

WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA) PY 2021

ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 1, 2021 TO JUNE 30, 2022



**VIRGINIA
CAREER WORKS**



VCU

Performance Management Group
L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs

VIRGINIA ANNUAL REPORT

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

Program Year 2021

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	2
Introduction Narrative	2
Approved Waivers	4
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	5
State Evaluation Activities and Research Projects	5
Virginia's Approach to Customer Satisfaction	8
Data Validation	10
WIOA Combined State Plan Progress	11
Sector Strategies and Career Pathways Implementation	12
WIOA Title I Youth Program Work Experience and Out-of-School Youth (OSY) Expenditure Requirement	12
Virginia's Performance Accountability System	13
Activities Funded by the State's WIOA Title I Set Aside Funds	14
Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion Activities	15
Activities Provided Under the Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service Section 7(b)	17
National Dislocated Worker Grants Awarded	18
Success Story	18
State Workforce System Challenges	20
Appendix	23

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This year's WIOA Annual Report is dedicated to the workforce development professionals across the Commonwealth and acknowledges their extraordinary efforts in providing ongoing services in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

INTRODUCTION NARRATIVE

Virginia is pleased to submit the Program Year 2021 WIOA Annual Statewide Performance Report Narrative for WIOA Titles I and III. For Program Year 2021 (PY21), Virginia's WIOA Title I and Title III programs (Workforce Partners) were able to provide quality programming and services to meet our customer needs by:

Customer Service Training:

The VEC recently completed an agency wide customer service training led by the Virginia Commonwealth University Performance Management Group (PMG). This training focused on conflict resolution, solution focused thinking, positive interactions, and how to meaningfully connect with customers. This training was mandatory for all positions and increased the entire agency's proficiency in assisting customers.

Hiring Events:

Title III has been working with the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) Leadership and Business Service Teams to provide regional and statewide virtual and in person hiring events.

Virtual Services:

Workforce Services at VEC ensured Virginians that needed services still received them, despite COVID related restrictions. This was accomplished by providing virtual services and by partnering with local libraries and other local organizations in areas that lacked reliable broadband services. This allowed the VEC to provide services in a safe and secure manner in accordance with CDC and State health guidelines.

Language Access Town Halls:

The Importance of Language Access for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Virginians statewide town hall was held on May 18, 2022. Advocates also spoke to the statewide Accessibility Task Force in July 2022 and answered specific questions about language access for state services.

GED® Test for Free campaign:

Title II conducted social media and ad campaigns that were boosted by Workforce Partners to reach individuals who had started their GED testing but had not yet completed and were eligible to receive state-sponsored testing vouchers; this campaign drew in hundreds of individuals who were able to earn their secondary credential.

Furthermore, Virginia continued to focus on the implementation of the WIOA Combined State Plan through strengthening workforce partnerships and cross-agency collaboration.

In PY21, WIOA Title I program effectively served 5,206 Virginians through Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs. Virginia's Rapid Response team provided services to a total of 48 WARN notices that impacted over 3,800 workers. WIOA Title III programs served 102,812 individuals who utilized self-service employment assistance and 48,822 participants who received staff assisted services through Wagner-Peyser.

In PY21, WIOA Title I programs effectively served:



5,206

Virginians through Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs

Virginia's Rapid Response team provided services to a total of:



48

WARN notices that impacted over 3,800 workers

WIOA Title III programs served:



102,812

individuals who utilized self-service employment assistance



48,822

participants who received staff assisted services through Wagner-Peyser

In total,



12,119

businesses were served by both WIOA Title I and Title III programs



14,823

businesses were served by all four WIOA Titles

The following are highlights of Virginia's WIOA Workforce activities in PY21:

Updates to WIOA Combined State Plan

Virginia's 2020-2023 Combined State Plan (CSP) was updated and approved in June 2022 to reflect Virginia's new Governor and changes that have impacted Virginia since 2020. Virginia's vision for the delivery of workforce development services is:

During the life of this plan, we will improve economic opportunity for all Virginians by serving those who are not yet earning a sustainable wage and, as important, by focusing the resources and mechanisms of our workforce system to recruit people into the workforce and connecting them to businesses in high-demand industries.

Governor Glenn Youngkin embraces four strategic goals for the workforce system. These goals are:

1. Build Virginia's talent supply to align with current and anticipated business needs and to earn sustainable wages
2. Increase business engagement and deliver value to business customers by filling jobs in high-demand occupations that are strategic to Virginia's economy and strengthen Virginia's regions
3. Increase outreach and recruitment efforts to make available services more well-known and accessible to stimulate job readiness and career awareness
4. Reduce workforce system barriers through collaborative integration and innovative solutions

APPROVED WAIVERS

Identify each waiver that the state has had in place for at least one program year and provide information regarding the state's progress toward achieving the goals and performance outcomes in ET A's letter of approval for the waiver (sec 189(i)(3)(C)(ii)) and outlined in the state's waiver request

(when applicable). Discuss how activities carried out under each approved waiver have directly or indirectly affected state and local area performance outcomes. To the extent possible, provide quantitative information.

The Commonwealth of Virginia did not receive any waivers for Program Year 2021.

EFFECTIVENESS IN SERVING EMPLOYERS

Identify the two approaches the state has chosen for the Effectiveness in Serving Employers performance indicator pilot. If the state is piloting a state-established measure of Effectiveness in Serving Employers, or has any other metrics to assess employer engagement, describe the measure/metric as well.

The Commonwealth of Virginia selected the Effectiveness in Serving Employers pilot measures of:

- Retention with the Same Employer
- Employer Penetration Rate

The total result of the joint efforts of the WIOA funded programs yielded the following results:

- Retention with the Same Employer: 60.88%
- Employer Penetration Rate 5.1%

The data collection on employer services, which included activities supported by WIOA funded programs and other non-WIOA funded workforce programs, provided the following results:

- 18,392 unduplicated businesses were served.
 - This number represents approximately 6.4% of the total employers in the Commonwealth.
- Workforce Recruitment Services were the most common type of service delivered.
- The top three types of businesses served by North American Industry Classification Systems (NAICS) were:
 - 31-33 Manufacturing
 - 62 Healthcare and Social Assistance
 - 54 Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
- 74% of the businesses served employed less than 250 individuals per establishment.



STATE EVALUATION ACTIVITIES AND RESEARCH PROJECTS

Include brief descriptions of: (a) current or planned evaluation and related research projects, including methodologies used; (b) efforts to coordinate the development of such projects with WIOA core programs, other state agencies and local boards; (c) a list of completed evaluation and related reports and links to where they were made accessible to the public electronically; (d) State efforts to provide data, survey responses, and timely site visits for Federal evaluations; and (e) any continuous improvement strategies utilizing results from studies and evidence-based practices evaluated.

In February 2021, Virginia began an evaluation of its workforce development system and it was completed in December 2021. This evaluation was conducted by the VCU Performance Management Group (PMG) in collaboration with the Secretariat of Labor. The intention of this evaluation and its recommendations was to serve as a bridge to the Youngkin administration providing an overview of existing workforce development efforts in Virginia as well as opportunities to build and strengthen those programs and services. The evaluation used the goals included in the Virginia Combined State Plan (CSP) and in the Virginia Board of Workforce Development (VBWD) strategic plan as benchmarks.

Research was conducted primarily through interviews with workforce leaders in the state, regions, as well as peer states. In all, interviews were conducted with 49 workforce representatives including agency leaders, regional leaders (board chairs and directors) and Chief Local Elected Officials (CLEOs). Surveys were also used to collect information where appropriate. In-person assessments were conducted at all the comprehensive job centers throughout the state.

Logistics prevented conducting formal assessments at all the affiliate job centers. Direct interviews with workforce customers were not possible due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Data from the systems of record for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I, Title III and Title IV, such as customer demographics and staff engagements, was analyzed along with information provided by the regions including board demographics and services available at the One-Stop centers.

Additional research included reviewing federal and state statutory code, related workforce policies and regulations, and journal articles pertaining to workforce trends along with demographic data. Currently, the Virginia workforce development system spans ten agencies and six Secretariats.

Feedback from assessment participants, both internal and external, suggest the current structure creates challenges in developing and implementing policies, programs, and services. Virginia operates WIOA Titles I and III in separate agencies while 80 percent of other states, including five of the six peer states analyzed, place them under a single agency. Operating Title I and III in separate agencies also means workforce customers may not be aware of eligible services available in the other programs.

Most of those interviewed as part of this assessment were found to be passionate, fully engaged and committed to the goal of providing effective workforce services to those in need. There were some differences of opinion on how to accomplish that goal when comparing the regional insights to that of those working at the state oversight level. Feedback from the regions suggests the workforce Title I Administration representatives are focused on compliance rather than the delivery of innovative services and do not take regional processes into consideration when developing policies and systems.

Title I Administration representatives provided feedback that the regions are focused on retaining control rather than embracing system-wide solutions like the referral portal, which the majority of

regions reported does not meet their business needs. Communication challenges between the two groups have created tension and opportunities for misunderstandings that need to be addressed. Several of the assessment recommendations are a first step in resolving this conflict.

One-Stop customers generally experience high-touch engagements with workforce programs and services. Analysis of the data provided to PMG shows the pandemic had a significant impact on regional operations but in recent months the number of customer engagements has started to trend upward. The most often requested needs by workforce customers across almost all the regions are childcare and transportation with the lack of available childcare support outside of the “9 to 5” jobs being a significant obstacle. Resources available in the centers are generally consistent but methods for capturing visitor information (intake and customer satisfaction) vary by region, hindering the ability to analyze information across all the regions.

Partnerships with other entities such as economic development representatives are essential to ensuring the workforce can support existing and future needs of businesses through both four-year degree programs as well as vocational/trade programs.

A majority of regional directors reported awareness of workforce programs and services throughout their area is generally low with some reporting a five to ten percent awareness among residents. The level of engagement of some of the regions, sometimes limited because of funds, changing population demographics, and some regional boards focusing solely on oversight, may be a factor in the low level of awareness. Those regions actively partnering with local non-profits, libraries, etc., reported higher levels of awareness of available workforce services.

The recommendations resulting from this analysis for Virginia’s workforce programs are broken down into time frames as shown below:

Recommendations for Immediate Implementation

- Reevaluate the management and implementation strategies of referral portal
- Regain trust amongst workforce partners
- Examine potential gains combining Title I and Title III together under one agency to help streamline job and training services
- Allocate state funds for regional outreach programs
- Focus on career readiness, soft skills, and support for both trade and degree programs
- Standardize One-Stop customer data collection methods
- Streamline One-Stop resource room technology management
- Expand regional partnerships

Recommendations for Implementation 2022 to 2025

- Establish centralized decision-making authority over workforce system
- Address the need for critical wraparound services
- Provide dedicated funding for business services
- Reduce workforce system barriers and increase equity, diversity, and collaboration opportunities

Recommendations for Implementation 2026 and beyond

- Expand opportunities for effective regional services delivery
- Ensure Workforce Data Trust integration with all workforce partners
- Create greater alignment of policies with local labor markets

VIRGINIA'S APPROACH TO CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Describe the state's approach to customer satisfaction, which may include such information used for One-Stop center certification, in accordance with 20 CFR 678.800. This description should include: 1) the state's methodologies; 2) the number of individuals/employers who were provided customer satisfaction outreach, the response rate, and efforts made to improve the response rate; 3) the results and whether the results are generalizable to the entire population of customers; and 4) a description of any continuous improvement processes for incorporating the customer satisfaction feedback.

Virginia's Customer Satisfaction Approach for PY21

Virginia's Customer Satisfaction Approach for PY21 was primarily based upon a multi-pronged method of surveying the jobseeker and business customers. As verified through the One-Stop Certification Process every three years, and through the statewide WIOA Title I monitoring team's annual review activities, the Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) work with their American Job Center partners to implement a customer survey process for each American Job Center. The One-Stop Certification Process and the monitoring process are used to assure that each center has been determined to meet uniform certification standards.

Additionally, several of Virginia's agencies providing workforce services conduct agency specific customer surveys to validate the quality and appropriateness of their specialized workforce services. The Virginia Employment Commission (VEC), the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS), and the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI) each provide the opportunity for agency specific customer feedback during their service provision processes. These agency specific customer surveys allow for an in-depth analysis of the specialized services provided. The Adult Education program is a decentralized, grant-funded network of providers, each of which has mechanisms to solicit and collect customer (student) feedback and suggestions that are acted upon by the grant administrative team.

Virginia's primary approach to evaluating customer satisfaction for the network of American Job Centers relies on the Local Workforce Development Boards to develop and implement customer satisfaction surveys. The fourteen individual local workforce development boards each have a customer satisfaction survey for their job seeker customers and for their business customers. In each of the areas, a customer satisfaction survey is made available to the job seeking customers through various means, such as available in the resource room in paper and electronic versions, offered to customers at the end of workshops/meetings/events in either an electronic or printed format. Some are made available on the LWDA website as well. The business customers are also offered an opportunity to provide customer service feedback at the LWDA level after each event/provision of service. Virginia also relies on the agencies providing specialized workforce services to develop and implement agency specific customer satisfaction surveys.

For Title III services, provided by the VEC, customer satisfaction is a critical component of the services Virginia provides to Wagner-Peyser, Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA), Trade Act, Workforce Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC), and Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JMSG) customers. The Virginia Workforce Connection (VaWC), an electronic service provision and tracking tool and the state system of record for Title I and Title III, offers customers the opportunity to complete a satisfaction survey once they have received WIOA Title III services. Both employers and job seekers can respond to the survey.

The Title IV general vocational rehabilitation (VR) agency, DARS, works in partnership with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) to assess the perspectives of Title IV VR consumers who have not yet entered employment. Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2021 was the eighth year of assessing DARS satisfaction for consumers in service delivery (post Individualized Plan for Employment but prior to Employment). This innovative approach permits real-time assessment of services, allowing issues to be addressed prior to consumers exit the program. Each month, a stratified sample based on office proportion is used to ensure that the sample matches as closely as possible the population proportions for DARS' offices as of survey selection. DARS also offers consumers the option of completing either a paper or online survey.

The Title IV VR agency that serves individuals who are blind, vision impaired, or deafblind, DBVI, partners with its SRC for DBVI in reviewing the effectiveness of, and individual satisfaction with the VR services provided. All eligible individuals, who receive services, are provided the opportunity to participate in VR program evaluation through a customer satisfaction survey. The survey is provided with several ways for individuals to respond, in paper form by mail, online, or by telephone. The survey provides a systematic method of hearing the point of view of individuals being served. It is one measure of program effectiveness and a quality-of-service indicator. In the survey, participants can provide their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with received services, VR staff, and various aspects of the VR process. DBVI administers and distributes monthly surveys to assess consumer satisfaction with VR services. All survey recipients are provided with an explanation regarding (a) the purpose of the study; (b) voluntary participation; (c) the due date for completion of the survey; (d) confidentiality of personal information and responses; and (e) alternative options to complete the survey if additional help is required.

Due to the combined nature of the approach to evaluating customer service, tracking the customer service feedback process and outcomes for the American Job Centers is done at the local level; while agency specific customer feedback for the specialized services provided by the VEC, DARS, and DBVI is done through the state agencies. Each workforce customer is offered avenues for providing feedback that reflect their unique experience within the workforce system. Evidence from the One-Stop Certification Process and statewide monitoring indicates that all job seeker and business customers are provided an opportunity to participate in an American Job Center customer service feedback survey.

For the VEC, in PY21, a total of 1,921 surveys were submitted via the Virginia Workforce Connection (VaWC), the state management system of record used for data collection and reporting.

At the general VR agency, 2,788 consumers were selected to participate in the Fiscal Year 2021 DARS survey.

Per recommendation of the Virginia SRC, VR consumers participating in the survey are offered the opportunity to waive their rights to confidentiality so that their responses can be shared with DARS

staff. Thus, survey responses and comments for clients who desire to share their responses are provided in a summary document throughout the survey period. An annual document with survey highlights is developed after the end of each survey period. This document includes overall percentages for questions related to counselor relationship and consumers offices. Additionally, summary percentages for categories related to the following areas are included: the best thing that has happened to help them move towards their job goal and areas that would help them move closer to their job goal.

For the DBVI, in PY21, 211 individuals were provided the opportunity to participate in the DBVI VR consumer satisfaction survey. The current response rate is approximately 40%, up from 30% in FFY21. The overall satisfaction rate remains high, with 90% of participants responding as very satisfied or satisfied with VR services received from DBVI.

Currently the Virginia Career Works center customer service feedback results are only generalizable to the individual populations for each of the individual Local Workforce Development Areas, while the VEC, DARS, and DBVI customer feedback was specific to the customers receiving their unique program services respectively. For the most part, VEC specific customers who reported poor experiences cited technical issues trying to file their Unemployment Insurance claims or trouble navigating the Virginia Workforce Connections to search for job postings. The DARS and DBVI specific responses cannot be overly generalized due to the unique nature of the combination of services provided to each customer.

Each Local Workforce Development Board has a process for collecting, analyzing, and incorporating the customer satisfaction survey results into their daily operations. The survey results are collected and analyzed by program managers or One-Stop operators. The results are shared with the partner team members, and any resulting actions needed to improve operations are implemented through the appropriate partnership of American Job Center staff.

These combined mechanisms ensure that continuous improvement is an integral part of the customer satisfaction feedback processes for both the Virginia Career Works centers jobseeker and business customers, and for the specialized agency specific workforce services being provided by the VEC, DARS, and DBVI as a part of the workforce system in Virginia.

DATA VALIDATION

Virginia has established processes for data validation that meet all federal guidelines issued by USDOL, which help to ensure the accuracy of the annual statewide performance reports, safeguards data integrity, and promote the timely resolution of data anomalies and inaccuracies as required by 2 CFR 200.328.

Quarterly performance reviews are completed to monitor for data errors, missing data, out-of-range values, and anomalies. These reviews assure compliance with applicable Federal requirements, and programmatic performance expectations are achieved. Annual data element validations are conducted to ensure the completeness of data and to identify and correct specific issues within the reporting process. The effectiveness of the data validation process will be assessed annually, and revisions will be made as needed. Staff will be trained regularly on data validation processes.

Quarterly

The Participant Record Individual Layout (PIRL) report is run every quarter for local areas (WIOA Title I programs) and American Job Centers (WIOA Title III programs). The information from the extracted file is checked against our state system to ensure the information contained in all federal extract files are accurate. Data is reviewed for errors, inconsistencies, missing data out of range values and any anomalies. Virginia Career Works Centers (VCWC) are contacted to make corrections. The reviews are done prior to their submission in the federal reporting system WIPS. This proactive approach is conducted on a quarterly basis to ensure the local areas are aware of any issues and can receive technical assistance all year round. Local areas and VCWCs are required to address all findings or concerns that are identified in a timely matter.

Annual

The annual report is run at the end of the program year, and the sample for data element validation is generated. For WIOA Title I programs, the sample is roughly 15% of the total program exiters (or a minimum of 650 participants) for the program year identified for review. For each sample file, the relevant required data elements listed in TEGL 23-19 are assessed. Each data element that is required to be validated and that is supported by acceptable documentation will be scored as “pass”. Conversely, each data element that is not supported by acceptable documentation, is scored as a “fail”. Validators use a combination of self-attestation (client statement with certification), cross-matching (i.e. wage data and employer documentation), detailed case and program notes (statements by VCW staff entered into the Virginia Workforce Connection (VWC) that identify the specific data element, the status of the element, the date information was obtained, staff name, and other relevant information), and electronic records (participant records stored in numeric and text formats) to validate the elements. The results of the element validation are shared with the local areas and kept on file according to records retention requirements. The Data Validation process was recently updated to include the additional required data elements listed in TEGL 23-19.

Training

Annual data validation training is provided to appropriate program staff. Training includes information on the importance of validating the data, what needs to be validated, and how data validation works.

Recommended Activities

WIOA COMBINED STATE PLAN PROGRESS

2021-2022 Combined State Plan Implementation

In early 2022, the state-level team with representation from all WIOA titles and other key workforce partners came together to submit the 2022 update to the 2020-2023 Combined State Plan (CSP). This plan was approved by June 30, 2022.

All Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) will ensure their local strategic plans align with the updates to the CSP. The state-level team who developed the CSP will work together to update

the implementation plan to drive the delivery of the plan's strategic and operational elements. Initiatives in the updated plan include further development and enhancement of the referral portal, increased engagement with business services teams, upgrading state and local outreach and communication strategies, and expanding partnerships with social services.

SECTOR STRATEGIES AND CAREER PATHWAYS IMPLEMENTATION

Progress made in implementing sector strategies and career pathways. The discussion may include: business engagement strategies, work-based learning (including apprenticeship), work experiences for youth and adults, transitional jobs, and incumbent worker training strategies and policies in the state.

Virginia is making progress with sector strategies and career pathways via the Sector Strategies and Career Pathways Academy (SSCPA). The SSCPA is a statewide initiative to provide professional development for Virginia's workforce professionals to further operationalize career pathways and sector strategies in the Commonwealth. The Academy had its first cohort of participants in May 2019.

Since its implementation, Virginia has had over 779 workforce professionals participate in the Academy and six peer regional workgroups to plan and implement sector strategies and/or career pathways projects. In February 2022, the SSCPA began issuing a quarterly newsletter that highlights success stories on how Virginia is operationalizing sector strategies and career pathways in the Commonwealth. The newsletter is a resource for news and updates about efforts to advance sector strategies and career pathways among all stakeholders in Virginia's workforce system.

For additional information, see our SSCPA website at <https://www.sscpa-va.com/>

WIOA TITLE I YOUTH PROGRAM WORK EXPERIENCE AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH (OSY) EXPENDITURE REQUIREMENT

WIOA Title I Youth Program – 75% Expenditure Requirement for OSY and 20% Expenditure Requirement for Work Experience

The Commonwealth of Virginia, WIOA Title I Youth Programs met both the out-of-school youth (OSY) 75 percent expenditure and the youth work experience 20 percent expenditure requirements for PY20 funds. Additionally, the Commonwealth is on track to meet these goals with PY21 funds.

For PY20 funds, the Commonwealth expended 84.6% of Youth funds on out-of-school youth. In the first year of availability for PY21 funds, the June 2022 monthly reports 88.4% of funds have been expended on out-of-school youth.

For PY20 funds the Commonwealth expended 21.8% of Youth funds on Youth Work Experience (WEX) and in the first year of availability for PY21 funds, the June 2022 monthly reports 15.8% of funds have been expended on Youth Work Experience.

To ensure that each LWDA meets or exceeds the Youth Out of School and Work Experience requirement, the WIOA Title I Administrator (Virginia Community College System) is reviewing expenditure reports on a monthly basis and requiring LWDA's that are below the minimum requirement to meet monthly with the WIOA Title I Youth Program Coordinator. For LWDA's that are below 15%, a written action plan detailing how the LWDA will meet the minimum requirement is required.

In addition, the Commonwealth has implemented the following to increase youth enrollments and the 20% work experience expenditure rate for PY21:

- Virginia will schedule an annual WEX webinar to discuss Virginia's 20% WEX requirement trend, best practices, and administrative tips and tools (e.g. allowable expenditures) to meet the WEX expenditure requirement. This peer-to-peer call/webinar will feature a local area's WEX best practices.
- Review the LWDB's monthly expenditure detail reports to make sure they are tracking and reporting expenditures in the appropriate allowable expense category.
- Encourage LWDB's to provide more WEX to the in-school youth population in partnership with their local school systems CTE programs
- Work with LWDBs to ensure they are conducting co-enrollment partnership with other youth development organizations such as Dept. Juvenile Justice, Dept. of Human Service, YouthBuild, Job Corps and Dept. of Rehabilitative Services
- Encourage LWDBs to work more closely with their State and local business/employer services teams to connect with employers and with identified youth WEX and internship opportunities

With this and many other statewide efforts, Virginia can continue to meet both required WIOA Title I Youth expenditures.

Virginia continues to provide statewide TA training and encourage LWDBs to work closely and collaborate with other state agencies serving the same youth populations with similar goals and leverage local resources through braiding funds with the agencies serving OSY (YouthBuild, Job corps, Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice, DVR, Dept. of Social Services, and Local High School Dual Enrollment/CTE Programs).

VIRGINIA'S PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM

Virginia performance measures or goals and progress towards meeting them

The Virginia Acts of Assembly 2015 session amended the Code of Virginia to require that Local Workforce Development Boards allocate a minimum of 40 percent of the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Workers funds to training services as defined under Virginia Workforce Letter 14-7, Change 3 and Section 134 (c)(3) of the WIOA. These training services must lead to recognized postsecondary education and workforce credentials aligned with in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area or region. Local compliance with this requirement is reviewed on an annual basis.

The VEC has been actively involved in discussions at the State Workforce Development Board regarding establishing statewide performance measures in addition to the DOL negotiated measures. While this is still in the planning phase, the discussion surrounding how to more effectively measure workforce performance has been a high priority for the agency.

Primary indicators of performance

During PY2021, there were no deficiencies noted in primary performance indicators. Virginia continues to conduct training for the LWDAs in an effort to improve their ability to provide participants with follow-up services.

The state's common exit policy, including which ETA-funded partner programs are included in the state's common exit policy. The following ETA-funded programs are included under the common exit requirement:

- Title I – Adult, Dislocated Workers and Youth
- Title III – Wagner-Peyser
- Trade Act
- National Dislocated Worker Grants

Virginia uses the Geographic Solutions Virtual One-Stop application and established the common exit policy within the application.

Negotiated performance levels for local areas for Titles I and III core programs and for program years 2022 and 2023.

During Spring 2022, Virginia negotiated state performance levels with the U.S. Department of Labor. In Summer 2022, using statewide goals and local statistical adjustment model results, the state negotiated local performance levels with each Local Workforce Development Board. See Appendix for Virginia's WIOA Titles I and III Performance Levels for program years 2022-2023.

ACTIVITIES FUNDED BY THE STATE'S WIOA TITLE I SET ASIDE FUNDS

Activities provided with the funds reserved by the governor, which can be up to 15% of the state's allotment. In this section of the narrative, states may describe activities undertaken in whole or in part with their Governor's Reserve and how those activities have directly or indirectly impacted performance.

During the performance year, the following initiatives and services were supported with Title I state set-aside funds:

During the performance year, the following initiatives and services were supported with Title I state set-aside funds:

- **Network2Work Pilot:** The Network2Work framework aligns the three networks that are essential for creating pathways to jobs and careers offering family-sustaining wages: the employer network, the job-seeker network, and the provider network. Four pilot

communities include Charlottesville Region, Shenandoah Valley, Southeastern Virginia, and Richmond Region. Expended \$814,157

- **Work Based Learning:** The goal of this project is to meet Virginia's workforce needs of tomorrow by providing equity of access to Work-Based Learning opportunities through the development and implementation of a virtual connector between secondary students and real work business opportunity. Expended \$415,950
- **Return to Earn:** This initiative provided \$500 hiring incentives to new employees of qualifying small business. The incentives were to support the transition of unemployed workers to get back into the workforce while helping employers fill vacant jobs after the COVID-19 pandemic. The Return to Earn Grant Program served business with less than 100 employees that did not have the resources to provide hiring incentives. Expended \$322,049
- **CTE High School Innovation:** The Career Technical Education High School Innovation Grant is a two-year planning grant to develop and expand opportunities for secondary students to earn postsecondary credentials and a high school diploma simultaneously. The initiative will support partnerships between a local school division, postsecondary institutions, business and industry, and workforce and economic development entities. Students will be provided a sequence of courses that start in grade nine and culminate in the attainment of a high school diploma and associate degree in up to five years. The initiative will include authentic work experiences, mentorships and internships designed to prepare students for a career in an identified career pathway. Expended \$240,728
- **AJC Security:** Provides funding to support security personnel at comprehensive American Job Centers and American Job Centers that have a Virginia Employment commission physical presence. Expended \$151,552
- **Area 13 GOVA:** A study was completed on the workforce training needs in the Bay Consortium area to include a site selection study to implement the training needs in the Northern Neck Planning District Commission area. The assessment included a blueprint of what is needed by local companies and other workforce needs, prioritization for implementation, cost estimate, and the necessary steps to improve the quality and quantity of workforce training in the region. The study addressed manufacturing, forestry/wood products/paper, and aquaculture. Expended \$37,654
- **HR Strong:** WIOA state set-aside funds are being provided over an 18-month period for advanced training in shipbuilding, ship repair, offshore wind, and skilled trades workforce development in Hampton Roads in support of increased Navy ship construction, repair, modernization, and maintenance programs, the Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind project, and Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel expansion project. Project continues until June 30, 2023. Expended \$36,798

RAPID RESPONSE AND LAYOFF AVERSION ACTIVITIES

Rapid Response

In accordance with Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act requirements, Rapid Response staff contacted company officials within 48 hours of receipt of a WARN, held employer briefings with management, and planned employee briefings as desired by the employer. Most briefings were held before the workers left their respective companies. A team of local

workforce development partners who offered direct services to impacted workers provided employee briefings, led by one of five Regional Rapid Response Coordinators. The Rapid Response Coordinators were instrumental in planning and resourcing job fairs, on-site employer resource centers, customized transition workshops and registration for WIOA and partner services.

WARN notices filed by employers and non-WARN information obtained by rapid response coordinators in PY 2021:

WARN Notices: 48

Number of Impacted Workers: 3,876

Non-WARN: 12

Number of Impacted Workers: 1,158

Number of Companies Served and Number of Individuals Served

In PY2021, Rapid Response Coordinators continued to reach out to businesses that had initially provided temporary layoff notices to keep abreast of their individual situations, deliver services virtually as needed, and deliver information materials to impacted businesses and individuals. Coordinators also found a large majority of their time dedicated to helping individuals impacted by these layoffs in navigating issues with unemployment insurance applications.

Strategies for Linking Rapid Response Recipients to American Job Centers and Processes for Intake or Co-Enrollment in the Trade Adjustment Assistance and the Dislocated Worker Programs

The five Rapid Response Coordinators in Virginia each cover multiple local workforce development areas (LWDA), and each LWDA has a “go to” group of professionals in the American Job Centers who assist in providing services to impacted employees and companies. Rapid Response participants are provided the informational services required by the regulations and an additional survey on service needs and workshop interests is provided to the impacted employees to complete. Based on this information, additional services are provided on-site if allowed by the company. Whenever feasible, a targeted hiring event will be carried out for these employees.

In addition to these services, the Virginia Employment Commission’s (VEC) Economic Information and Analytics (EIA) division creates a workbook on open employment opportunities in the area based on the skills of the impacted workforce and this information is provided to the employees. Dislocated Worker program enrollment opportunities are offered to impacted workers, including opportunities to start the enrollment onsite if possible. To document services provided to workers on-site, Rapid Response Coordinators add services to a generic program module in the Virginia Workforce Connection to track. Rapid Response Coordinators continued to work with businesses during the pandemic to continue to provide information and referral services to the TAA and Dislocated Worker program.

Layoff Aversion Strategy

Virginia’s layoff aversion strategy is focused on connecting workers to new employment opportunities prior to layoff and connecting workers to training opportunities such as on-the-job training (OJT), individual training accounts, TAA, and state funded training programs. To track the

return on investment in Rapid Response services, the VBWD created metrics for the WIOA Title I Administrator and VEC to track, including information on training program enrollment, average duration of unemployment insurance benefits collected, return to work wages, and the estimated economic impact on state tax revenue of dislocated workers returning to employment.

How Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion Activities are Aligned with Business Engagement, Sector Strategy, and Career Pathway Efforts

Business services teams in the field identify companies that may be in distress and refer those companies to the WIOA Title I Administrator, LWDB, and Economic Development. Once such a company is identified, team members will identify potential strategies to assist the company in avoiding layoffs and provide those services as appropriate. Virginia employed grants such as the Return to Earn Grant, which provided support to small businesses to encourage unemployed Virginians to return to work.

Specific Types of Services or Workshops Provided to Both Companies and Affected Workers.

Services provided to companies include the basic host of informational services to employees, workshops such as resume writing, job search strategies and interviewing, targeted hiring events, and program enrollment opportunities for WIOA Title I and Affordable Care Act Coverage. If an impacted company is assessed as being potentially TAA impacted, TAA Navigators consult with the company and assist in preparing TAA Petitions. If petitions are certified prior to the layoff occurring, TAA Information sessions are held at the employment site for the impacted employees. Companies identified as being in distress are referred to state economic development and local workforce development boards to determine what efforts and funding may help the company retain jobs.

ACTIVITIES PROVIDED UNDER THE WAGNER-PEYSER ACT EMPLOYMENT SERVICE SECTION 7(B)

Ten percent of the Wagner-Peyer Act funds allotted to the Commonwealth of Virginia are reserved for use by the Governor. These funds are identified and reported to DOL quarterly. The affiliated activities are tracked by job service staff time allocated to each identified group, grant, or program. These activities are found below.

The 10 percent set-aside funds were used for employment services to employers and job seekers who fell within high priority categories. These categories included:

- Job seekers looking for opportunities within in-demand occupations such as construction, IT fields, government, healthcare, and transportation, etc.
- Services to UI claimants to assist them with getting back to work. These services included job service, counseling, intake, and other activities.
- Services to employers who fall within priority industry sectors, including, but not limited to, manufacturing, agriculture, cyber security, energy, healthcare, logistics, tourism, advanced manufacturing, and big data.

NATIONAL DISLOCATED WORKER GRANTS AWARDED

In PY21, Virginia was awarded \$3.3 million for the Covid-19 Disaster Recovery National Dislocated Worker Grant (NDWG). These funds were used to provide dislocated workers training and disaster relief employment in positions such as community health workers and temperature takers. Eight of the fourteen local workforce development areas requested disaster relief employment and training funds under this grant.

During the program year, local areas saw low interest from potential dislocated workers for services or employment provided by the grant.

Virginia's COVID-19 NDWG ended in March 2022. A total of 73 participants were served in the grant; 28 participants were served with disaster relief employment and 45 participants were served with employment and training services.

At the end of the grant \$801,702.87 was spent, which was approximately 24% of the \$3.3 million grant. VCCS along with the participating local areas performed an exercise to determine if a no-cost extension would be feasible. It was determined after the exercise that given the low interest from participants, for both training services and disaster relief employment, that the state should not pursue the no-cost extension. The participating local areas were not confident that they could enroll the number of eligible and interested participants in the program to reach our program goals originally approved by the United State Department of Labor-Employment and Training Administration.



SUCCESS STORY

Success #1

1

In December of 2021, George was experiencing homelessness after losing his father to cancer. George connected with Virginia Career Works Northern and also with Shelters to Shutters. George was invited to a hiring event in January 2022 with multiple Shelters to Shutters Industry Partners. George did not have experience in the multifamily industry, but his background in customer service, his positive attitude, and his motivation made him stand out at the event.



George was offered a full time position as a Resident Coordinator with Bonaventure Property Management. He was provided with a discounted apartment large enough for his daughter to have her own play area. As part of the Shelters to Shutters program, George was paired with a mentor to walk alongside him and offer support as he navigated multiple life transitions.

Within three months, George was promoted to a Leasing Consultant and now has his eyes set on continuing to advance and grow as a multifamily professional. Learn more about George's story at <https://shelterstoshutters.org/story/george/>.

2

Success #2

Mr. W completed his sentence within the criminal justice system and sought an opportunity to return to the labor market and find a fulfilling career. He faced several significant challenges to finding employment, including forbidden use of any form of technology due to the nature of his criminal charges.

In May 2022, Mr. W visited the Virginia Career Works Northern Fairfax Annandale Center, seeking employment assistance. Mr. W expressed an interest in obtaining a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) but needed assistance paying for training. He was connected to the WIOA and SNAPET programs. He worked with case managers to obtain CDL training as well as supportive services (CDL permit, DOT physical, driving record, along with new tires for his own vehicle to get to training/work) to assure his success in training and employment.

Mr. W began training in June 2022 to obtain his CDLA license and earned his credential and Virginia CDL license by July 2022. Mr. W worked with his WIOA and SNAPET case managers and several VCW Center Career Services Specialists who helped set up an email account, completed and submitted employment applications alongside Mr. W, and assisted with resume writing and interviewing.

In August 2022, Mr. W was offered full-time employment, earning \$23/hour (\$47,840 annually) with fringe benefits as a CDL driver. Mr. W's success was a result of his hard work and motivation along with the dedication of the numerous Employment Specialists who were determined to help him succeed. Mr. W expressed his gratitude and appreciation for all the career specialists who supported him stating, "your work has been instrumental in my success!"



3

Success #3

Marvin Windows, a window manufacturing company located in Roanoke, Virginia came to the Western Virginia Workforce Development Board for assistance with providing training for their very first apprentice cohort comprised of 10 employees. Marvin had previously worked with the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry to set up a Registered Apprenticeship program for their employees.

The board was able to provide Marvin with \$15,000 in Incumbent Worker Training funds that allowed them to purchase ToolingU licenses to provide technical education alongside of the On-the-Job Training provided by the employer. Employees completed this training towards the end of 2021 and saw great success. Not only did the apprentice cohort see a 90% retention rate during one of the largest labor shortages due to the pandemic, but they also saw an average wage increase of 39%, or \$12,797.

Half of the employees also received a promotion because of this training. This provided a 62% return on Investment over a two year period. Marvin is also unique in the fact that they did not lay off, furlough, or reduce hours for their employees when businesses started to see the impact of the pandemic. Apprentices remained employed the entire time, completing their training as scheduled. Marvin shared that “funding was crucial to their ability to train these apprentices and seeing the confidence and skills they built was amazing!”



4 Success #4

Debra worked as an airline sales agent for over 15 years until she was laid off due to the COVID-19 pandemic. She learned about multiple employment programs such as Re-Employing Virginia (REV) and WIOA that could help support her career goals of obtaining gainful employment within the IT industry.

In November 2021, Debra enrolled in WIOA as a Dislocated Worker with a goal of working in the field of Cybersecurity governance and compliance. With her Virginia Career Works Northern WIOA case manager, Debra explored different training providers and programs and she decided to begin cyber security training in February 2022.

In March, she earned her credential and began working with a job developer to get connected to employment opportunities and participate in mock interviews. That same month, Debra received a full- time job offer as an IT Communications Specialist earning \$82,000 annually with benefits.



STATE WORKFORCE SYSTEM CHALLENGES

Virginia's workforce delivery system is decentralized with responsibility for the programs under each of the four titles of WIOA divided amongst five different state agencies. Administrative responsibilities for Title I programs and Title III Wagner-Peyser employment services are divided between two agencies: VEC and VCCS. Historically, this fragmentation has resulted in the duplication of services. A key objective of this Plan is to mitigate the effects of programmatic fragmentation in the Commonwealth and build a streamlined approach to workforce services delivery.

In addition, this giant, decentralized system does not easily allow for a simple determination of a return on investment. The system collects large amounts of data and reports them to federal and state agencies as required by law and regulation. Virginia utilizes the system of record for Titles I and III, the Virginia Workforce Connection, to report federally mandated performance measures. However, Virginia has not yet established a simple reporting system that could determine the system's progress across all WIOA partners on key indicators, including how many customers of the system got jobs, which system programs are leading customers to getting jobs, how long those individuals remained in those jobs, and what were the wages of those jobs. Yet, Virginia does have many data collection initiatives, such as the Virginia Longitudinal Data System, that could be used to kick start this endeavor. The simplification of data reporting and determining a system return on investment is currently in the works.

Finally, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many incarcerated individuals did not receive the same pre-release workforce services they would have otherwise received. In the next two years, Virginia will see large populations of returning citizens who were not prepared to join the workforce to the level the state usually expects. Going forward, the system will work to determine which services are most needed by these populations and how they can be implemented in an effective way before and after their release.



APPENDIX

WIOA Title I and Title III Negotiated Performance Measures

WIOA Performance Measures Final Negotiated Goals	PY 22	PY 23
WIOA Title I Adults		
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	78.0%	78.5%
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	79.0%	79.5%
Median Earnings	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,100.00
Credential Attainment Rate	74.5%	75.0%
Measurable Skill Gains	68.0%	68.5%
WIOA Title I Dislocated Workers		
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	85.5%	86.0%
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	82.0%	82.5%
Median Earnings	\$ 8,800.00	\$ 8,900.00
Credential Attainment Rate	72.0%	72.5%
Measurable Skill Gains	61.5%	62.0%
WIOA Title I Youth		
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	73.0%	73.5%
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	71.5%	72.0%
Median Earnings	\$ 3,300.00	\$ 3,400.00
Credential Attainment Rate	68.0%	68.5%
Measurable Skill Gains	60.0%	60.5%
WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Labor Exchange (LEX)*		
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	70.0%	70.5%
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	70.0%	70.5%
Median Earnings	\$ 5,900.00	\$ 6,000.00
WIOA Titles I and III: Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable	Not Applicable