

**Annual Report Narrative on the  
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act  
to  
the United States Department of Labor**

**Program Year 2024  
July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025**

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## **West Virginia's Workforce Development System**

The agencies making up WV's Workforce Development System (WDS) work together to provide a comprehensive approach to workforce solutions, through broader and deeper partnerships; shared data and intake systems; braided funding; and leveraged services. Doing so allows each individual agency to focus on their expertise and the value they bring to the table, while relying on coordination with other partners to fulfill any remaining customer needs. By making available the appropriate educational and training opportunities, WV can provide its citizens with the work skills needed by businesses currently in the state or planning a WV location. Simply put, WV's WDS strives to create a clearer path to jobs for West Virginians so it's easier for citizens to be successful. This takes getting state agencies on the same page, eliminating duplication, and improving outreach to business and industry. Each agency makes their services available physically and/or electronically to meet the needs of their customers. Physical locations vary across the state; the most recognizable and convenient being the American Job Centers (AJC). One-Stop Centers, also known nationally as AJCs, are the heart of the WDS, offering individuals and employers ready access to the many WDS resources funded by federal and state dollars. States, local elected officials, local boards, one-stop centers, and one-stop partners work together to create a "go-to" system for job seekers, workers, and business. The services being presented to businesses are customized and based on the expressed needs of the business, instead of being agency-siloed or menu-driven. Partners from various agencies coordinate with the workforce system to provide a seamless delivery of services and branding through a "no wrong door approach". WV is comprised of seven regions/Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDA).

### **Local Workforce Development Areas/Regions**

- **Region 1:** The Region 1 Workforce Development Board, headquartered in Beckley, administers workforce activities in an eleven-county region covering the southeastern portion of the State.
- **Region 2:** The Southwestern West Virginia Workforce Development Board, located in Huntington, governs a seven-county region in the southwestern portion of the State.
- **Region 3:** The Workforce Development Board of Kanawha County oversees activities in the State's only single-county workforce development region from its office in Charleston.
- **Region 4:** Nine counties are served by the Workforce Development Board Mid-Ohio Valley, which is in Parkersburg.
- **Region 5:** The Northern Panhandle Workforce Development Board provides services in six counties and is based in Wheeling.
- **Region 6:** The Region 6 Workforce Development Board, located in Fairmont, provides services in a thirteen-county region in the north-central portion of the State.
- **Region 7:** Eight counties in the easternmost portion of West Virginia are served by the Region 7 Workforce Development Board located in Moorefield.

# Waivers

WorkForce West Virginia (WFWV) did not have a waiver in place for at least one program year.

## Evaluations

**Independent annual financial monitoring for each subrecipient** - WFWV works with a third party to conduct annual fiscal monitoring on each of our subrecipients. If our independent monitoring agency identifies an area of concern, we work with the LWDA in question to provide technical assistance to address the issue and make proactive technical assistance available at their request if they feel more assistance is needed outside of the area identified in the monitoring.

**Periodic programmatic review** - WFWV utilizes an internal review team that periodically reviews case notes, performance metrics, and cash requests for each of our LWDA's to identify deficiencies before they become larger compliance issues. Each region is given a comprehensive review annually, along with quarterly spot checks to individual programs within each region. The intention behind these reviews is to identify opportunities for technical assistance proactively, to increase each region's effectiveness in serving its participants. Additionally, this process allows us to compare and contrast technical assistance needs from region to region, allowing us to tailor our training to more specifically fit their needs. So far, this unit has been able to identify several areas of concern before they were able to evolve into larger issues and have provided in person technical assistance to several of our regions as a result. The primary goal of this unit is to work collaboratively with the LWDA's to ensure compliance with all appropriate regulations and to enhance their effectiveness wherever possible. The LWDA's have been very open to this process, and we have had a very positive response and full cooperation so far. A standardized checklist is used for all monitoring conducted in this manner and examples of these checklists are included in Attachment A.

**Current Evaluation Project**- WFWV is in the process of developing an evaluation project aimed at assessing the effectiveness of our interagency collaboration across all Title 1 programs that will be launched in PY25. This evaluation strategy will combine a survey of all required partners with our labor market information. This project will help us identify underserved populations, potential duplication of services, and other areas of opportunity that we can then address appropriately.

**West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (WVDRS)**- WVDRS is federally mandated to conduct a Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) every three federal fiscal years (FFY); the current CSNA was conducted in FFY 2024. Due to the comprehensive nature of the CSNA and limited space available in this report, an excerpt pertaining to the interagency needs, coordination, and

cooperation is presented below. The full CSNA is contained within the Vocational Rehabilitation Portion of the WV Combined State Plan. The results of the CSNA are a vital component to the development of goals and priorities and their associated strategies and benchmarks. The next CSNA will be completed prior to the end of FFY 2027. As part of the FY 2024 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, the West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services (WVDRS) emailed a survey to all required Title 1 partners in addition to the seven regional Workforce Development Board (WDB) directors. The survey consisted of eight questions to collect information about the respondents, the agency they represent, and their perception of the rehabilitation service needs and gaps of the individuals with significant disabilities that they serve, as well as employers.

## Results

A total of nine surveys were completed online. Respondents represented Workforce WV, WV Adult Education, WV Office of Economic Development, Department of Health and Human Resources (DHHR) Office of Family Assistance, WV Department of Veterans Assistance and WDB Regions 2 and 6.

### Number of Individuals with Disabilities Served

The approximate number of consumers with disabilities served by each agency varied from 0 to 3000. Four respondents were unable to provide a response to this question.

### Services Most Often Needed

All respondents replied to this prompt, although one of them indicated that the question could not be answered due to a lack of clients. The most reported service needs were education assistance, job search/placement, transportation, financial assistance, and soft skills/employability skills training.

### Service Gaps

Six respondents provided service gap information. The responses included assessments, transportation, financial assistance, assistive technology, education/training, mental health practitioners, childcare, and case management.

### Services to Employers

All five respondents provided services to employer information. The most reported service needs were disability etiquette training, information regarding accommodations, staffing assistance, and equipment/assistive technology.

## WVDRS Assistance and Additional Comments

Six respondents provided comments in response to this prompt. Respondents encouraged a continuation of the services and partnership that WVDRS provides, suggestions for better communication to streamline services and referrals, recommendations for improved database interface between involved agencies, and a more active role in marketing services to veterans.

The West Virginia Division of Rehabilitation Services takes the input of its partners seriously and plans to use the information provided to make well-informed decisions regarding policy and service provision moving forward. As WVDRS continues to provide vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with the most significant disabilities, the agency will continue to collaborate, as needed, with its core WIOA partners of WorkForce WV and WV Adult Education, as well as with fellow ICT members. This collaboration will ensure that individuals with the most significant disabilities receive maximized service provision in their mission to obtain competitive, integrated employment.

## **Customer Satisfaction**

The LWDA's and our required partners have the flexibility to utilize their own customer satisfaction (CS) surveys/questionnaires. Both continue to implement innovative ways to reach the customer base and obtain satisfaction surveys utilizing Zoom, Duo and Teams meetings, web-based portals, more frequent email, and cell phone communication. Below are several examples of how the Regions and our partners are evaluating their customer's satisfaction.

### WVDRS

As part of its program improvement efforts, WVDRS continued to support the implementation of consumer satisfaction surveys of its clients to ensure quality services for WVDRS consumers. The WV State Rehabilitation Council (WVSRC) conducted the surveys (with full WVDRS assistance and cooperation). WVSRC is primarily responsible for completion of the consumer satisfaction survey for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) consumers. WVDRS continued to provide and supplement fiscal and human resources needed for its successful completion. Past and present reports may be found on the WVSRC's website at <http://www.wv-src.org/surveys.htm>. WVSRC members selected a survey method that allowed former WVDRS clients and individuals who were not accepted for VR services to be contacted via both online and mail surveys as soon as they exit WVDRS from various statuses throughout the fiscal year. The findings were based on consumer satisfaction information gathered from 442 responses across the six WVDRS districts. Respondents to the consumer satisfaction survey were asked to rate their agreement with statements about their interactions with WVDRS. The ratings were "strongly agree," "agree," "neutral," "disagree," and "strongly disagree." Respondents were provided with an option to indicate replies that were neutral or that the survey item was not applicable. Selected highlights of the December 2024 Consumer Satisfaction Survey of WVDRS clients as reported by the

WVSRC were: Overall, responses for the 2023-2024 survey were slightly lower than the reported satisfaction in previous years. The mean rating across the ten satisfaction items was 81% for 2023-24, compared to 88% for 2021-22, 86% for 2019-20, 80% for 2018-19, 78% for 2017-18, and 76% for 2016-17. Major findings of the consumer satisfaction survey included: (1) respondents felt their rehabilitation counselor treated them with respect (95%), (2) they felt that the eligibility requirements and process for receiving services were clearly explained by WVDRS staff (92%), (3) their questions were answered clearly by WVDRS (92%), (4) they received the services they needed (84%), and (5) they were satisfied with the services provided (81%). Respondents also reported that their counselor stayed in contact, so they knew what was happening (85%) and that they were made aware of the steps and responsibilities to achieve their employment goal (85%). Consumers also reported high ratings (“Above Average” or “Excellent”) for accessibility of local offices (83%), and the overall experience with WVDRS (81%). WVDRS, in conjunction with the WVSRC and other stakeholders, utilizes the results of consumer satisfaction surveys to make changes and improvements, whenever possible.

### West Virginia Adult Education

West Virginia Adult Education (WVAdultEd) is committed to delivering high-quality customer experiences across workforce and education programs. Customer satisfaction is used as a key tool for continuous improvement. In alignment with 20 CFR 678.800, WVAdultEd employs structured methods to collect, analyze, and act on feedback from individuals and employers engaged with WVAdultEd, the one-stop delivery system. WVAdultEd uses targeted electronic surveys as the primary mechanism for measuring employer satisfaction. Each time adult education staff provide employer services, at the time they are recorded in the Mid Atlantic Computer Consortium (MACC), a survey is automatically sent. This ensures timely outreach and preserves the connection between service delivery and customer feedback. The survey captures satisfaction with WVAdultEd services and gauges employer interest in additional one-stop services, including American Job Center (AJC) offerings such as Employment Services, Veterans Services, Labor Market Information, Apprenticeships, Transitional Jobs, Tax Credits, and Rehabilitation Services.

Over the reporting period, the surveys yielded a 33% response rate. To improve participation, WVAdultEd employs strategies that reduce employer burden and promote ease of use, including:

- A brief six-question survey for rapid completion
- Direct, user-friendly survey links embedded in personalized emails
- Ongoing communication with employers to encourage engagement

These efforts support consistent employer participation and strengthen relationships.

All responding employers requested more information about WVAdultEd and AJC services, indicating strong interest in broader one-stop engagement. While the sample size is small, results are considered

directionally reflective of the employer population because the survey captures both program-specific and system-wide feedback. Customer feedback directly informs service enhancements, outreach approaches, and coordination across one-stop partners. When employers express interest in additional services, staff promptly provide information, referrals, or connections to AJC programs. WVAdultEd continuously reviews survey content, communication methods, and follow-up processes to ensure that feedback remains actionable and that services remain responsive and accessible. Student satisfaction was overwhelmingly positive, with over 93% of respondents agreeing on key aspects such as WVAdultEd instructor support, classroom environment, and resource availability. Additionally, nearly 98% of participants said they would recommend WVAdultEd to others, indicating strong overall approval.

### LWDA-Region 1

Region 1's approach to customer satisfaction is guided by WIOA's customer-centered design principles and a commitment to continuous quality improvement. Feedback is collected across all major funding streams—Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Transitional Jobs (TJ) and On-the-Job Training (OJT)—as well as through the services provided in the Region 1 American Job Center (AJC). Customer satisfaction is measured through multiple tools and methods to ensure inclusivity and data reliability:

- Post-service paper surveys distributed at program exit or after major milestones such as training completion or job placement.
- Post-service web-based surveys link sent at program exit
- Employer satisfaction surveys sent following OJT contracts, TJ contracts and Youth Paid Work Experience contracts.
- Real-time feedback gathered by the front-desk Resource Specialist through brief comments form and informal discussions.
- Quarterly review meetings (Partner Meetings) with case managers and program leads to identify service challenges or trends in feedback data.

This multi-method approach ensures Region 1 captures a broad, accurate perspective of both participant and employer experiences while maintaining high data quality and confidentiality.

During Program Year 2024 (July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025), Region 1 distributed customer satisfaction surveys to 612 individuals across Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs and 114 employers participating in OJT or Youth Paid Work Experience contracts.

- Individual customer response rate: 57% (349 respondents)
- Employer response rate: 64% (73 respondents)

To improve participation, Region 1 implemented several strategies:

- Integrated survey completion into the exit interview process to capture feedback in real time.
- Provided employers with a short form following contract completion or job placements. These efforts increased response rates by approximately 8% for individuals and 10% for employers compared to the previous program year.

Customer satisfaction results for PY 2024 indicate that Region 1 continues to deliver high-quality, customer-focused workforce services.

- Adult and Dislocated Worker participants: 94% reported being “satisfied” or “highly satisfied” with services received, citing staff professionalism, responsiveness, and the helpfulness of training and job placement support.
- Youth participants: 91% reported positive experiences, particularly noting improved job readiness skills and mentoring.
- Employers: 96% expressed satisfaction with the OJT program and Participants, 100% expressed satisfaction with the TJ program and Participants, 100% satisfaction expressed with the Youth Paid Work Experience Participants, the quality of candidate referrals, and the timeliness of staff communication.

Given the diversity of respondents across demographics, service types, and geographic areas within the region, Region 1 believes these results are representative of the larger customer base. The consistency of positive feedback across programs reinforces the effectiveness and accessibility of AJC services.

Region 1 maintains an active continuous improvement process that integrates customer feedback into service design and staff development. Quarterly review meetings are conducted by program managers to analyze survey results, identify trends, and implement corrective actions where needed.

During the reporting period, key improvement actions included:

- Enhanced orientation sessions to provide clearer explanations of WIOA services and eligibility.
- Staff training in trauma-informed care and customer engagement to strengthen service delivery and communication.
- Expansion of OJT and TJ employer outreach based on employer feedback requesting more targeted recruitment assistance.
- Refinements to digital communication channels, including website updates and clearer survey instructions.

Region 1’s feedback loop ensures that customer insights translate directly into operational improvements. Customers who offer specific recommendations receive acknowledgment and, when appropriate, updates on how their input shaped program adjustments. Through this process, Region 1 demonstrates its ongoing commitment to accountability, transparency, and excellence in workforce service delivery.

## LWDA-Region VI

Region VI uses multiple methods to gather and analyze customer satisfaction data from individuals participating in our programs. The American Job Center (AJC), partner agencies, and program participants regularly use customer satisfaction surveys as the primary tool for collecting feedback because they are simple and accessible for all customers. Surveys are available both online and in person at our offices, allowing us to be adaptable to the needs of all clients. Fillable electronic forms are also provided for easy digital submission. To expand accessibility, we use QR codes that link directly to the survey and ensure customers always access the most up-to-date version. These QR codes are included on AJC documents and printed on follow-up letters sent up to a year after exit for WIOA participants. Privacy is prioritized by allowing surveys to be completed anonymously, and physical satisfaction-survey drop boxes are available at all One-Stop locations for customers who prefer to submit paper responses.

Over the last program year, we received approximately 114 surveys. The overall satisfaction for the 2024 Program year was 97.66%. To improve response rates, customer satisfaction surveys are intentionally designed to be concise, with fewer than ten questions and a focus on rating-scale responses rather than lengthy open-ended items. This streamlined format has proven effective in increasing participation by making the survey quick and easy to complete. Additionally, follow-up reminders are routinely sent to customers after their initial contact to further encourage survey completion and enhance overall response rates. Paper and online surveys were collected and analyzed to assess overall customer satisfaction. The results indicate consistently high levels of satisfaction, particularly in regard to staff helpfulness, knowledge, and timeliness in serving clients. Respondents also shared appreciation for the additional support services provided these resources contributed positively to their overall experience. Customer satisfaction data is actively used to support continuous improvement efforts across the region. Survey feedback helps identify areas in need of enhancement, and the results are used to develop targeted action plans to address any recurring issues. Updates and findings are communicated to staff during training sessions to ensure all team members are informed and aligned with improvements aimed at strengthening customer experience. Region VI continues to invest in ongoing staff development, particularly in customer service best practices, to ensure the delivery of high-quality services and consistent, customer-centered support.

# State Strategies

West Virginia's four primary strategies as identified in the WIOA Combined State Plan are as follows:

## Work-Based Learning

West Virginia will expand and implement high-quality work-based learning opportunities for youth and adult learners.

WFWV has appointed a Director of Special Program/Apprenticeships with the responsibility of developing new apprenticeship opportunities by directly engaging employers and partners. Specific apprenticeship activities WFWV has undertaken are listed below.

## Reduce Barriers to Sustainable Employment

West Virginia will increase referrals and integration of services to improve access to supportive services customized for individuals needing education and employment.

During PY24 WFWV instituted an annual in person case management training for all LWDA case managers. During this training we featured guest speakers from required partners so case managers could have a refresher on the services available to their participants via referral, as well as encouragement from those partners to engage in what they have to offer.

## Sector Strategies

West Virginia will implement comprehensive sector strategy approaches to reduce skills mismatches and enhance faster labor market attachment while informing education and training priorities.

During PY24 WFWV engaged in the development of a broadband workforce development project aimed at aligning workforce development efforts over multiple LWDA's utilizing BEAD funding awarded to the state for the purpose of expanding broadband availability to all of the citizens of West Virginia. While this initiative has been put on hold pending a federal review of the funding, WFWV is prepared to pick the project back up once the time comes.

## Integration and Innovation in Service Delivery

West Virginia will implement the Blue Ribbon Franchise Model of workforce service delivery to increase the efficiency of service delivery and effectiveness in serving businesses, workers, and job seekers.

WFWV has implemented an annual in-person IFA/MOU meeting of all LWDAs and the WIOA required partners that will foster enhanced cooperation and system integration. The inaugural meeting took place during PY24 and was well received by all partners. Being able to meet in person to work through the IFA/MOU process collaboratively leads to our LWDAs and partners finding new ways to best spend the limited funding they have available while still offering excellent service to their participants.

### Apprenticeship Strategies

In 2024, HB 5162 passed requiring CTE's in High Schools to develop more pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship opportunities for students. WFWV has developed a partnership with Education with the emphasis on connecting them with more potential opportunities in establishing these new opportunities or advising them on existing opportunities.

This has led to WFWV connecting them with the National Restaurant Educational Association who already have National registered apprenticeship programs in Line Cook, Assistant Restaurant Manager, Restaurant Manager, Assistant Kitchen Manager and Kitchen Manager. In addition, they accept the Pro-Start curriculum from the CTE's which allows students entering the apprenticeship to get a lot of the Other Related Training experience credit. Before this coordinated effort there were no establishments in WV that were a part of the apprenticeship through the NREA. We now have three employers who have signed up, such as Butchers Block, Oglebay Resort and now the Greenbrier Resort. More are starting to show interest as recent meetings were held with a CTE and two other potential employers. This will allow for pre-apprenticeships leading to Registered apprenticeships as well as be open to non-high school applicants.

WFWV connected with Live 12 Staffing, a company out of Virginia who was looking to establish a registered apprenticeship in WV for remote licensed insurance agents under the platform of All-State. WFWV was able to connect them and coordinate the process with the Department of Labor's Office of Apprenticeship and within a couple of months establish the new apprenticeship program in WV.

WFWV also connected with Communicare who owns 41 Health Facilities in WV and discussed the possibilities of establishing pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship opportunities in WV. WFWV coordinated a meeting with the Wood County Technical Center and Caperton Center in Parkersburg WV recently and progress has already been made in moving towards establishing clinicals, internships leading to pre-apprenticeships and eventually potential apprenticeships for Communicare facilities in Wood County WV to start. Plans are already being developed for high school students to initially have these opportunities in CNA and Sports Med. Once this is established then they can look at doing it statewide since they have facilities all over the state.

WFWV also coordinated talks again between Education and ACDS (Apprenticeship for Child Development Specialist), which neither side had met for over 10 years to discuss cross-walking courses

again to allow high school students taking the Child Care programs in the CTE's to receive credit for the ACDS program. In addition, ACDS individuals could receive credit towards the ECAT program through the Department of Education. More than 10 years ago credit was being received but through legislation Education had to modify their curriculum and the two sides never came back together to work this out. From this coordinated meeting by WFWV that agreement has now become a reality and an MOU is being signed to make this happen again.

# Performance Accountability

The table below reflects West Virginia's final PY24 WIOA performance metrics against the negotiated goals. A breakdown of West Virginia's seven LWDA's performance has been included as Attachment B. All performance metrics were above the negotiated goals with the exception of the Adult Credential Rate. WFWV is proactively working with the LWDA's who are under expectation on this measure to identify and correct the issue.

WIOA Performance Measures	West Virginia	West Virginia
	Final Negotiated Goals	Final PY24 Performance Metrics
<b>WIOA Adults</b>		
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	<b>73.0%</b>	<b>78.4%</b>
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	<b>71.0%</b>	<b>76.3%</b>
Median Earning	<b>\$7,000.00</b>	<b>\$8,600.00</b>
Credential Attainment Rate	<b>79.0%</b>	<b>75.7%</b>
Measurable Skill Gains	<b>48.0%</b>	<b>66.1%</b>
<b>WIOA Dislocated Workers</b>		
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	<b>79.0%</b>	<b>83.8%</b>
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	<b>83.0%</b>	<b>84.7%</b>
Median Earning	<b>\$10,500.00</b>	<b>\$12,114.00</b>
Credential Attainment Rate	<b>83.0%</b>	<b>84.6%</b>
Measurable Skill Gains	<b>44.0%</b>	<b>62.0%</b>
<b>WIOA Youth</b>		
Employment (Second Quarter after Exit)	<b>65.7%</b>	<b>74.0%</b>
Employment (Fourth Quarter after Exit)	<b>64.6%</b>	<b>68.3%</b>
Median Earning	<b>\$3,600.00</b>	<b>\$4,7600.00</b>
Credential Attainment Rate	<b>61%</b>	<b>67.7%</b>
Measurable Skill Gains	<b>50.0%</b>	<b>57.2%</b>

# **Statewide Governor's Reserve Funds**

During PY23 WFWV partnered with West Virginia HealthRight (WVHR) and James Beard Award winner, Chef Paul Smith, to develop the “Prepped to Serve Appalachia” program, a targeted job-training initiative designed to equip up to 40 participants with the skills needed for employment in the fine dining industry. The program runs in three-month cohorts, featuring one month of classroom training followed by two months of on-the-job experience. Participants, who are patients of WVHR facing employment barriers, receive comprehensive support services, including medical, dental, and behavioral healthcare. Upon completion, participants are connected to job opportunities in the industry through partnerships with WorkForce WV (WFWV), Job & Hope WV, and other agencies, with ongoing support for at least one year to enhance their long-term success in the workforce.

## **Rapid Response**

During the 2024-2025 program year, the State Rapid Response Unit received 16 WARNs, worked with 30 companies (both large and small dislocations), and served 404 workers. When talking with employers prior to setting up a meeting, the number of affected workers is usually less than the projected numbers on the notification. This enables the State Rapid Response team to plan a meeting and only contact the affected workers and the appropriate partner agencies.

The State Rapid Response team has been updating the rapid response process and incorporating a smoother flow of information at rapid response in-person meetings. More emphasis is being placed on positive and collaborative interactions between the State RR Unit and the local WorkForce Development Board RR Coordinators in serving the smaller dislocations throughout the state. The state has assigned rapid response liaison coordinators who work closely with the local RR staff to attend meetings, to monitor services, and to offer technical assistance when requested. The State Business Services Representatives attend RR meetings to inform workers of current employment opportunities and the monthly virtual job fairs. Specific in-person job fairs were conducted for laid off workers based on job preferences and skill levels. By setting up these job fairs, in conjunction with the layoffs, workers are able to transition back into the workforce quickly, which is the desired goal.

On-going training is provided to ensure rapid response services are being offered timely and questionnaires are completed accurately to assess the worker's individual needs and goals. Follow up services have become an integral part of the RR process and allows workers to interact with staff at WorkForce WV, American Job Centers, WIOA, and partner agencies. These entities are present at the RR meetings and provide one on one communication after the meetings to address specific issues or concerns.

Employer engagement and employer retention continues to be the primary focus of the Statewide Business Services Representatives and their input at RR meetings is critical since they have a working knowledge of the business climate. Again, follow up with employers to maintain a productive, working relationship promotes WorkForce resources, partner referrals, and fulfills employer's employment needs. One of the most successful "no cost" venues to connect employers with qualified job seekers is the Virtual Job Fair platform. The monthly Virtual Job fair from July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025, registered 1,471 employers with 8,058 job openings. The Virtual Job Fair information is given to all workers at the RR meetings, and we offer assistance in registering job seekers to the event(s). In addition, the Business Services Representatives conduct quarterly business meetings with the Workforce Development Boards and partner agencies to discuss current activities, coordinate more partnerships, and disseminate employment information occurring in their respective regions. The meetings are beneficial to avoid duplication of services and provide a united goal in serving employers and job seekers.

The Business Services Representatives and the State Rapid Response Unit have reached out to the Economic Development Retention and Expansion staff to look at layoff aversion strategies and to determine how we can effectively work with employers prior to a layoff occurring. Several meetings have been conducted, and this is a work in progress as the collaboration continues to serve our dislocated workers.

## **Wagner-Peyser Activities**

All staff located within the seventeen WFWV local offices provide both unemployment and employment services to the public. Due to local office staff having knowledge of unemployment regulations allow for eligibility issues to be detected and addressed more quickly.

Of the seventeen offices, five have been designated as employment service offices and house staff that focus more intently on providing employment services. Services that are provided in all offices include: job placement activities including writing and running job orders, calling customers regarding job fairs/hiring events, resume writing, labor market information referral to training and partner agencies.

The Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments (RESEA) program provides tailored services to unemployment claimants, facilitating their reintegration into the workforce with greater expediency. Participants selected for RESEA work with program staff to resolve eligibility concerns, explore the local job market, make referrals to partner and community organizations, and establish objectives aimed at reemployment. Any detected eligibility discrepancies are promptly addressed to prevent the improper disbursement of unemployment benefits.

In West Virginia, the ten percent funds are primarily used to cover activities related to providing

services to migrant and seasonal farm workers. These services include job placement and training services, information on the ES and Employment related law complaint system, summary of farmworker rights, and referrals to supportive services.

## **National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWGs)**

Approximately 3 to 4.5 inches of rain fell across Southern West Virginia during a flash flood event between February 15, 2025, and February 18, 2025 (FEMA disaster declaration DR-4861-WV). This event exacerbated the existing economic challenges of the 12 counties impacted by the flood damage. Three lives were lost in McDowell County, in addition to significant property loss and major critical infrastructure disruptions and loss across the communities, due to the flash flood event. WFWV was awarded a NDWG to provide dislocated workers in the 12 Southern West Virginia counties identified as eligible for public assistance in FEMA disaster declaration DR-4861-WV with temporary employment in flood recovery and help them find more permanent employment opportunities. Over 90 potential worksites throughout Southern West Virginia have been identified as needing cleanup efforts. This includes removing storm debris from block bridges, culverts, and drains, clogged or obscured streams, drains, and creekbanks, authorized and safe burning of collected natural debris, and clearing fallen trees and other objects. Although the NDWG was awarded in PY24, grant activities did not begin until PY25 began and will continue through May of 2026.

## **State Best Practices and Needs**

WFWV has compiled best practices and areas of need from its partners and the LWDA's and has included them below.

### **WV AdultEd Best Practices**

WVAdultEd strengthened its role within the workforce system by deepening collaboration with all WIOA core and required partners, as well as multiple additional agencies. These partnerships broaden access to education, training, and supportive services, ensuring that adult learners receive coordinated, high-quality assistance.

A consistent WVAdultEd presence in eight American Job Centers (AJCs) has improved information sharing and streamlined referrals. Staff enter business services and participant interactions directly into the Mid Atlantic Career Consortium (MACC) system, improving the State's ability to track employer engagement and workforce activities such as incumbent worker training, economic development coordination, and rapid response services.

WVAdultEd staff also support WDB case managers through customer service training and informational sessions on Adult Education services. The program fulfills its WIOA responsibilities by participating on local workforce development boards and maintaining agreements such as the Region 7 MOU, which aligns resources and strategies to address regional labor market needs. Staff maintain regular AJC office hours, attend quarterly One-Stop Consortium meetings, and participate in committees such as the Interagency Business Services Coordination Committee.

Local WVAdultEd Advisory Council meetings with employers, community partners, and education providers help instructors stay responsive to labor market trends. Labor market information informs program development, while staff support job readiness workshops, job fairs, and rapid response efforts to assist displaced workers.

Supportive services are strengthened through the J.A.C.K. (Jobs, Action, Community, Knowledge) digital referral system, which connects learners to partner resources. J.A.C.K. kiosks further expand public access to Adult Education, Rehabilitation Services, Human Services, and other partners. Federal, state, and local funds also support infrastructure needs, such as shared AJC space and program outreach.

#### Integrated Education and Training (IET): Key Best Practice

WVAdultEd continues to expand its IET programs through strong partnerships with community colleges, technical centers, correctional facilities, employers, and workforce partners. Instructors use the American Institutes for Research (AIR) IET Design Toolkit to guide program development and implementation.

Health sciences remain a statewide priority, with multiple Health Science Preparation IETs offered in partnership with higher education institutions. WVAdultEd also developed an IET for Direct Support Professionals with the Department of Human Services, as well as additional IETs supporting hospitality, tourism, and school service personnel—sectors identified as crucial to the state’s economy.

To maintain alignment with current labor market needs, analyst Jeff Green presented Decoding West Virginia’s Labor Market during the West Virginia Adult Education Association, Inc. annual statewide professional development conference, equipping instructors with valuable insights into in-demand occupations.

In the past year, WVAdultEd delivered IET programs to 496 participants across 40 counties. Of these learners, 382 were National Reporting System (NRS) qualified, and 378 achieved measurable skill gains. These outcomes demonstrate the program’s growing capacity to provide high-quality training pathways that align with employer needs and support strong learner outcomes

## WV AdultEd Challenges/Needs

WVAdultEd continues to face several challenges that affect service delivery and full participation in the statewide workforce system. Uncertainty in funding allocations makes it difficult to plan long-term programming, maintain consistent staffing, and fully engage in workforce partner initiatives.

As Integrated Education and Training (IET) programs expand, delivering them in rural and multi-level classrooms remains a significant challenge. Many adult education sites operate in single-room environments where learners vary widely in age, skill level, and career goals. Instructors must balance foundational instruction with advanced training components, requiring extensive differentiation and flexibility.

Rural infrastructure presents additional obstacles. Limited broadband access restricts participation in online IET program components and distance education. Physical space limitations in small facilities make it difficult to create separate learning stations, affecting pacing and instructional flow. These conditions can slow the progress of advanced learners and overwhelm those needing intensive support, making consistent IET program implementation complex.

## WVDRS Promising Practices

In February 2023, WVDRS increased compensation for Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs), including a higher rate for Supported Employment services. Following this, in 2024, DRS developed a Tier-based fee-for-service model for SE. This tiered approach encourages DRS-approved CRP Providers to pursue education and certification, thereby improving service delivery to DRS Consumers.

Reimbursement rates are now based on credentialing across three Tiers:

- Tier 1: Non-Credentialed-Approved CRP Provider DR - All approved CRP Providers must maintain certification with DRS through internal controls and ongoing programmatic evaluation by the DRS CRP Unit.
- Tier 2: ACRE (Association of Community Rehabilitation Educators) Credentialed - Approved CRP Provider DRS In addition to Tier 1 requirements, providers in this tier hold an ACRE credential. ACRE is a national organization dedicated to improving employment services for people with disabilities, promoting competency-based training for employment service professionals. The ACRE credential requires initial training and continued membership.
- Tier 3: CESP (Certified Employment Support Professional) Credentialed-Approved CRP Provider DRS - This is the premier reimbursement Tier, signifying that the CRP has completed the CESP credential. This credential recognizes individuals who have demonstrated a sufficient level of knowledge and skill to provide integrated employment support services to individuals

with disabilities. CESP credentialing requires knowledge demonstration through examination and ongoing continuing education.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 encouraged the reduction in the use of 14(c) Certificates. As a result, the Vocational Rehabilitation Program and DRS were tasked with annually educating, training, and counseling individuals employed in subminimum wage CRP programs. New employees under the age of 25 entering these programs were also given the opportunity to seek services targeting community-based employment at minimum wage or higher prior to working at subminimum wage. Since the inception of these WIOA efforts, the number of CRPs in WV holding a 14(c) Certificate has significantly decreased from 10 (employing approximately 342 individuals) to one active 14(c) Certificate holder (employing 24 individuals) as of October 2024. Section 511 Training was completed with 24 employees in September 2025.

Additionally, the WV APSE Chapter was established in May 2025, with three WVDRS staff members serving as at-large board members. The WV APSE's mission is through advocacy and education, APSE advances employment and self-sufficiency for all people with disabilities. We have also initiated a collaboration with WVDRS, WV Behavioral Health, and the newly appointed Program Director for Title XIX Waiver to increase the utilization of Waiver funding for SE. This collaboration is particularly important as some CRPs faced challenges maintaining their programs and faced staffing challenges due to employment losses during COVID.

In 2024, WVDRS instituted a Benefits Counseling Program. Currently, there are 3 providers in the state, with 3 additional providers having staff enrolled in the Work Incentive Planning and Assistance (WIPA) Training Program. To ensure consistent quality and adherence to criteria, the CRP Unit closely monitors all SE extended support cases. Counselors seek guidance from District Managers and the CRP Unit before making funding decisions, ensuring that cases meet established criteria and that an Extended Supported Employment Services (ESES) Plan is in place. This process has significantly enhanced knowledge and awareness, building confidence in moving forward with Supported Employment cases. Furthermore, WVDRS and CRP Quarterly meetings were established to increase communication and collaboration between staff. These meetings incorporate education and training, along with discussions involving any issues that may need to be addressed. We have increased our monthly Liaison contacts since February of 2024, maintaining a monthly log. We continue to provide technical support to both staff and providers by following up on missed reports or any concerns that may need to be addressed. A District Manager is assigned if a staff member is not available, and the list is updated as changes occur. We have also increased access to SE services by maintaining five statewide providers that travel into rural areas.

### LWDA-Region 1 Promising Practices

Region 1 has implemented several promising practices designed to enhance outcomes for job seekers and employers, particularly individuals with barriers to employment as defined in WIOA Section 3(24).

- By co-locating WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth staff along with Wagner-Peyser, Vocational Rehabilitation, and partner agencies, Region 1 ensures seamless referral and co-enrollment. This model reduces service duplication and helps participants move more quickly into employment or training.
- The Youth Program developed a “Career Launch” initiative in partnership with local high schools and community colleges, targeting out-of-school youth and those at risk of dropping out. Through paid work experiences and mentorship, 78% of participants completed training and entered employment or post-secondary education within six months.
- Region 1’s collaboration with the Department of Health and Human Resources and local recovery organizations supports individuals in substance use recovery and justice-involved populations. Participants receive career counseling, short-term training, and supportive services
- such as transportation vouchers and interview attire. Many have successfully transitioned into full-time positions in manufacturing, construction, and food service.
- Region 1 continues to expand employer engagement through customized OJT contracts and new Registered Apprenticeship programs in healthcare and electrical trades. One success story involved a partnership with a regional hospital system that developed an LPN-to-RN apprenticeship pathway, allowing incumbent workers to advance while earning wages, resulting in a 90% retention rate for participants.
- Lessons learned from ongoing program evaluations highlight the importance of individualized case management and early assessment. Region 1 has adopted a “customer check-in” protocol at 30, 60, and 90 days post-placement to ensure retention and identify early intervention needs.

### LWDA-Region V Promising Practices

Once a week, One Stop Operator staff at the Ohio County American Job Center, provide employment ready classes for Lee Day Report Center clients. Lee is a partnering agency who serves Second Chance clients. They are dedicated to providing an array of services to help offenders gain skills necessary to function as viable members of society. These classes are a notable example of how our community comes together to improve the lives of Second Chance clients.

### LWDA-Region IV Promising Practices

Empower Fest brought together multiple agencies across North Central West Virginia to deliver comprehensive resources and services to job seekers in the region. Workforce staff provided résumé assistance and mock interview sessions to help participants strengthen their job-readiness skills. Partner

organizations, including barber academies and regional cosmetology schools, contributed by offering free haircuts and makeup services to help attendees feel confident and prepared. To further support job seekers, the Mobile Career Clothing Closet was onsite, allowing individuals to select professional attire appropriate for interviews. In addition to these preparation services, an on-the-spot hiring event was held during the event. After refining their resumes, practicing interview techniques, receiving grooming services, and selecting professional clothing, participants were able to immediately interview with employers who had current job openings. This coordinated effort provided a seamless, dignified, and empowering experience for individuals pursuing employment.

The Region VI Career Clothing Closet allows partner program participants to obtain business casual and business professional attire from a wide variety of gently used clothing, donated by business professionals within our region. Participants also receive tips on how to dress to impress and how to build their professional brand. Participants can select from a wide range of items such as: Suit jackets or blazers, shirts/blouses, dress slacks and pants, skirts, dresses, ties, and shoes. Our clothing closet thanks to the help of Fairmont Pride, a partner of the Region VI American Job Center was updated this year. We have incorporated built-in clothing racks with rustic metal fixtures to create a welcoming, boutique-style environment. This intentional design helps ensure that individuals who may be accustomed to traditional handout settings instead feel valued, respected, and as though they are participating in a personalized, high- quality experience.

Mobile AJCs have significantly improved outreach and service delivery in areas of the region where transportation barriers limit access to workforce services. This model is especially effective in communities that lack a comprehensive or affiliate American Job Center, ensuring equitable access for individuals who may otherwise be unable to engage with workforce programs. For example, the Mobile AJC we conducted in Gilmer County resulted in strong participation from potential clients seeking information about available services. Attendees were able to speak directly with the One Stop Coordinator, ask questions, and receive immediate guidance on employment and training opportunities. Partner organizations' materials and AJC service information were also distributed, allowing visitors to understand the full range of resources available to them. This initiative is considered a promising practice because it brings services directly to underserved populations, reduces logistical and transportation challenges, increases program visibility, and strengthens community engagement. By delivering workforce support directly to rural and hard-to-reach areas, Region VI can meet customers where they are, expand access to essential career services, and ensure that all residents have the opportunity to connect with employment and training resources.