



# New Jersey's

# talent development strategy

NJ Combined State Plan for WIOA ([njsetc.net/nj-combined-plan-wioa.pdf](http://njsetc.net/nj-combined-plan-wioa.pdf))

## Mission

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

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## Vision

To strengthen New Jersey’s workforce, we must build high-quality 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. Employers, libraries, community groups, county colleges, vocational and technical institutions, K-12 education systems, training providers, industry associations, organized labor, four-year universities, and other important players statewide all have an enormous stake in creating a successful education and training system that responds to the rapidly changing needs of the state’s key industries.

## Key State Government Partners

- State Employment and Training Commission
- Department of Labor and Workforce Development
- Department of Education
- Office of the Secretary of Higher Education
- Department of Human Services
- Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired
- Division of Family Development

## Five Key Strategic Themes

<p>THEME <b>1</b></p>	<p>THEME <b>2</b></p>	<p>THEME <b>3</b></p>	<p>THEME <b>4</b></p>	<p>THEME <b>5</b></p>
<p>Building career pathways with a focus on industry-valued credentials</p>	<p>Expanding high-quality, employer-driven partnerships</p>	<p>Providing career navigation assistance through One-Stop Career Centers and broad partnerships</p>	<p>Strengthening governance through effective Workforce Development Boards and regional collaborations</p>	<p>Ensuring system integrity through metrics and greater transparency</p>



New Jersey State Employment and Training Commission

## Theme 1 | Building career pathways with a focus on industry-valued credentials

New Jersey's workforce policies and investments are focused on expanding career pathways that enable individuals to access greater economic opportunity and build their skills throughout their careers. Specifically, these career pathways will help more individuals obtain industry-valued credentials and degrees.

### Career Pathways

New Jersey has adopted a common definition of career pathways to be incorporated into all workforce and education programs. Career pathways are a series of education and training experiences resulting in industry-valued credentials leading to employment, promotion, and/or advanced education. Career Pathways are industry-focused, have diverse entry and exit points, and include integration of adult basic skills, digital literacy, employability skills, and work-based learning, including registered apprenticeships.

### Industry-Valued Credentials

The State intends to create a workforce system valued by employers that creates pathways for individuals to attain post-secondary credentials and degrees. Our goal is that 80% of occupational training investments will be focused on programs that result in an industry-valued credential by 2021.

LWD has developed the **New Jersey Industry-Valued Credential List** based on analysis of a variety of labor market information sources and extensive input from employers and the state's Talent Networks. To learn more, visit <http://careerconnections.nj.gov/IVCL>.

## Theme 2 | Expanding high-quality, employer-driven partnerships

New Jersey has committed to increasing the number of high-quality, employer-driven partnerships statewide. The workforce and education efforts of these collaborations follow a clearly defined mission and vision statement, with defined roles, responsibilities and impact measures for all partners, including employers, educators, organized labor and registered apprenticeship programs, training providers, and local workforce professionals.



The **Talent Networks** are led by colleges, universities, and business organizations and focused on building partnerships with employers, educational institutions, and workforce organizations in New Jersey's seven key industries:

**Advanced Manufacturing | Life Sciences | Health Care | Financial Services | Transportation, Logistics & Distribution | Technology | Retail, Hospitality & Tourism**

The Talent Networks are building regional high-quality, employer-driven partnerships, known as **Targeted-Industry Partnerships (TIPs)**, in areas of the state that have a concentration of employers in their specific industry. New Jersey is also investing in the development of three **Talent Development Centers (TDC)** at community colleges and universities focused on the Advanced Manufacturing, Health Care, and Transportation, Logistics and Distribution industries. The TDCs serve as "centers for excellence" in the state and will be anchors for expanded high-quality, employer-driven partnerships in their industry.

### High-Quality Partnerships

A truly "high-quality" partnership is one that features:

- Private sector employers, actively working with their public and non-profit colleagues to focus on the specific jobs and skills in demand by the region's leading sectors.
- A clear mission and well-defined roles for all of the partner organizations.
- Distinct career pathways, defined by a series of degrees, certificates, and other credentials that employers value and look for when hiring.
- Widespread use of timely industry and workforce data, ensuring that partners' employment and training investments target authentic job opportunities, not declining occupations and obsolete skills.
- Practical, collaborative learning experiences where trainees apply lessons from the classroom in real-world settings through internships, mentorships, or apprenticeships.
- Clear measures of program effectiveness so partners can see meaningful outcomes in terms of trainee job placement and credentials earned.
- Reliable, sustainable funding streams

## Theme 3 | Providing career navigation assistance through One-Stop Career Centers and broad partnerships

In order to expand the number of jobseekers and students who have access to high-quality career guidance and job search assistance, New Jersey is building a new network of One-Stop Career Centers, community colleges, public libraries, community- and faith-based organizations, organized labor, and educational institutions.



The **New Jersey Career Connections** initiative seeks to ensure that all New Jerseyans have the tools and resources they need to have successful careers. Through this initiative, government, nonprofit, and educational institutions, including One-Stop Career Centers, community colleges, public libraries, and community- and faith-based organizations, work together to provide personalized, comprehensive, and effective career navigation assistance, both online and in person, to jobseekers throughout the state.

At its core, New Jersey Career Connections consists of three simple parts:

**a service model | a network of partners | and a website.**



### Service Model

The New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, using input from partners, has developed a career navigation framework featuring expert insights and actionable guidance. This model simplifies job search and career planning efforts while giving partners a framework for providing services in a common manner.

The New Jersey Career Connections career navigation model is called **The Path to Employment** and consists of the steps **Plan, Prepare, and Succeed**.



Plan



Prepare



Succeed

Each step of the process provides information and activities to help jobseekers realize their career goals.



### Network of Partners

New Jersey Career Connections consists of nearly 100 locations where individuals can get career navigation assistance. These locations include One-Stop Career Centers, community colleges, public libraries, and a wide array of community- and faith-based organizations throughout the state. At these locations, staff are trained to provide services to jobseekers in **The Path to Employment** framework to ensure that services are delivered in a consistent manner.

New Jersey is providing funding to local libraries across the state, selected competitively, to assist them in participating in the “Career Connections Network” and to provide job search and career planning assistance to individuals. These locations will refer individuals to One-Stop Career Centers for more in-depth assistance.



### Website - careerconnections.nj.gov

The website houses the service model for the network and provides users direct access to career navigation resources. The website is optimized for mobile use and designed to enable a fluid user experience.

The website includes interactive tools, including a job board and a career navigation module, as well as useful resources, including a directory of training programs, information on hundreds of careers, and advice and guidance on a wide variety of topics. Among other functions, **careerconnections.nj.gov** helps jobseekers learn how to network, find employment, and prepare for interviews.

## Theme 4 | Strengthening governance through effective Workforce Development Boards and regional collaborations

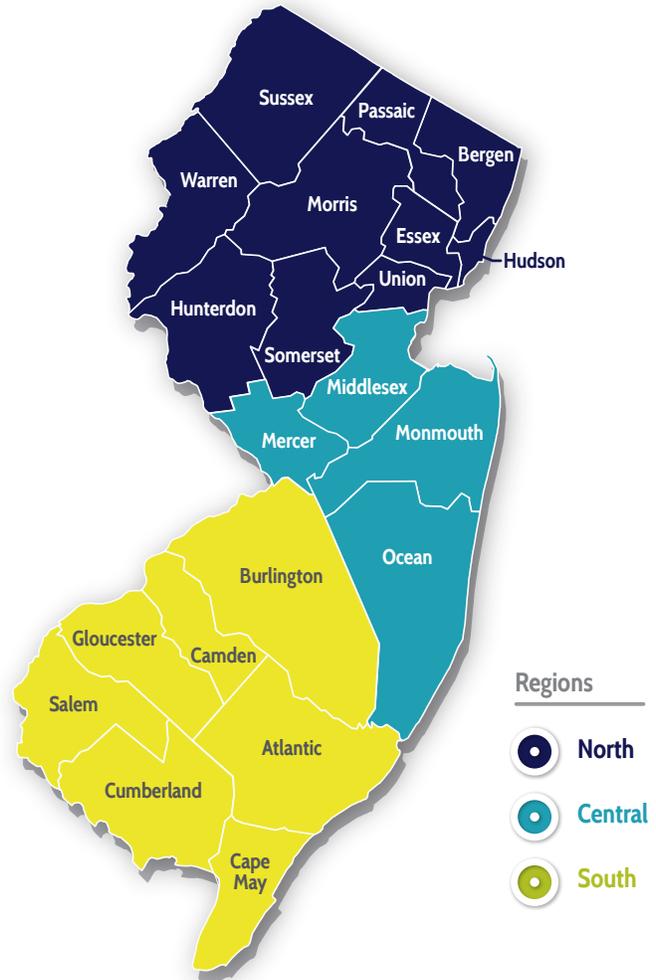
Effective Workforce Development Boards (WDBs) are critical to the success of New Jersey's Talent Development system. Led by the private sector but inclusive of key partners, local WDBs engage in an active governance role to ensure that investments are made in effective programs so that local residents can access the services they need for career success and that programs are connected to the needs of local employers.

### Regional Collaboration

Regional workforce planning is a critical step to better coordinate services, leverage resources, and improve industry and economic development collaborations beyond local area borders. The State Employment and Training Commission (SETC) created three workforce planning regions in New Jersey, in which local WDBs will jointly create regional plans for workforce services.

### Local Board Governance

The State is focused on strengthening roles of local boards as drivers of the workforce system. Local Boards are certified by the State Board, the SETC, to ensure that each local board is fulfilling its roles and responsibilities. Further, local boards competitively select One-Stop Operators and certify One-Stop Career Centers in their area to ensure access to quality services and continuous improvement.



## Theme 5 | Ensuring system integrity through metrics and greater transparency

New Jersey is committed to data-informed decision making and greater transparency. New Jersey will make performance data on workforce development programs accessible to workforce decision-makers and the public.

### Performance Indicators

The State will implement the WIOA Primary Indicators to assess and guide training investments across federal and state workforce programs. Performance measures for adults, dislocated workers, and youth focus on participant outcomes, including Employment Rate; Median Earnings; Credential Attainment Rate; and Measurable Skills Gains. A performance indicator is being developed by federal agencies to measure effectiveness in serving employers. To further strengthen data-informed decision making, New Jersey will examine and use additional performance measures to assess and guide training investments across federal and state workforce programs. These New Jersey-specific performance measures include: Number of Program Participants Served; Characteristics of Program Participants; Customer Satisfaction; Local Workforce Development Board Certification; Number of High-Quality Partnerships Established; and Regional Coordination.

### Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) and Consumer Report Card

New Jersey will make performance data on training programs accessible to workforce decision-makers and the public. The Eligible Training Provider List and Consumer Report Card are critical tools assisting jobseekers and students to make informed decisions about skills-building training programs. New Jersey is strengthening its Eligible Training Provider List to provide enhanced information about training programs to New Jersey customers; this includes providing relevant performance and cost information, in an easy to understand format on the Consumer Report Card available at [www.njtopps.com](http://www.njtopps.com).