

# WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA) PY 2022

## ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 1, 2022 TO JUNE 20, 2023



**VIRGINIA  
CAREER WORKS**



**VCU**

L. Douglas Wilder School of  
Government and Public Affairs  
Center for Public Policy

# VIRGINIA ANNUAL REPORT

## Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

### Program Year 2022

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This year's WIOA Annual Report is dedicated to the workforce development professionals across the Commonwealth and acknowledges their efforts in providing ongoing services throughout the program year.

## INTRODUCTION NARRATIVE

Virginia is pleased to submit the Program Year 2022 WIOA Annual Statewide Performance Report Narrative for WIOA Titles I and III. For Program Year 2022 (PY22), 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:

### Strengthening Innovation

In August 2022, the Virginia Secretary of Labor announced the availability of up to \$2 million in WIOA Title I Governor's set-aside funds. These funds were made available through a competitive award process to support innovative service delivery approaches. Funds were targeted to help get individuals back into the workforce in economically distressed areas of the Commonwealth that have an unemployment rate higher than the statewide rate and a poverty rate higher than the statewide rate.

Funded activities focused on leading participants to employment in a high-demand occupation as defined by the Virginia Board of Workforce Development and aligned with priority industry targets named by the applicant's respective GO Virginia region in their Growth and Diversification Plan. Sector-based strategies were informed by industry and included approaches in work-based learning program activities, such as apprenticeships and on-the-job-training (OJT).

Program design focused on innovative service delivery strategies that result in high quality workforce participation through public-private partnerships and alignment with GO Virginia regional strategies. Subsequently awards were made to five local workforce development boards.

### Fostering Economic Development

In October 2022, a multi-year plan was initiated by the Governor's Office to address Labor Participation for Rural Economic Prosperity in Southwest Virginia, that involved a consortium of organizations. The Southwest Virginia (SWVA) region has a nearly three times larger gap (29.3%) between the supply and need for childcare compared to the average across the Commonwealth (11.9%). SWVA has an insufficient labor force to meet the demand for high-paying jobs. SWVA is losing the young, talented workforce in the labor ecosystem with a major barrier to attraction and retention being insufficient access to childcare.

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With seed funding provided by the Secretary of Labor, in partnership with the New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board, United Way of Southwest Virginia will address these regional challenges with Ready SWVA, a \$23 million initiative to develop a hub and spoke model. Over two years, the investment of \$1,240,316 WIOA Title I Governor's set-aside funds will support project management, shared services coordination, and the coordination for adult and emerging workforce programs.

Ready SWVA will use braided funding to regain a foothold on the regional economy by:

- Developing infrastructure for economic development prosperity through expanded access to affordable quality childcare,
- Strengthening the network of current providers, and
- Building a workforce of professional early childhood educators.

Ready SWVA will develop a hub and spoke model for child development centers and the early childhood education sector to address the gap in the regional economic ecosystem in rural SWVA. The Ready SWVA hub and spoke model will:

- ✓ Allow current residents to return to work by providing quality, accessible childcare,
- ✓ Develop a regional workforce of professional, credentials early childhood educators,
- ✓ Support regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies to attract new talent, young families, and higher paying jobs,
- ✓ Support entrepreneurs by developing an emerging industry sector as a sustainable small business with support from the shared services alliance, and
- ✓ Provide long-term outcomes of a health, appropriately educated, and trained, financing-stable workforce through high-quality curriculum preparing young students for lifelong success.

The Multi-Workforce Development Area Ready SWVA project is a pilot project for Early Childhood Education Career Pathway capacity building. More than 250 individuals will be trained using Early Childhood Foundation and Department of Education funds (individuals that need additional supports will be co-enrolled with WIOA Title I). 100 incumbent workers will be trained and co-enrolled with WIOA Title I programs. By the end of this two-year project, 100 new early education teachers will be placed in the region, opening of approximately 800 childcare slots and potentially allowing 400+ adults to return to work.

The New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Area Consortium Board will provide general project oversight for activities conducted with WIOA Title I Governor's set-aside funds. The Southwest Virginia Workforce Development Board will provide input and guidance for implementation within their local workforce development area. The two Boards will work together with the United Way SWVA to support project success. An outside entity will provide input and evaluation as the project progresses.

## Optimizing Workforce Development in the Commonwealth

In September 2022, the Governor's Office and Virginia Secretary of Labor embarked on a major initiative to optimize the entire Virginia Workforce Development Program. Virginia's workforce development programs, approaches, and overall ecosystem are critical to the economic vitality of the Commonwealth. To optimize workforce readiness for Virginia's current and future jobs, the Secretary of Labor's team began working to position workforce development programs to better equip Virginians with the skills they need to meet the employer demand, align job placement with high demand occupations, elevate their experience of getting and remaining employed, and increase their earning power.

Given Virginia's currently decentralized approach to workforce development, the plan focused on solving the Commonwealth's need for clear alignment to ensure that major components of the workforce ecosystem work together toward a common goal: moving Virginia into the future of work.

Workforce development officials began working to create a dynamic, nation-leading workforce ecosystem hub that proactively connects industry demand with talent capabilities across sectors and regions, all aligned to a shared vision for the future that brings the Governor's bold agenda into fruition.

Key tenets that informed this approach include:

- **Confirming a shared definition of what workforce development means** for the Commonwealth with common goals and outcomes;
- **Balancing centralized strategy and regional flexibility** by consolidating some programs and processes across the Commonwealth, while providing guidelines that allow regions to flexibly address their unique worker and employers' needs;
- **Holding accountability to meaningful outcomes** to align the workforce development system by providing metrics and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that encourage programs to stay aligned with overall workforce development goals and objectives; and
- **Sharing data strategy and consolidation** between workforce development programs with a centralized portal for data gathering and sharing, while developing a longer-term data and analytics strategy that increases responsiveness and accountability for outcomes.

The approach ultimately selected by the Governor's Office was designed to consider three simultaneous dimensions: looking *inward* at the workforce development infrastructure and policies; looking *outward* at the legislative, budgetary, and ecosystem engagement strategy; and looking *forward* to the technology and data transformation that is required to implement consequential change.

This transformational work culminated in the General Assembly passing legislation which created the new Department of Workforce Development and Advancement (DWDA), heralding a new path forward that will help all Virginians in the years to come.

## PY 2022 Service Totals

In PY22, WIOA Title I program effectively served 5,191 Virginians through Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs. Virginia's Rapid Response team provided services to a total of 30 WARN notices that impacted over 3,561 workers. WIOA Title III programs served 60,737 individuals who utilized self-service employment assistance and 23,684 participants who received staff assisted services through Wagner-Peyser.

In PY22, WIOA Title I programs effectively served:



**5,191**

Virginians through Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs

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



**30**

WARN notices that impacted over 3,561 workers

WIOA Title III programs served:



**60,737**

individuals who utilized self-service employment assistance



**23,684**

participants who received staff assisted services through Wagner-Peyser

In total,



**11,921**

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



**14,963**

businesses were served by all four WIOA Titles

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## Highlights of Virginia's WIOA workforce activities in PY22

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### 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 2022.

### 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: 61.6%
- Employer Penetration Rate 4.9%

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:

- 19,147 unduplicated businesses were served.
  - This number represents approximately 6.3% 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:
  - 54 Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
  - 62 Healthcare and Social Assistance
  - 31-33 Manufacturing
- 78% 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 December 2021, Virginia completed an evaluation of its workforce development system. Several recommendations for implementation were issued for 2022 to 2025 including:

- 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

In September 2022, the Governor's Office and Virginia Secretary of Labor examined these four key recommendations and embarked on a major initiative to optimize the entire Virginia workforce development program. The goal was to create a single, dynamic, nation-leading workforce ecosystem hub that proactively connects talent capabilities across all Commonwealth sectors and regions with industry demand. The aligned workforce development system will effectively streamline capabilities and resources with one goal in mind: a transformed and transformational system that works for all Virginians.

Core elements of this opportunity for change include:

- Balance centralized strategy with regional flexibility
- Standardize goals, metrics, performance incentives, and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
- Design a centralized hub for service seekers and to streamline workforce policy and efficiently gathering, analyzing and sharing data.

The transformation efforts to-date resulted in the creation of the DWDA. The agency is centered around developing a stronger workforce ecosystem that delivers best-in-class services to Virginians and employers to foster a stronger Virginia economy.

The mission of DWDA is to create, sustain, and retain a viable workforce that can support current and future business and industry while recognizing the unique regional needs and capabilities of

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the Commonwealth through public-private partnerships and robust data and infrastructure investment, which results in standard measures and program accountability.

In summary, the future of workforce development in Virginia is very bright and will be characterized or reflected in several ways including:

- New and impactful investment into industry and business
- Increased earning power and financial security for Virginia employees
- Virginians that are well equipped with in-demand knowledge and skills
- Sustained program accountability with universal success metrics
- Employers that are empowered to connect with Virginians with the talent and skills needed to fill positions
- Opportunities created for all Virginians, no matter their zip code

## 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 PY22**

Virginia's customer satisfaction approach for PY22 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 Develop 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

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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 continues to remain a vital component in the delivery of services to customers and participants in Wagner-Peyser, Trade Adjustment Act (TAA), Jobs for Veteran State Grant (JVSG), Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA), Foreign Labor Certification (FLC) and the Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC). The Virginia Workforce Connection (VaWC) is the state system of record for Title III and crucial for tracking and metrics reporting. This electronic service provision allows both employers and job seekers the opportunity to respond to a customer satisfaction survey once they have received Title III services and fosters an environment of continuous process improvement for the VEC.

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)2022 was the ninth 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 exiting 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 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. The results also support ongoing continuous program improvement and staff training activities. In the survey, participants can provide their level of satisfaction with received services, VR staff, and various aspects of the VR process. DBVI administers and distributes monthly surveys to assess consumer satisfaction. All survey recipients are provided with an explanation regarding (a) the purpose of the evaluation; (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.



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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 reflects 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 PY22, a total of 1,369 surveys were submitted via VaWC. 99 surveys were submitted by employers and 1,270 surveys were completed by job seekers. At the general VR agency, 2,933 consumers were selected to participate in the Federal Fiscal Year 2022 DARS survey.

Per recommendation of the DARS 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 PY22, 222 individuals were provided the opportunity to participate in the DBVI VR consumer satisfaction survey. The current response rate is approximately 30%, consistent with the PY21 response rate. The overall satisfaction rate remains high, with 85% of participants responding as overall 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

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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 the 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 and/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 VCWC staff entered into the Virginia Workforce Connection (VaWC) 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.

## 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

### 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 833 workforce professionals participate in the Academy with 221 individuals fully completing the course, 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 PY22 funds.

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For PY21 funds, the Commonwealth expended 88.6% of Youth funds on out-of-school youth. In the first year of availability for PY22 funds, the June 2023 monthly reports 87% of funds have been expended on out-of-school youth.

For PY21 funds the Commonwealth expended 23.4% of Youth funds on Youth Work Experience (WEX) and in the first year of availability for PY22 funds, the June 2023 monthly reports 18.9% of funds have been expended on Youth Work Experiences.

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 monthly 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 implemented the following to increase youth enrollments and the 20% work experience expenditure rate for PY22:

- Virginia held 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 featured WEX best practices.
- Reviewed the LWDB's monthly expenditure detail reports to make sure they tracked and reported expenditures in the appropriate allowable expense category.
- Encouraged LWDB's to provide more WEX to the in-school youth population in partnership with their local school systems CTE programs.
- Worked with LWDBs to ensure they conducted 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
- Encouraged 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's LWDBs OSY enrollments and work experience rate for PY22 has increased and will continue to meet both required WIOA Title I Youth required 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).

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## 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 PY2022, 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.

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## 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:

- **VEC Workforce Transformation:** To optimize workforce readiness for Virginia's current and future jobs, the Commonwealth seeks to improve how workforce development programs are managed, delivered, and measured in order to better equip Virginians with the skills they need, elevate their experience of getting and remaining employed, and increase their earning power. Expended \$1,089,325.
- **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 \$133,319.
- **VOEE Virginia Skills Initiative:** Develop an Alumni Career Data Set and a Virginia Supply Side Skills Data Set. Expended \$897,824.
- **VDOE Work Based Learning Network:** meet Virginia's workforce needs of tomorrow by providing equity of access to Work-Based Learning opportunities through the development and implementation of the VWBLN. The purpose of this MOU is to expand opportunities for secondary students to experience Work-Based Learning not only in their locality but also throughout their region and the Commonwealth. The initiative will establish a virtual connector between students and real-world business opportunities. The partnership will provide Work-Based Learning experiences in Virginia's high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand workforce career sectors. Expended \$573,157.
- **SW Virginia Childcare Support:** With seed funding provided by the Commonwealth of Virginia, United Way of Southwest Virginia in partnership with the New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board and the Southwest Virginia Workforce Development Board will address regional challenges with Ready SWVA, a multi-million-dollar initiative to increase labor participation by addressing access to childcare. Expended \$146,191.
- **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 with 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 experience, mentorships and internships designed to prepare students for a career in an identified career pathway. Expended \$289,047.

- **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 \$292,042.
- **Workforce Innovation Grant:** These funds will support innovative service delivery approaches. Funds will be targeted on getting individuals back into the workforce in economically distressed areas of the Commonwealth that have an unemployment rate higher than the statewide rate and a poverty rate higher than the statewide rate. Expended \$136,108.
- **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 ended June 30, 2023. Expended \$601,469.

## 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 2022:

WARN Notices: 30

Number of Impacted Workers: 3,561

Non-WARN: 27

Number of Impacted Workers: 732

### Number of Companies Served and Number of Individuals Served

In PY 2022, Rapid Response Coordinators experienced a return to the “Pre-Pandemic” workflow of layoff notification and responses. Many businesses expressed willingness to allow services to return back on site versus the primarily digital delivery method popular during the pandemic,

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though the digital delivery method remains in use dependent on the situation. In most cases Coordinators found that many businesses were eager to hire outgoing talent and approached the Coordinator, AJC staff, or employer directly about connecting with these employees. As a result, WIOA Title I dislocated worker enrollment was generally low statewide.

### **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.

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

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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

The Commonwealth of Virginia did not apply for or have any active National Dislocated Worker Grants During PY 2022.



## SUCCESS STORIES

### Success #1

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Karen P. is a 72-year professional with over 20 years of experience in communications, data analysis and customer service. She's been employed in diverse settings in the past including a hospital, grocery chain and major telephone company. Ms. P. was last employed in 2007 before joining the Northern Virginia Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) in November 2022.

She had ongoing health concerns but was ready to find part-time employment and needed support with her job search. During our initial meeting with Ms. P., it was visible that she was experiencing a low mood and told the Northern Virginia SCSEP Case Manager that she was "depressed and can't see light at the end of the tunnel" related to finding employment. The SCSEP Team worked with her closely to set her employment goals on her initial IEP and registered her for a free LinkedIn Learning license.

Ms. P. began taking LinkedIn Learning online courses to update her computer skills right away. The SCSEP Team saw a positive change in her confidence levels as she had a set schedule and was meeting her goals. She earned certificates of completion through LinkedIn Learning, which she was very proud of and as were the SCSEP staff. She also started applying for jobs again, as she gained more confidence in herself.

Once a new CSA opportunity opened at the Fairfax County Public Assistance and Employment Services Information Center, SCSEP staff placed her at that work site to continue her growth and use skills she learned through LinkedIn Learning and the Virginia Career Works workshops.

Ms. P. was excited to use her newly developed computer skills and assist visitors during her SCSEP worksite training. The opportunity gave her a newfound hope in being employed again.



On May 19, 2023, Ms. P. sent SCSEP staff a message, excited to share that she has been offered employment at The Fresh Market as a Front-End Cashier, 25-40 hours per week earning \$15 per hour. She wrote to the SCSEP Team:

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*"I wish to thank you for the privilege of being in this wonderful program-I can't begin to tell you how much this program and working at the info desk has meant to me and done for me. I came alive, and you gave me hope and confidence! Thank you for everything!"*

The Northern Virginia SCSEP was overjoyed that she found employment. Even more, Ms. P. left the Northern Virginia SCSEP program on a much higher note than when she came in at enrollment. She continues to enjoy her job at The Fresh Market.

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## 2 Success #2

A WIOA Title I Adult client was let go from her staffing agency in December 2022 due to the agency no longer providing services to the logistics employer. The client was enrolled in the WIOA program and connected to another employer hiring for assembly. Due to the client having some experience in manufacturing in her work history, she was selected to participate in the On-the-Job Training (OJT) program with WIOA and the employer. The client started her position on February 8, 2023 under OJT earning \$15.75 per hour, which was a 105% increase her previous wages. After working for a month, the client was promoted with an increase in wages to \$22.46 per hour. As of October 1, 2023, the client received another increase in wages bringing her new salary to \$24.63 per hour, which is an annual salary of over \$50,000. The current wages are 164% higher than the logistics employer.



## 3 Success #3

A WIOA Title I Adult client was enrolled in a program while she was employed as a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA). The client is a single mother of two children receiving public assistance. She was seeking to increase her skills so she could obtain a higher wage. The client's wage at time of enrollment was \$13.52 per hour, which is an annual salary of just over \$28,000. The client completed the Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) program and was selected as valedictorian of her graduating class. The client passed the state board exam, obtained her license, and returned to her previous employer with an increase in wages to \$31 per hour, which is an annual salary of over \$64,000. The client now earns 229.29% more than before her LPN training.



# 4

## Success #4

A client initially sought assistance from WIOA, meeting the program's criteria for priority of service by receiving public assistance. Unemployment and language barriers were significant challenges for this client. With the help of ACE, the client successfully completed the required courses, paving the way for the client's enrollment in the Dental Assistant training program through MedCerts. The Adult Career Navigator worked closely with the client, supporting the client in passing the Dental Assistant state board exam. Though the client's first attempt was unsuccessful, the client persevered, studied diligently, retook the exam and earned her dental assistant credential. The Career Navigator also provided guidance in completing workshops. As a result, the client is now employed as a dental assistant in Altavista, VA. The client is receiving great satisfaction from her work and is excited about gaining valuable experience in her current role.



## STATE WORKFORCE SYSTEM CHALLENGES

For many years, Virginia's workforce delivery system functioned as a decentralized system, 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, which sometimes resulted in the duplication of services.

Existing law and regulation require that large volumes of workforce development data be collected and reported to federal and state agencies. However, Virginia has not yet established a simplified reporting system that could determine the level of progress being made quarterly or annually 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.

The net effect of Virginia's decentralized system unfortunately prevents a simple determination of a return on investment of funds allocated annually for workforce development activities.

In PY22, a new workforce development agency was established as part of the plan implemented to reorganize the Commonwealth's approach to workforce services delivery. When complete, the DWDA will enhance service delivery and embrace several key operational characteristics including the opportunity to:

- Adapt to the accelerated pace of change.
- Prepare for the demands of tomorrow's workforce.
- Reimagine the delivery of critical skill-building.

- Redefine workforce preparedness services.
- Transform the way we deliver, message, and measure the success of our workforce programs.
- Optimize workforce readiness.

Virginia has a lot of workforce programs that are effective and provide valuable services to job seekers and businesses across the Commonwealth. As the pace of change accelerates, the new DWDA will be structured to accommodate the ever-evolving demands of employers and job seekers.



## APPENDIX

### WIOA Title I and Title III Negotiated Performance Measures

WIOA Performance Measures Final Negotiated Goals	PY 22	PY 23
<b>WIOA Title I Adults</b>		
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%
<b>WIOA Title I Dislocated Workers</b>		
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%
<b>WIOA Title I Youth</b>		
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%
<b>WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Labor Exchange (LEX)*</b>		
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