 Modification.](#)
 - iv. How do these priorities align to the foundational goals, mission, and strategic themes identified in New Jersey's Talent Development Strategy?

- II. **Regional Data Analysis - [Update with new data and analysis for the 2019 Modification](#)**
 - a. ***Demonstrate how the region has collected and analyzed regional labor market information. Regions should consider the following questions when responding to this requirement:***
 - i. What industries, occupations, and skills are in demand and targets of opportunity for the region?
 - ii. How is the region changing in terms of population demographics, labor supply, and occupational demand?
 - iii. What geographic factors impact the regional economy (e.g. proximity to other labor markets, commuting patterns)?
 - iv. What special populations, including people with disabilities, are present in the region, how many individuals are there in each category, and what are the policy and service implications to meet the needs of these individuals?

- III. **Integration of Strategies and Services - [Update as appropriate for the 2019 Modification](#)**
 - a. ***Describe the regional service strategies including use of cooperative service delivery agreement(s). Regions should consider the following questions when responding to this requirement:***
 - i. Which existing service delivery strategies will be expanded and how?
 - ii. What service strategies will be used to address regional workforce needs, such as education, training, work-based learning, employment, and job matching?
 - iii. How did the planning region arrive at these strategies? What is the rationale for regional coordination on these service delivery strategies?
 - iv. What formal and informal cooperative procedures will the core partners and other required partners establish to align services and coordinate delivery?

- IV. **Sector Initiatives: High Quality Employer-Driven Partnerships - [Update as appropriate for the 2019 Modification](#)**
 - a. ***Describe the development and implementation of sector initiatives for in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the planning region. Regions should consider the***

following questions when responding to this requirement:

- i. What industry sectors and occupations have been prioritized and why?
- ii. What strategies will be implemented to ensure that corresponding industry-recognized credentials will be delivered within these sectors? What is the capacity of existing education and training providers to offer these credentials?
- iii. What sector strategies will be implemented and/or scaled throughout the region?
- iv. How are core partners and non-core partners involved in supporting or scaling these sector strategies?
- v. How will New Jersey [Industry Partnerships](#) be engaged in regional strategies to support target sectors?
- vi. What other public-private partnerships exist in the region that could support sector strategies and what is their role in planning?

V. Administrative cost arrangements, including pooling of funds - [Update as appropriate for the 2019 Modification](#)

a. Describe the coordination of administrative cost arrangements, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate. Regions should consider the following questions when responding to this requirement:

- i. What administrative cost arrangements have been agreed upon by all members of the planning region?
- ii. How will these administrative cost arrangements support regional workforce development objectives?
- iii. What process was used between regional partners to reach agreement on cost sharing arrangements?

VI. Coordination of transportation and other supportive services - [Update as appropriate for the 2019 Modification](#)

a. Describe how transportation and other supportive services are coordinated within the region. Regions should consider the following questions when responding to this requirement:

- i. What regional organizations currently provide or could provide supportive services?
- ii. How can gaps in service be addressed regionally?
- iii. What policies and procedures will be established to promote coordination of supportive services delivery?

VII. Coordination with economic development - [Update as appropriate for the 2019 Modification](#)

a. Describe the coordination of services with regional economic development services and providers. Regions should consider the following questions when responding to this requirement:

- i. What economic development organizations or businesses are actively engaged in regional planning?
- ii. How are regional workforce development strategies aligned to economic development priorities in the region?
- iii. How will economic development organizations be engaged in strategies to align

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- supply and demand within the labor market?
 - iv. How will the region engage economic development organizations in an ongoing, sustained way?

VIII. Performance negotiations and other requirements - [Update as appropriate for the 2019 Modification](#)

a. Document how the planning region will collectively negotiate and reach agreement with the Governor on local levels of performance for, and report on, the performance accountability measures described in WIOA sec. 116(c) for local areas or the planning region. Regions should consider the following questions when responding to this requirement:

- i. What process will be used to determine regional performance goals?
- ii. What process will be used to collectively negotiate performance goals?

IX. Coordination with Other Regional Efforts - [Update as appropriate for the 2019 Modification](#)

a. Describe the coordination which exists (if any) with other regional planning efforts, such as municipal planning boards, Mayors' Associations, grant initiatives, and New Jersey Transit?

DRAFT TEMPLATE
New Jersey Workforce Development
WIOA Regional-Local Memorandum of Understanding

This Memorandum of Understanding is entered into by and between the Partners of the New Jersey [REGION NAME – North Region / Central Region / South Region], including the New Jersey Local Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) of [WDB NAMES], hereafter referred to as the Regional Partners.

Additionally, the following partners within the REGION are signatories to this MOU:
[ADD OTHER SIGNATORY ENTITIES IF APPROPRIATE INCLUDING OTHER WIOA SYSTEM PARTNER ENTITIES COMMITTING TO COLLABORATE AS PART OF THE REGION.]

In consideration of the expectations of Regional collaboration and coordination for mutual undertakings and covenants, under policies set by the Governor, the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission (SETC), and New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (LWD), the parties agree as follows.

I. Introduction: Purpose and Background

In accordance with the requirements of Section 106 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (Public Law 113–128), the members of [REGION NAME], with the agreement of the chief elected officials of the member Local Workforce Investment Areas, shall undertake Regional Planning activity, development of a Regional Plan and an Agreement as to how the planning region will collectively negotiate and reach agreement with the Governor on local levels of performance for, and report on, the performance accountability measures described in section 116(c), for local areas or the planning region.

II. Duration: Term of Agreement

This Memorandum of Understanding will cover a period of _____ years. It will begin on _____ and end on _____.

[It is recommended that the period be the four-year period of the first Regional Plan. Regions may select a different period based on any requirements of the local area partners.]

III. Defined Roles and Responsibilities: Provision of Services

The Regional Partners entering into this Memorandum of Understanding agree to collaborate together on all of the required service activities that make up the activity of the WIOA workforce development system as outlined in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and the State of New Jersey WIOA State Consolidated Plan. The Regional Partners also agree to

coordinate and collaborate on the activities that are presented in the [REGION NAME] Regional Plan, including the following menu of activities.

[LIST OF KEY ACTIVITIES AS OUTLINED IN THE REGIONAL PLAN]

Each Regional Partner will work collaboratively as part of [REGION NAME] to analyze available services and identify areas where access to services through the One-Stop system could be improved. The Regional Partners agree to work collaboratively together as [REGION NAME] on continuous improvement of the One-Stop system.

IV. Methods for Referral

[A method of cross-referral of customers (job-seekers and businesses) among the One-Stops in the Region's local workforce areas will be developed, and outlined here, between the Regional Partners and their respective WIOA system partners in the REGION in agreement with the Regional Operator conforming to all policies of the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development. Referral may occur in person, by fax, telephone, mail, or electronic means including information sharing through use of state technology systems developed for integrated service and program management as well as other shared software packages or technologies.]

V. Deliverables:

[REGION NAME] commits to support each of the Region's WDBs in achieving the required WIOA performance outcomes, all State of New Jersey performance and program requirements, and the following deliverables:

[LIST ADDITIONAL SPECIFIC DELIVERABLES FOR THE REGION]

VI. Reporting:

The Regional Partners commit to adhere to all Federal and State reporting processes as released or developed by State policy. The Regional Partners will, specifically, report on program performance as part of the bi-annual WDB certification/re-certification process and will report together on Regional requirements in keeping with Policy being developed by the SETC and LWD.

[DETAILS AND EXPECTATIONS WILL BE INSERTED SUBSEQUENTLY ON REGIONAL REPORTING PROCESSES AS REQUIRED BY SETC/LWD.]

The Regional Partners further commit to report on the following deliverables, measures and outcomes:

[INSERT ADDITIONAL REGIONAL MEASURES HERE.]

VII. Funding and Operating Costs

The One-Stop system will be funded primarily through allocations to Local Areas within the Region from Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds, and State funds allocated to the local operations. Other partners may elect to negotiate with the Workforce Development Boards and staff in One-Stop offices for coordinated activity. Financial agreements with those individual partners may be negotiated.

All One-Stop partners assure that they will work together as Partners and work with the State to work out funding of operational costs pursuant to Federal and State guidelines.

VIII. Partner Collaboration and Decision-Making

[The REGION shall describe here its process for decision-making, and in particular how the original Regional Plan and the elements in this MOU were agreed-upon, the Region's process for gaining consensus when making decisions, and the process to be used between Regional Partners to resolve issues when consensus cannot be reached.]

[REGION NAME] attests that the Regional Partners have followed the guidance from the New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission for the One-Stop infrastructure funding process.

[The REGION shall establish a Lead Entity and lead contact person for Regional reporting and communications with SETC and LWD. This Lead Entity is [INSERT ENTITY NAME, CONTACT PERSON NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION.] The Region is free to change the Lead Entity and to update SETC and LWD of any changes during the life of this Memorandum of Understanding.

Other leadership structures and roles, listed below, may be identified for other purposes within the Regional Partnership as appropriate. Current leadership structures and roles include:
[INSERT OTHER REGIONAL LEADERSHIP STRUCTURES, ROLES AND CONTACTS HERE.]

IX. Modification Process, Renewal, and Termination

- (a) The parties may modify this Memorandum of Understanding consistent with applicable law and policies. Such modifications shall be made by mutual written agreement of the parties at any time.
- (b) This Memorandum of Understanding shall be reviewed not less than once every three-year period to ensure appropriate delivery of services, strategies in line with current Regional needs, and equitable levels of funding across the REGION as appropriate.

(c) This Memorandum of Understanding may be renewed under the same terms and conditions, subject to the approval of all the parties. The term may not be longer than the original term.

X. Equal Employment Opportunity and Nondiscrimination

The parties to this Memorandum of Understanding commit to comply with all nondiscrimination and Equal Employment Opportunity provisions of Section 188 of the Workforce Investment Act and its implementing regulations at 29 CFR Part 37.

XI. Authorization

In Witness Whereof, the parties have, through their duly authorized representatives, [the local Workforce Development Board Chairs and Chief Local Elected Officials], entered into this Memorandum of Understanding. The parties, having read and understood the foregoing terms of this Memorandum of Understanding, do by their respective signatures, dated below hereby agree to the terms thereof.

Signature
Title
Organization
Date

Signature
Title
Organization
Date