

U.S. Department of Labor

Assistant Secretary for
Employment and Training
Washington, D.C. 20210



July 20, 2026

The Honorable Mike Dunleavy
Governor of Alaska
P.O. Box 110001
Juneau, AK 99811

Dear Governor Dunleavy:

Thank you for your waiver request submission to the U.S. Department of Labor (Department) regarding certain statutory and regulatory provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and the accompanying plan to improve the statewide workforce development system (enclosed). The waiver request was received on April 28, 2026, as part of your recent WIOA State Plan modification submission. This letter provides the Employment and Training Administration's (ETA) official response to your request and memorializes that Alaska will meet the outcomes and implement the measures identified in its plan to ensure accountability agreed to by Alaska and ETA. This action is taken under the Secretary of Labor's authority to waive certain requirements of WIOA Title I, Subtitles A, B, and E, and Sections 8–10 of the Wagner-Peyser Act in WIOA Section 189(i).

Requested Waiver: Waiver of the requirements outlined in WIOA Section 107(b) to allow a state workforce development board to carry out the roles and responsibilities of a local board.

ETA Response: ETA approves, through June 30, 2028, the State's request for a waiver to allow the state board to carry out the roles of the local workforce development boards in the State. ETA reviewed the State's waiver request and plan and has determined that the requirements requested to be waived impede the ability of the State to implement its plan to improve the workforce development system. Given the challenges the State and local areas have in mounting a fully compliant local-led board at this time, the Department agrees that the state board is in a better position to ensure effective service delivery in the local workforce areas in the State. Under this waiver, the Governor may designate the state board to carry out the roles and responsibilities of the local boards in the state. In implementing this waiver, the State must:

- Continue to include local input into its activities; and
- Allocate funding to the local area for which the state board is carrying out local board functions.

The State is reminded that WIOA Title I waivers may not be used for any discriminatory purposes. All activities and waiver plan provisions must comply with Section 188 of WIOA, the implementing regulations at 29 CFR Part 38, and all applicable federal nondiscrimination laws.

The State must report its waiver outcomes and implementation of the approved waivers in the WIOA Annual Report. ETA will use this information to assess continued waiver approval and to identify promising practices that may be adopted more widely. ETA is available to provide technical assistance to you in support of your goals. If you have questions, feel free to contact my office at (202) 693-2772.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Henry Mack". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Henry Mack, Ed.D.
Assistant Secretary

Enclosures

cc: Catherine Muñoz, Commissioner, Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce
Development
Dr. Tamika Ledbetter, San Fransico Regional Administrator, ETA
Marian Esver, Federal Project Officer, ETA

Alaska 2026 State Plan Waivers
Received 4/28/26

Overview – Waiver Request

Alaska is requesting renewal of its previously approved waiver to operate as a single statewide workforce development area under WIOA Section 189(i)(3)(B).

This waiver allows the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) to function as both the State Workforce Development Board and Local Workforce Development Board, supporting a unified governance structure that enhances administrative efficiency, ensures consistent statewide service delivery, and improves access to workforce services across Alaska's geographically dispersed and rural communities.

The waiver supports Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) framework and aligns with federal priorities related to system integration, employer engagement, and workforce system modernization.

Key Elements – Single Statewide Area Waiver Framework

Alaska's waiver request is based on the following key elements:

- Operation as a single statewide workforce development area under WIOA §106(d) and §107(b)
- Designation of AWIB as both the State and Local Workforce Development Board
- Elimination of duplicative local governance structures to improve administrative efficiency
- Support for consistent statewide policy implementation and fiscal oversight
- Alignment of workforce strategies with employer demand and sector-based approaches
- Maintenance of equitable access to services across urban, rural, and remote communities
- Preservation of WIOA performance accountability under Section 116
- Use of data-driven monitoring and continuous improvement strategies
- Alignment with federal priorities, including TEGL 05-25 system modernization guidance

(1) Identifies the statutory or regulatory requirements for which a waiver is requested and the goals that the State or local area, as appropriate, intends to achieve as a result of the waiver, and how those goals relate to the Unified or Combined State Plan;

Pursuant to section 189(i)(3)(B) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the State of Alaska requests renewal of its previously approved waiver to operate as a single statewide workforce development area.

The State is requesting continuation of existing waiver authority and is not seeking any expansion or modification of the previously approved waiver. This request is submitted as part of Alaska's two-year State Plan modification for Program Years (PY) 2026–2027 under TEGL 07-25. The governance structure remains unchanged from the previously approved 2024–2027 State Plan framework.

Statutory and Regulatory Requirements

This waiver relates to the following statutory and regulatory requirements:

- WIOA section 106(d) – Designation of local workforce development areas
- WIOA section 107(b) – Local workforce development board composition and functions
- 20 CFR §§ 679.210–679.240 and 679.270 – Local board designation, responsibilities, and single-area state provisions

Under this waiver, the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) serves as both the State Workforce Development Board and the Local Workforce Development Board for the entire state. Alaska operates as a single-board, single-area workforce system.

This waiver is consistent with WIOA section 189(i)(3)(B) because it improves the statewide workforce development system, aligns with WIOA goals, and does not undermine worker protections, fiscal accountability, or performance requirements.

Operational Context and Need for the Waiver

Alaska's geographic scale, dispersed population centers, and limited administrative capacity in many rural and remote communities present structural challenges to operating multiple local workforce development areas.

Separate local governance entities would:

- Create duplicative administrative costs
- Fragmented, limited fiscal and staffing resources

- Impede consistent statewide policy implementation
- Introduce inequities in service capacity across regions

The single statewide structure addresses these constraints by consolidating governance functions while maintaining local engagement through:

- Geographic diversity in board membership
- Representation from business, labor, education, Tribal organizations, and local elected officials
- Ongoing outreach and stakeholder consultation across Alaska's economic regions

The waiver does not eliminate local input, reduce service access, or alter participant eligibility. It ensures governance responsibilities are carried out in a manner that is operationally feasible, equitable, and fiscally responsible.

Goals of the Waiver

The goals of this waiver are to:

- Maintain administrative efficiency in a geographically large and sparsely populated state
- Ensure consistent statewide policy implementation and fiscal oversight
- Reduce duplicative governance structures that are not operationally sustainable in Alaska's regional context
- Support coordinated statewide planning, employer engagement, and sector strategies
- Maintain consistent access to workforce services across urban, rural, and remote communities
- Preserve unified performance accountability under WIOA section 116

Alignment with the State Plan and Federal Priorities

This waiver supports the strategic vision and goals outlined in Sections II(b) and II(c) of this State Plan and advances Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) framework.

The waiver aligns with federal priorities, including:

- Strengthening workforce system integration
- Enhancing employer engagement and sector partnerships

- Expanding access to services for underserved populations
- Supporting system modernization and data-informed decision-making

Alignment with U.S. Department of Labor priorities and expected outcomes is further described in Section 4 of this waiver request.

(2) Describes the actions that the State or local area, as appropriate, has undertaken to remove State or local statutory or regulatory barriers;

Before requesting renewal of this waiver, the State of Alaska conducted a comprehensive review of applicable statutes, administrative policies, governance structures, fiscal procedures, and service delivery models to identify any State or local barriers to implementation of the requested waiver.

This review confirmed that:

- Alaska statute authorizes the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) as the State Workforce Development Board
- The Governor has designated Alaska as a single statewide workforce development area
- Administrative policies support centralized fiscal oversight, monitoring, and performance accountability
- Service delivery is coordinated statewide through Alaska Job Centers, partner agencies, and contracted providers
- No State-level statutory, regulatory, administrative, or fiscal barriers impede the implementation of a single-area workforce system

The State also evaluated whether alternative governance structures, including multiple local workforce development areas, could be implemented through State-level policy or administrative changes.

Based on this assessment, the State determined that establishing multiple local workforce development areas would not be operationally feasible due to geographic scale, dispersed population centers, administrative capacity constraints, and limited resources in rural and remote communities.

As a result of this review, the State determined that no additional State or local statutory or regulatory changes are necessary to support implementation of the requested waiver.

The remaining constraint is the federal statutory framework under WIOA sections 106 and 107, which cannot be modified through State action. Accordingly, a federal waiver is necessary to continue operating Alaska's single statewide workforce development area.

(3) Describes the goals of the waiver and the expected programmatic outcomes if the request is granted;

Continuation of this waiver is expected to support measurable improvements in system coordination, service consistency, and administrative efficiency. These outcomes are expected to be performance-neutral or performance-enhancing and aligned with Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) framework and the strategic goals outlined in this State Plan.

Expected Programmatic Outcomes

If the waiver is granted, Alaska expects the following outcomes:

Stable or Improved Performance Outcomes

- Maintain or improve performance across the WIOA section 116 primary indicators of performance
- Ensure no adverse impact on performance outcomes resulting from the statewide governance structure

Increased Consistency in Service Delivery

- Ensure uniform eligibility determinations and policy implementation across all regions
- Reduce regional variability in program administration and service delivery

Sustained or Improved Access for Rural and Remote Communities

- Maintain equitable access to workforce services across geographic regions
- Increase participation among priority populations, including individuals in rural and remote areas

Administrative Efficiency and Reduced Duplication

- Streamline planning, reporting, and oversight processes
- Reduce administrative burden, costs, and delays associated with duplicative governance structures

Employer Engagement and Alignment

- Strengthen statewide sector strategies and industry partnerships
- Improve coordination of employer services and responsiveness to workforce needs

Measurement and Data Sources

Progress toward these outcomes will be measured using:

- AlaskaJobs system data
- WIOA section 116 performance reports
- Monitoring and compliance findings
- Fiscal oversight and program review reports

The waiver does not create new performance indicators or reporting requirements. Existing performance accountability systems will be used to assess outcomes and ensure continued program effectiveness.

Performance Neutrality Statement

The State does not anticipate adverse impacts on participant outcomes, employer engagement, fiscal integrity, or compliance as a result of this waiver.

The continuation of the single-area governance structure is expected to maintain or improve system performance while enhancing coordination, consistency, and access across Alaska's workforce system.

(4) Describes how the waiver will align with the Department's policy priorities, such as:

Continuation of Alaska's waiver to operate as a single statewide workforce development area aligns with U.S. Department of Labor priorities, including system modernization and alignment principles outlined in TEGl 05-25.

This waiver supports federal policy priorities in the following areas:

Strengthening Workforce System Alignment and Integration

- Promotes coordination across WIOA core programs and partner programs within a unified governance structure
- Supports integrated service delivery through the Alaska Job Center Network

Enhancing Employer Engagement and Sector Strategies

- Enables consistent statewide implementation of sector-based workforce strategies

- Strengthens coordination of employer services across regions and industries

Expanding Access to Workforce Services

- Supports equitable access to services for individuals in rural and remote communities
- Reduces disparities in service availability across geographic regions

Improving Administrative Efficiency and Reducing Duplication

- Eliminates duplicative local governance structures
- Streamlines planning, reporting, and oversight functions

Advancing Data-Informed Decision-Making and Continuous Improvement

- Supports consistent statewide performance tracking and monitoring
- Enables use of data to inform policy, program design, and resource allocation

Supporting Job Quality and Career Pathways

- Promotes alignment of workforce services with in-demand industries and career pathways
- Supports participant progression to employment, retention, and advancement

Conclusion

By continuing this waiver, Alaska strengthens alignment with federal workforce priorities while maintaining a coordinated, efficient, and accessible workforce system that supports both participants and employers across the state.

(A) supporting employer engagement;

The continuation of Alaska's single statewide workforce development area strengthens employer engagement by ensuring that business representatives are consistently informed of statewide policy, planning, and investment decisions.

Operating under a single-board structure enables coordinated employer outreach, reduces fragmentation, and ensures that workforce strategies are aligned with statewide labor market demand rather than varying regional approaches.

This approach supports:

- Consistent employer engagement practices aligned with labor market demand

- Statewide sector strategies informed by industry needs
- Coordinated business services across workforce system partners
- Streamlined communication with employers through a unified workforce system
- Improved responsiveness to employer workforce needs across regions

Through this structure, Alaska can engage employers more effectively, align training investments with industry demand, and support job-driven workforce development strategies consistent with federal priorities.

(B) connecting education and training strategies;

The continuation of Alaska’s single statewide workforce development area facilitates coordinated planning between workforce and education partners, supporting alignment across education, training, and employment systems.

This unified structure enables consistent implementation of career pathway strategies. It strengthens coordination among WIOA core programs, including Title I and Title II (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act), as well as secondary and postsecondary education partners.

The waiver supports the Department’s emphasis on integrated education and workforce strategies while maintaining program-specific accountability, eligibility requirements, and funding structures.

This model enables:

- Consistent development and implementation of career pathways aligned with in-demand industries
- Alignment with career and technical education (CTE) and postsecondary training pathways
- Coordination with secondary, postsecondary, and adult education partners
- Integration of education and training through strategies such as Integrated Education and Training (IET), where appropriate
- Improved transitions from education to employment through coordinated service delivery

Through this approach, Alaska strengthens connections between education and workforce systems, supports skill development aligned with employer demand, and improves participant outcomes.

(C) supporting work-based learning;

The continuation of Alaska's single statewide workforce development area enables coordinated implementation of sector-based strategies and work-based learning approaches, including Registered Apprenticeship, on-the-job training (OJT), and other employer-connected training models.

Centralized governance and oversight support consistent standards for policy implementation, monitoring, and fiscal accountability across the state, ensuring that work-based learning opportunities are delivered in alignment with employer demand and workforce system priorities.

This structure advances:

- Expansion of work-based learning opportunities aligned with employer demand
- Consistent policy implementation for on-the-job training, Registered Apprenticeship, and other work-based learning models
- Coordination of training strategies across regions and partner programs
- Increased access to earn-and-learn opportunities for participants, including priority populations
- Strengthened employer partnerships through direct involvement in training and skill development

Through this approach, Alaska supports job-driven training strategies that connect participants to employment, enhance employer engagement, and improve workforce system outcomes consistent with federal priorities.

(D) improving job and career results, and

The continuation of Alaska's single statewide workforce development area supports improved job and career outcomes by maintaining unified performance accountability, consistent statewide oversight, and coordinated service delivery across programs and regions.

While the waiver does not alter negotiated performance levels or indicators under WIOA Section 116, it strengthens the governance structure necessary to support effective performance management, data-driven decision-making, and continuous improvement.

This approach supports:

- Consistent implementation of policies and service strategies that contribute to employment and earnings outcomes
- Standardized monitoring practices to ensure program quality and compliance
- Coordinated service delivery across urban, rural, and remote communities
- Improved alignment of training and employment services with in-demand industries
- Enhanced ability to track and improve outcomes related to employment, credential attainment, and retention

Through this structure, Alaska improves its ability to deliver effective workforce services, support participant success, and achieve strong job and career outcomes consistent with federal performance expectations.

(E) other guidance issued by the Department.

The continuation of Alaska's single statewide workforce development area aligns with federal priorities for system integration, continuous improvement, and workforce system modernization, as outlined in guidance issued by the U.S. Department of Labor, including TEGL 05-25.

This structure supports a coordinated and adaptable workforce system that is responsive to evolving federal guidance while maintaining accountability and program integrity.

Consistent with federal guidance, this approach supports:

- System modernization and operational efficiency across workforce programs
- Centralized oversight of data systems, performance reporting, and accountability processes
- Statewide policy alignment across core and partner programs
- Integration of services to improve customer experience and system effectiveness
- Flexible service delivery approaches suited to Alaska's geographic and demographic realities

Through this structure, Alaska can implement federal guidance consistently, strengthen system performance, and support continuous improvement across the workforce development system.

(5) Describes the individuals affected by the waiver; and

The waiver affects individuals and employers served through Alaska's statewide workforce development system.

The waiver does not change eligibility criteria, priority of service requirements, or access to services for any population.

Populations Affected

The following populations are served through the workforce system and are affected by the governance structure supported by this waiver:

- Individuals with barriers to employment
- Residents of rural and remote communities
- Alaska Native populations and tribal communities
- Youth, adults, and dislocated workers
- Participants in partner programs, including the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)
- Employers across Alaska's industry sectors

No populations are excluded, restricted, or disadvantaged as a result of this waiver.

Expected Benefits

The waiver supports the following benefits for individuals and employers:

- Consistent statewide eligibility determination and service delivery
- Coordinated service delivery across workforce system partners
- Equitable access to services regardless of geographic location
- Reduced administrative fragmentation and duplication
- Improved alignment of services with employer workforce needs

Mitigation Strategies

Any potential reduction in localized governance is mitigated through:

- Diverse representation on the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB), including geographic and stakeholder diversity
- Ongoing regional stakeholder engagement and consultation

- Monitoring of participation, service delivery, and outcomes across geographic areas
- Transparent processes for requesting local area designation, consistent with WIOA requirements

The waiver does not alter eligibility requirements, priority of service, performance accountability, or nondiscrimination protections under WIOA Section 188 and 29 CFR Part 38.

Monitoring and oversight of impacts to these populations are further described in Section 6 of this waiver.

(6) Describes the processes used to:

(A) Monitor the progress in implementing the waiver;

The State will monitor implementation of the waiver through established programmatic, fiscal, and performance oversight processes designed to ensure compliance, consistency, and effectiveness across the statewide workforce system.

Monitoring activities include:

- Participant file reviews, including eligibility validation and documentation requirements
- Fiscal monitoring and subrecipient oversight to ensure compliance with federal and state requirements
- Performance dashboard analysis aligned with WIOA Section 116 indicators
- Data validation reviews to ensure the accuracy and integrity of reported outcomes
- Implementation of corrective action procedures, as necessary

These monitoring activities assess compliance with WIOA requirements, equitable access to services, consistency of service delivery across regions, and progress toward achieving program outcomes.

(B) Provide notice to any local board affected by the waiver;

As a single-area state, Alaska does not have separate local workforce development boards. The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) serves as both the State Workforce Development Board and the Local Workforce Development Board for the entire state.

Accordingly, there are no separate local boards requiring notification. However, AWIB members are informed of waiver-related actions and decisions through established

governance processes, including board meetings, committee discussions, and regular communications.

This approach ensures transparency, stakeholder awareness, and appropriate oversight consistent with WIOA requirements.

(C) Provide any local board affected by the waiver an opportunity to comment on the request;

As a single-area state, Alaska does not have separate local workforce development boards. The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) serves as both the State Workforce Development Board and the Local Workforce Development Board.

AWIB members are provided the opportunity to review and comment on the waiver request through formal board meetings, committee discussions, and established governance procedures.

In addition, the process for requesting designation as a local workforce development area remains publicly available. It is administered in accordance with WIOA and 20 CFR § 679.640, ensuring that stakeholders can request local designation and provide input on the workforce system structure.

(D) Ensure meaningful public comment, including comments by business and organized labor, on the waiver.

The State will ensure meaningful public comment on the waiver request by providing advance notice through established public notice procedures and conducting targeted outreach to stakeholders, including business representatives, organized labor, and workforce system partners.

The waiver request will be made available through accessible formats and multiple channels to support broad statewide participation. Stakeholders will be provided with sufficient time and multiple methods for submitting comments.

All substantive comments received during the public comment period will be reviewed and considered before submission to the U.S. Department of Labor, consistent with federal guidance. Where applicable, comments will be addressed and incorporated into the waiver request.

Documentation of public notice activities, comment periods, and responses will be maintained in accordance with state and federal record retention requirements.

(E) Collect and report information about waiver outcomes in the State's WIOA Annual Report.

The State will collect, track, and report information on waiver implementation and outcomes through established performance reporting and monitoring systems.

Waiver outcomes will be reported through:

- WIOA Annual Statewide Performance Report
- WIOA Section 116 performance indicators, including employment, earnings, credential attainment, and measurable skill gains
- Monitoring and oversight documentation, including programmatic and fiscal reviews

These data sources will be used to assess the effectiveness of the waiver in supporting system coordination, service delivery, and participant outcomes.

The waiver does not create additional federal reporting requirements beyond those established under WIOA.

These monitoring and reporting processes ensure ongoing accountability, transparency, and alignment with federal requirements throughout the waiver period.

(7) The most recent data available regarding the results and outcomes observed through implementation of the existing waiver, in cases where the State seeks renewal of a previously approved waiver.

Alaska has successfully operated under an approved Single Statewide Workforce Development Area waiver in prior program years. During the most recently completed program years, the State has maintained compliance with WIOA statutory and regulatory requirements while operating under this governance structure.

Available programmatic, fiscal, and performance data indicate that operation as a single statewide workforce development area has supported consistent performance accountability, equitable service access, and administrative efficiency.

Performance outcomes

During the prior waiver period, Alaska:

- Maintained performance across WIOA Section 116 primary indicators
- Sustained compliance with federal reporting requirements for WIOA Titles I–IV
- Monitored performance outcomes statewide and by geographic region

- Implemented corrective actions, where necessary, through established monitoring processes

No adverse impacts to performance, compliance, or service delivery were identified as a result of operating under the waiver.

Participation and Access

- Maintained statewide participation, including in rural and remote communities
- Ensured access for priority populations
- Enabled flexible allocation of resources to meet regional workforce needs

Employer Outcomes

- Sustained employer engagement across industry sectors
- Supported sector strategies and work-based learning initiatives
- Maintained alignment between workforce services and employer demand

Efficiency and Administrative Impact

- Reduced duplication of governance structures
- Streamlined administrative and reporting processes
- Strengthened fiscal oversight and accountability

Continuous Improvement

Lessons learned through implementation of the waiver include:

- Importance of clearly defined governance roles and responsibilities
- Ongoing monitoring of geographic equity in service delivery
- Strong stakeholder engagement across regions and populations
- Use of data-driven decision-making to inform policy and program improvements

Continued Relevance of the Waiver

Alaska's geographic scale, dispersed population centers, and administrative context continue to support the need for a single statewide workforce development area.

The waiver continues to support:

- Effective stewardship of WIOA funds

- Equitable access to workforce services across all regions
- Consistent statewide accountability and performance management

Conclusion

These results demonstrate that the waiver has been effective in maintaining performance, ensuring access, and supporting efficient administration. The State, therefore, requests continuation of the waiver for the PY 2026–2027 State Plan modification period.

VI(e)(1-7) – Waiver Requests

[\(e\) Waiver Requests \(optional\)](#). States wanting to request waivers as part of their Title I-B Operational Plan must include a waiver plan that includes the following information for each waiver requested:

Overview – Waiver Request

Alaska is requesting renewal of its previously approved waiver to operate as a single statewide workforce development area under WIOA Section 189(i)(3)(B).

This waiver allows the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) to function as both the State Workforce Development Board and Local Workforce Development Board, supporting a unified governance structure that enhances administrative efficiency, ensures consistent statewide service delivery, and improves access to workforce services across Alaska’s geographically dispersed and rural communities.

The waiver supports Alaska’s Workforce Future (AWF) framework and aligns with federal priorities related to system integration, employer engagement, and workforce system modernization.

Key Elements – Statewide Workforce Governance Waiver Framework

Alaska’s waiver request is based on the following key elements:

- Operation of a statewide local workforce development area under the approved waiver and WIOA §107(b).
- Designation of AWIB as both the State and Local Workforce Development Board
- Elimination of duplicative local governance structures to improve administrative efficiency
- Support for consistent statewide policy implementation and fiscal oversight
- Alignment of workforce strategies with employer demand and sector-based approaches
- Maintenance of equitable access to services across urban, rural, and remote communities
- Preservation of WIOA performance accountability under Section 116
- Use of data-driven monitoring and continuous improvement strategies
- Alignment with federal priorities, including TEGL 05-25 system modernization guidance

[\(1\) Identifies the statutory or regulatory requirements for which a waiver is requested and the goals that the State or local area, as appropriate, intends to achieve as a result of the waiver, and how those goals relate to the Unified or Combined State Plan;](#)

Pursuant to section 189(i)(3)(B) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the State of Alaska requests renewal of its previously approved waiver to operate as a single statewide workforce development area. The State is requesting continuation of existing waiver authority and is not seeking any expansion or modification of the previously approved waiver. This request is submitted as part of Alaska’s two-year State Plan modification for Program Years (PY) 2026–2027 under TEGL 07-25. The governance structure remains unchanged from the previously approved 2024–2027 State Plan framework.

Statutory and Regulatory Requirements

This waiver relates to the following statutory and regulatory requirements

- WIOA section 107(b) – Local workforce development board composition and functions
- 20 CFR §§ 679.210–679.240 and 679.270 – Local board designation, responsibilities, and related governance provisions
- WIOA section 189(i)(3)(B)

Under this waiver, the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) serves as both the State Workforce Development Board and the Local Workforce Development Board for the entire state. Alaska operates one statewide local workforce development area under a unified governance structure in which the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) performs both State and Local Workforce Development Board functions pursuant to the approved waiver.

This waiver is consistent with WIOA section 189(i)(3)(B) because it improves the statewide workforce development system, aligns with WIOA goals, and does not undermine worker protections, fiscal accountability, or performance requirements.

Operational Context and Need for the Waiver

Alaska's geographic scale, dispersed population centers, and limited administrative capacity in many rural and remote communities present structural challenges to operating multiple local workforce development areas.

Separate local governance entities would:

- Create duplicative administrative costs
- Fragment fiscal and staffing resources
- Impede consistent statewide policy implementation
- Introduce inequities in service capacity across regions

The single statewide structure addresses these constraints by consolidating governance functions while maintaining local engagement through:

- Geographic diversity in board membership
- Representation from business, labor, education, Tribal organizations, and local elected officials
- Ongoing outreach and stakeholder consultation across Alaska's economic regions

The waiver does not eliminate local input, reduce access to services, or alter participant eligibility. It ensures governance responsibilities are carried out in a manner that is operationally feasible, equitable, and fiscally responsible.

Goals of the Waiver

The goals of this waiver are to:

- Maintain administrative efficiency in a geographically large and sparsely populated state
- Ensure consistent statewide policy implementation and fiscal oversight
- Reduce duplicative governance structures that are not operationally sustainable in Alaska's regional context
- Support coordinated statewide planning, employer engagement, and sector strategies
- Maintain consistent access to workforce services across urban, rural, and remote communities
- Preserve unified performance accountability under WIOA section 116

Alignment with the State Plan and Federal Priorities

This waiver supports the strategic vision and goals outlined in Sections II(b) and II(c) of this State Plan and advances Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) framework.

The waiver aligns with federal priorities, including:

- Strengthening workforce system integration
- Enhancing employer engagement and sector partnerships
- Expanding access to services for underserved populations
- Supporting system modernization and data-informed decision-making

Alignment with U.S. Department of Labor priorities and expected outcomes is further described in Section 4 of this waiver request.

[\(2\) Describes the actions that the State or local area, as appropriate, has undertaken to remove State or local statutory or regulatory barriers;](#)

Before requesting renewal of this waiver, the State of Alaska conducted a comprehensive review of applicable statutes, administrative policies, governance structures, fiscal procedures, and service delivery models to identify any State or local barriers to implementation of the requested waiver.

This review confirmed that:

- Alaska statute authorizes the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) as the State Workforce Development Board
- The Governor has designated one statewide local workforce development area encompassing the entire State of Alaska.
- Administrative policies support centralized fiscal oversight, monitoring, and performance accountability
- Service delivery is coordinated statewide through Alaska Job Centers, partner agencies, and contracted providers
- No State-level statutory, regulatory, administrative, or fiscal barriers impede implementation of the statewide workforce governance structure supported by this waiver.

The State also evaluated whether alternative governance structures, including multiple local workforce development areas, could be implemented through State-level policy or administrative changes.

Based on this assessment, the State determined that establishing multiple local workforce development areas would not be operationally feasible due to geographic scale, dispersed population centers, administrative capacity constraints, and limited resources in rural and remote communities.

As a result of this review, the State determined that no additional State or local statutory or regulatory changes are necessary to support implementation of the requested waiver.

The remaining constraint is the federal statutory framework governing workforce area governance and local board functions, which cannot be modified through State action. Accordingly, a federal waiver is necessary to continue operating Alaska's single statewide workforce development area.

(3) Describes the goals of the waiver and the expected programmatic outcomes if the request is granted;

Continuation of this waiver is expected to support measurable improvements in system coordination, service consistency, and administrative efficiency. These outcomes are expected to be performance-neutral or performance-enhancing and aligned with Alaska's Workforce Future (AWF) framework and the strategic goals outlined in this State Plan.

Expected Programmatic Outcomes

If the waiver is granted, Alaska expects the following outcomes:

Stable or Improved Performance Outcomes

- Maintain or improve performance across the WIOA section 116 primary indicators of performance
- Ensure no adverse impact on performance outcomes resulting from the statewide governance structure

Increased Consistency in Service Delivery

- Ensure uniform eligibility determinations and policy implementation across all regions
- Reduce regional variability in program administration and service delivery

Sustained or Improved Access for Rural and Remote Communities

- Maintain equitable access to workforce services across geographic regions
- Increase participation among priority populations, including individuals in rural and remote areas

Administrative Efficiency and Reduced Duplication

- Streamline planning, reporting, and oversight processes
- Reduce administrative burden, costs, and delays associated with duplicative governance structures

Employer Engagement and Alignment

- Strengthen statewide sector strategies and industry partnerships
- Improve coordination of employer services and responsiveness to workforce needs

Measurement and Data Sources

Progress toward these outcomes will be measured using:

- AlaskaJobs system data
- WIOA section 116 performance reports
- Monitoring and compliance findings
- Fiscal oversight and program review reports

The waiver does not create new performance indicators or reporting requirements. Existing performance accountability systems will be used to assess outcomes and ensure continued program effectiveness.

Performance Neutrality Statement

The State does not anticipate adverse impacts on participant outcomes, employer engagement, fiscal integrity, or compliance resulting from this waiver.

The continuation of the statewide governance structure is expected to maintain or improve system performance while enhancing coordination, consistency, and access across Alaska's workforce system.

(4) Describes how the waiver will align with the Department's policy priorities, such as:

The continuation of Alaska's waiver to operate as a single statewide workforce development area aligns with U.S. Department of Labor priorities, including system modernization and the alignment principles outlined in TEGL 05-25.

This waiver supports federal policy priorities in the following areas:

Strengthening Workforce System Alignment and Integration

- Promotes coordination across WIOA core programs and partner programs within a unified governance structure
- Supports integrated service delivery through the Alaska Job Center Network

Enhancing Employer Engagement and Sector Strategies

- Enables consistent statewide implementation of sector-based workforce strategies
- Strengthens coordination of employer services across regions and industries

Expanding Access to Workforce Services

- Supports equitable access to services for individuals in rural and remote communities
- Reduces disparities in service availability across geographic regions

Improving Administrative Efficiency and Reducing Duplication

- Eliminates duplicative local governance structures
- Streamlines planning, reporting, and oversight functions

Advancing Data-Informed Decision-Making and Continuous Improvement

- Supports consistent statewide performance tracking and monitoring
- Enables use of data to inform policy, program design, and resource allocation

Supporting Job Quality and Career Pathways

- Promotes alignment of workforce services with in-demand industries and career pathways
- Supports participant progression to employment, retention, and advancement

Conclusion

By continuing this waiver, Alaska strengthens alignment with federal workforce priorities while maintaining a coordinated, efficient, and accessible workforce system that supports both participants and employers across the state.

(A) supporting employer engagement;

The continuation of Alaska's single statewide workforce development area strengthens employer engagement by ensuring that business representatives are consistently informed of statewide policy, planning, and investment decisions.

Operating under a single-board structure enables coordinated employer outreach, reduces fragmentation, and ensures that workforce strategies align with statewide labor market demand rather than with varying regional approaches.

This approach supports:

- Consistent employer engagement practices aligned with labor market demand
- Statewide sector strategies informed by industry needs
- Coordinated business services across workforce system partners
- Streamlined communication with employers through a unified workforce system
- Improved responsiveness to employer workforce needs across regions

Through this structure, Alaska can engage employers more effectively, align training investments with industry demand, and support job-driven workforce development strategies consistent with federal priorities.

(B) connecting education and training strategies;

The continuation of Alaska's single statewide workforce development area facilitates coordinated planning between workforce and education partners, supporting alignment across education, training, and employment systems.

This unified structure enables consistent implementation of career pathway strategies. It strengthens coordination among WIOA core programs, including Title I and Title II (Adult Education and Family Literacy Act), as well as secondary and postsecondary education partners.

The waiver supports the Department's emphasis on integrated education and workforce strategies while maintaining program-specific accountability, eligibility requirements, and funding structures.

This model enables:

- Consistent development and implementation of career pathways aligned with in-demand industries
- Alignment with career and technical education (CTE) and postsecondary training pathways
- Coordination with secondary, postsecondary, and adult education partners
- Integration of education and training through strategies such as Integrated Education and Training (IET), where appropriate
- Improved transitions from education to employment through coordinated service delivery

Through this approach, Alaska strengthens connections between education and workforce systems, supports skill development aligned with employer demand, and improves participant outcomes.

(C) supporting work-based learning;

The continuation of Alaska's single statewide workforce development area enables coordinated implementation of sector-based strategies and work-based learning approaches, including Registered Apprenticeship, on-the-job training (OJT), and other employer-connected training models.

Centralized governance and oversight support consistent standards for policy implementation, monitoring, and fiscal accountability across the state, ensuring that work-based learning opportunities are delivered in alignment with employer demand and workforce system priorities.

This structure advances:

- Expansion of work-based learning opportunities aligned with employer demand
- Consistent policy implementation for on-the-job training, Registered Apprenticeship, and other work-based learning models
- Coordination of training strategies across regions and partner programs
- Increased access to earn-and-learn opportunities for participants, including priority populations
- Strengthened employer partnerships through direct involvement in training and skill development

Through this approach, Alaska supports job-driven training strategies that connect participants to employment, enhance employer engagement, and improve workforce system outcomes consistent with federal priorities.

(D) improving job and career results, and

The continuation of Alaska's single statewide workforce development area supports improved job and career outcomes by maintaining unified performance accountability, consistent statewide oversight, and coordinated service delivery across programs and regions.

While the waiver does not alter negotiated performance levels or indicators under WIOA Section 116, it strengthens the governance structure necessary to support effective performance management, data-driven decision-making, and continuous improvement.

This approach supports:

- Consistent implementation of policies and service strategies that contribute to employment and earnings outcomes
- Standardized monitoring practices to ensure program quality and compliance
- Coordinated service delivery across urban, rural, and remote communities
- Improved alignment of training and employment services with in-demand industries
- Enhanced ability to track and improve outcomes related to employment, credential attainment, and retention

Through this structure, Alaska improves its ability to deliver effective workforce services, support participant success, and achieve strong job and career outcomes consistent with federal performance expectations.

(E) other guidance issued by the Department.

The continuation of Alaska's single statewide workforce development area aligns with federal priorities for system integration, continuous improvement, and workforce system modernization, as outlined in guidance issued by the U.S. Department of Labor, including TEGL 05-25.

This structure supports a coordinated and adaptable workforce system that is responsive to evolving federal guidance while maintaining accountability and program integrity.

Consistent with federal guidance, this approach supports:

- System modernization and operational efficiency across workforce programs

- Centralized oversight of data systems, performance reporting, and accountability processes
- Statewide policy alignment across core and partner programs
- Integration of services to improve customer experience and system effectiveness
- Flexible service delivery approaches suited to Alaska’s geographic and demographic realities

Through this structure, Alaska can implement federal guidance consistently, strengthen system performance, and support continuous improvement across the workforce development system.

(5) Describes the individuals affected by the waiver; and

The waiver affects individuals and employers served through Alaska’s statewide workforce development system.

The waiver does not change eligibility criteria, priority-of-service requirements, or access to services for any population.

Populations Affected

The following populations are served through the workforce system and are affected by the governance structure supported by this waiver:

- Individuals with barriers to employment
- Residents of rural and remote communities
- Alaska Native populations and tribal communities
- Youth, adults, and dislocated workers
- Participants in partner programs, including the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)
- Employers across Alaska’s industry sectors

No populations are excluded, restricted, or disadvantaged as a result of this waiver.

Expected Benefits

The waiver supports the following benefits for individuals and employers:

- Consistent statewide eligibility determination and service delivery
- Coordinated service delivery across workforce system partners
- Equitable access to services regardless of geographic location
- Reduced administrative fragmentation and duplication
- Improved alignment of services with employer workforce needs

Mitigation Strategies

Any potential reduction in localized governance is mitigated through:

- Diverse representation on the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB), including geographic and stakeholder diversity
- Ongoing regional stakeholder engagement and consultation
- Monitoring of participation, service delivery, and outcomes across geographic areas
- Transparent processes for requesting local area designation, consistent with WIOA requirements

The waiver does not alter eligibility requirements, priority of service, performance accountability, or nondiscrimination protections under WIOA Section 188 and 29 CFR Part 38.

Monitoring and oversight of impacts to these populations are further described in Section 6 of this waiver.

(6) Describes the processes used to:
(A) Monitor the progress in implementing the waiver;

The State will monitor implementation of the waiver through established programmatic, fiscal, and performance oversight processes designed to ensure compliance, consistency, and effectiveness across the statewide workforce system.

Monitoring activities include:

- Participant file reviews, including eligibility validation and documentation requirements
- Fiscal monitoring and subrecipient oversight to ensure compliance with federal and state requirements
- Performance dashboard analysis aligned with WIOA Section 116 indicators
- Data validation reviews to ensure the accuracy and integrity of reported outcomes
- Implementation of corrective action procedures, as necessary

These monitoring activities assess compliance with WIOA requirements, equitable access to services, consistency of service delivery across regions, and progress toward achieving program outcomes.

(B) Provide notice to any local board affected by the waiver;

Alaska does not have separate local workforce development boards. Under the approved waiver, the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) performs the functions of both the State Workforce Development Board and the Local Workforce Development Board for Alaska's statewide local workforce development area.

Accordingly, there are no separate local boards requiring notification. However, AWIB members are informed of waiver-related actions and decisions through established governance processes, including board meetings, committee discussions, and regular communications.

This approach ensures transparency, stakeholder awareness, and appropriate oversight consistent with WIOA requirements.

(C) Provide any local board affected by the waiver an opportunity to comment on the request;

Alaska does not have separate local workforce development boards. Under the approved waiver, the Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) performs the functions of both the State Workforce Development Board and the Local Workforce Development Board for Alaska's statewide local workforce development area.

AWIB members are provided the opportunity to review and comment on the waiver request through formal board meetings, committee discussions, and established governance procedures.

In addition, the process for requesting designation as a local workforce development area remains publicly available. It is administered in accordance with WIOA and 20 CFR § 679.640, ensuring that stakeholders can request local designation and provide input on the structure of the workforce system.

(D) Ensure meaningful public comment, including comments by business and organized labor, on the waiver.

The State of Alaska conducted a public comment period for the PY 2026–2027 WIOA State Plan modification, including all proposed waiver requests, in accordance with WIOA requirements. The proposed waiver request was made available for public review through the Alaska Workforce Investment Board website and other public-notice methods. Stakeholders, including business representatives, organized labor, workforce system partners, education providers, Tribal organizations, community-based organizations, and members of the public, were provided the opportunity to review and comment on the waiver request. Any comments received were reviewed and considered before final submission of the State Plan modification.

The State provided advance notice through established public-notice procedures and conducted targeted outreach to stakeholders, including business representatives, organized labor, workforce system partners, education providers, Tribal organizations, community-based organizations, and members of the public. The waiver request was made available through accessible formats and multiple channels to support broad statewide participation. Stakeholders were given sufficient time and multiple methods to submit comments.

All substantive comments received during the public comment period were reviewed and considered before submission to the U.S. Department of Labor, consistent with federal guidance. Where applicable, comments were addressed and incorporated into the waiver request.

Documentation of public-notice activities, comment periods, comments received, and responses will be maintained in accordance with state and federal record-retention requirements.

(E) Collect and report information about waiver outcomes in the State's WIOA Annual Report.

The State will collect, track, and report information on waiver implementation and outcomes through established performance reporting and monitoring systems.

Waiver outcomes will be reported through:

- WIOA Annual Statewide Performance Report
- WIOA Section 116 performance indicators, including employment, earnings, credential attainment, and measurable skill gains
- Monitoring and oversight documentation, including programmatic and fiscal reviews

These data sources will be used to assess the waiver's effectiveness in supporting system coordination, service delivery, and participant outcomes.

The waiver does not create additional federal reporting requirements beyond those established under WIOA. These monitoring and reporting processes ensure ongoing accountability, transparency, and alignment with federal requirements throughout the waiver period.

(7) The most recent data available regarding the results and outcomes observed through implementation of the existing waiver, in cases where the State seeks renewal of a previously approved waiver.

Alaska has successfully operated under an approved Single Statewide Workforce Development Area waiver in prior program years. During the most recently completed program years, the State has maintained compliance with WIOA statutory and regulatory requirements while operating under this governance structure.

Available programmatic, fiscal, and performance data indicate that operating as a single statewide workforce development area has supported consistent performance accountability, equitable access to services, and administrative efficiency.

Performance outcomes

During the prior waiver period, Alaska:

- Maintained performance across WIOA Section 116 primary indicators
- Sustained compliance with federal reporting requirements for WIOA Titles I–IV
- Monitored performance outcomes statewide and by geographic region
- Implemented corrective actions, where necessary, through established monitoring processes

No adverse impacts to performance, compliance, or service delivery were identified as a result of operating under the waiver.

Participation and Access

- Maintained statewide participation, including in rural and remote communities
- Ensured access for priority populations
- Enabled flexible allocation of resources to meet regional workforce needs

Employer Outcomes

- Sustained employer engagement across industry sectors
- Supported sector strategies and work-based learning initiatives
- Maintained alignment between workforce services and employer demand

Efficiency and Administrative Impact

- Reduced duplication of governance structures
- Streamlined administrative and reporting processes
- Strengthened fiscal oversight and accountability

Continuous Improvement

Lessons learned through implementation of the waiver include:

- Importance of clearly defined governance roles and responsibilities
- Ongoing monitoring of geographic equity in service delivery
- Strong stakeholder engagement across regions and populations
- Use of data-driven decision-making to inform policy and program improvements

Continued Relevance of the Waiver

Alaska's geographic scale, dispersed population centers, and administrative context continue to support the need for a single statewide workforce development area.

The waiver continues to support:

- Effective stewardship of WIOA funds
- Equitable access to workforce services across all regions
- Consistent statewide accountability and performance management

Conclusion

These results demonstrate that the waiver has been effective in maintaining performance, ensuring access, and supporting efficient administration. The State, therefore, requests continuation of the waiver for the PY 2026–2027 State Plan modification period.