



WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AGENCY

PROGRAM YEAR 2021

(JULY 1, 2020 – JUNE 30, 2021)

WIOA ANNUAL STATEWIDE

PERFORMANCE REPORT NARRATIVE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In comparison to other states, the CNMI experienced substantial affects from the COVID-19 pandemic during program year 2020. The CNMI's economy is heavily rooted in its tourism industry and faced significant challenges as flights from major markets ceased completely. This resulted in a significant decline in economic activity as major businesses and its subsidiaries closed down.

In keeping with the *Governor's strategy* to build economic resiliency and develop a skilled workforce, the CNMI State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) initiated the Business Needs Assessment Survey (BNA) to identify and establish the framework for addressing the workforce challenges as well as provide policy direction on the federal investments to meet the employment and training needs of jobseekers, workers, and businesses. As required in WIOA, the representation of the CNMI's WIOA Core Programs on the SWDB provides the opportunities for a coordinated and comprehensive service delivery system. Strategic initiatives are currently being developed to weather the effects of the pandemic and the impact on the workforce.

DOL Workforce Investment Agency is the designated entity that provides services under the Title I – Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act serving adults, dislocated workers, and youths; Apprenticeship State Expansion Grant 2019; and the National Dislocated Worker Grant in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite many challenges, the DOL Workforce Investment Agency is adept to the necessary flexibilities in service delivery for a response to a disaster. This report highlights activities that include:

- WIOA Career Services
- Implementation of the COVID-19 Dislocated Worker Grant
- Meaningful assistance to individuals filing Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) and Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC)
- Expansion of Registered Apprenticeship Programs.


WAIVER

Board Membership Requirements

A request to waive the membership requirements of the board was submitted to USDOL ETA as the CNMI was unable to comply with the mandates of WIOA for representation of the workforce. At the time and what remains, the CNMI was lacking an established labor organization and was in its early development stages of the Apprenticeship State Expansion grant.

On November 23, 2020, USDOL ETA approved the CNMI's request to waive the statutory requirement on the membership to the State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) at WIOA Section 101(b)(1)(c)(ii) and the corresponding regulation at 20 CFR 679.110(b)(3)(ii)(B).

The approval of the waiver allowed for the CNMI to have a compliant board to continue their work towards improving the workforce system.

<p>U.S. Department of Labor Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training Washington, D.C. 20210</p> <p>November 23, 2020</p> <p>The Honorable Ralph DLG. Torres Governor of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Caller Box 10007 Saipan, MP 96950</p> <p>Dear Governor Torres:</p> <p>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 September 16, 2020. This letter provides the Employment and Training Administration's (ETA) official response to your request and memorializes that the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (Commonwealth) will meet the outcomes and implement the measures identified in its plan to ensure accountability agreed to by the Commonwealth and ETA. This action is taken under the Secretary'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).</p> <p>Requested Waiver: The Commonwealth is requesting a waiver of the state workforce development board (SWDB) membership requirements at WIOA Section 101(b)(1)(c)(ii) and the corresponding regulations at 20 CFR 679.110(b)(3)(ii)(B).</p> <p>ETA Response: The Commonwealth is requesting a waiver of the SWDB membership requirements. Specifically, the Commonwealth is requesting one additional year to fill the apprenticeship program position. ETA reviewed the Commonwealth's waiver request and plan and has determined that the requirements requested to be waived are not currently feasible given the lack of apprenticeship programs in the Commonwealth. Therefore, ETA approves this waiver through September 30, 2021.</p> <p>The Commonwealth must report its waiver outcomes and implementation of the approved waiver 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. For technical assistance regarding apprenticeship programs, please contact ETA's Office of Apprenticeship at (202) 693-2796.</p>	<p>The Department proposed additional flexibility in its budgets for Fiscal Years 2018 through 2021 to give governors more decision-making authority to meet the workforce needs of their states. If you have questions, feel free to contact my office at (202) 693-2772.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p> John Pallasch Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training</p> <p>Enclosure</p> <p>cc: Vicky Benavente, Secretary, Department of Labor, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Nicholas Lalpuit, Dallas/San Francisco Regional Administrator, Employment and Training Administration Marian Esver, Federal Project Officer, Employment and Training Administration</p>
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EFFECTIVENESS IN SERVING EMPLOYERS

The DOL Workforce Investment Agency recognizes that employers are fundamental to the workforce system and finds it important to measure the effectiveness of our business engagement activities. In the program year, USDOL ETA provided technical assistance that led to the successful reporting of the CNMI's Title I Programs. Of the three (3) established approaches, the CNMI piloted the following:

- Repeat Business Customers (Percentage of repeat employers using services within the previous three years) – This approach measured the percentage of employers who receive services that use core program services more than once. It assesses employer satisfaction with the services provided by the core programs and become repeat customers along with the ability of the core programs business service delivery to develop and maintain strong relationships with employers over extended periods of time. In program year 2020, the CNMI's Repeat Customer Rate is 14.3%.
- Employer Penetration Rate (Percentage of employers using services out of all employers in the State) – This approach measures the percentage of employers that use the core programs from all registered businesses in the CNMI. The results provide insights on the core programs ability to serve a large portion of employers and adequately meet their workforce needs. In program year 2020, the CNMI's Employer Penetration Rate was 11.1%

EVALUATION AND RESEARCH

Current or Planned Evaluation

In the year, the CNMI participated in numerous technical assistances dialogs with USDOL ETA Performance Specialist which focused on the requirements in WIOA to conduct an annual evaluation. As a result, a Request for Proposal (RFP) is being drafted to conduct a comparison study to assess the effectiveness of the services across programs.

Coordination with WIOA Core Partners

As part of the ongoing technical assistance, the CNMI's Core Programs was highly encouraged to participate in the upcoming Evaluation Peer Learning Cohort (EvalPLC). The CNMI's EvalPLC team submitted an application and selected to participate in the 2021-2022 cohort.

The team represents the WIOA Core Programs: Title I – DOL Workforce Investment Agency, Title II – NMC Adult Basic Education, and Title IV – Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. Another participating partner is the Title V program under the Office of Aging. Representatives include individuals with decision making authority along with key staff involved in data and reporting.

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Business Needs Assessment Survey (BNA)

In response to the economic challenges plagued by the COVID-19 pandemic, the SWDB determined that the BNA survey was necessary to better understand the businesses and nonprofits' current and projected needs so that the Workforce Investment Agency in consultation with the SWDB may align strategies to support the training, employment, and retention of employees in the CNMI. In conjunction with Max Impacts, a survey for review was drafted and approved by the CNMI DOL WIA and the SWDB and was made into a paper and online version. Through listservs, the online link was then distributed individually to over 100 business contacts within the Saipan Chamber of Commerce and Society for Human Resources (SHRM) as well as the Marianas Variety and Saipan Tribune. Overall, the survey received a total of 109 individual responses. See Attachment I to review full BNA.

With the total 109 individual responses, there were 17 different industries with top industries including Other Services (except public administration) (17%); Accommodation and Food Services (13%); Retail Trade (11%); Construction (11%); and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (9%). There were 76% of respondents that reported they had less than 30 employees (CNMI-based and indirect hires) and only 11% that reported employing over five indirect hires or those contracted through manpower agencies. Through the survey, a "CNMI-based Worker" is identified as a person who is 1) a U.S. qualified worker (e.g., U.S Citizen, Green Card Holder), and 2) when the employer was conducting the hiring process, the person was living in the CNMI. According to the survey, 101 respondents answered the questions and of that, 45% reported that they only employed CNMI-based workers. Seventy-three percent (73%) of respondents stated that at least 60% of their staff were CNMI-based and only 3% reported that over 80% of their staff were non-CNMI-based. Between August 2019 and August 2021, respondents were asked to identify how their operations and staffing has changed within the timeframe and 32% responded with "No Reduction", 33% responded with "Minimal Reduction", 30% with "Large Reduction." Five percent (5%) of respondents were "Temporarily Closed" and no respondents stated they were "Permanently Closed."

Recommendations based on data from the survey is that the SWDB could consider compensating employers for hours spent during in-house training, of which was the top response at (35%). The most significant barrier to have

employees participate in trainings is the “cost to participate” (52%) or the “time away from work” (52%). Specialized training for soft skills, including customer service and workplace responsibility is much needed as well. The top response from the survey showed that customer service (45%) and management (28%) are the top trainings needed. The top three traits that employers look for are “reliability,” “work ethics,” and “motivation to work.” Collaboration with the Public School System (PSS) to increase soft-skills programming is also recommended. Also, there is a growing need for trades training. The second highest numbers of job vacancies were related to Construction or Architecture.

HireMarianas Customer Survey

WIOA customers that utilize the state workforce management information system, HireMarianas, are able to access a survey to provide customer feedback. Of those that responded to the survey, eighty-one percent (81%) used the system to file for unemployment benefits, 10.2% for other reasons, and 5.6% for job search.

Indicate the primary purpose for which you will be using this information		
Answer	Number of Times Answered	Percent of Times Answered
Job Search	87	5.6 %
Filing for Unemployment	1269	81.9 %
Career planning/Occupational Research	7	0.5 %
Locate education or training providers	3	0.2 %
Find employer contact information	8	0.5 %
Research/Reports	2	0.1 %
Planning/Policy making	1	0.1 %
Just looking around	7	0.5 %
Employer looking for candidates	8	0.5 %
Other	158	10.2 %
Total: 1550		

PROGRESS TOWARDS STRATEGIC VISION AND GOALS

Despite the extraordinary challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, the CNMI continues to strategize on innovative approaches that align to the strategic vision of the CNMI's workforce development system to integrate a seamless workforce development system that meets the needs of employers, job seekers, workers, and youths in order to supply quality employees for the dynamic economy of the CNMI.

Eligible Training Provider List

In line with the territories initiative to integrate and streamline its service delivery system, the SWDB established the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). This provided eligible participants seeking job training a one stop in skill development and enhancement towards a career pathway that match their individual needs. The ETPL offers certificate and degree programs in hospitality, allied health occupations, business, education, criminal justice, and more. The SWDB continuously seeks to expand the programs of study on the ETPL to align with demand driven occupations.

Business Engagement

WIOA puts greater emphasis on engaging employers as partners to drive better outcomes for both job seekers and businesses. The CNMI recognizes the critical role employers play in the service delivery design of the in all of its programs and takes a proactive approach towards the continuous improvement to attract and retain partnerships with the business community, especially the untapped industry sectors.

Career Services

The provisions of WIOA Career Services for adults, dislocated workers, and youths remains a top priority. Service delivery shifted to virtual or appointment basis to comply with the COVID-19 guidelines of the CNMI's Governor Torres COVID-19 Task Force.

In the program year, 241 participants received career services (114 Adults, 59 Youths, and 68 Dislocated Workers), a 72% decrease compared to the previous year. The decline in enrollments is directly attributed to the pandemic and the impacts to the economy. While this may seem as an opportunity for career exploration and growth, individuals were focused on seeking assistance to file unemployment claims for PUA/FPUC benefits.

Workplace Success Training

The DOL Workforce Investment Agency maintains its partnership with the NMC Adult Basic Education (NMC ABE) to leverage resources towards a high school equivalency diploma, literacy assessment (CASAS) and the Workplace Success Training. Participants identified as new entrants, long term unemployed, in transitional jobs, or self-identified as requiring soft skills are referred to our partners at NMC ABE for inclusion. At the successful completion of training, participants receive a Certificate of Completion of 12 hours of training in: O'Net Career Exploration & Career Planning; Working with Other & Meeting Workplace Expectation; Getting Ahead & Resume Building; and Managing Yourself & Interview Etiquette.

Professional Development

Professional development is regarded as a critical component in meeting the hallmarks of WIOA to be accountable of the local area, drive workforce solutions for businesses and customers, excel in service delivery and strive towards continuous improvements towards workforce development and economic growth. As such, staff participated in a three (3) day training. Topics included:

- Emotional Intelligence
- Teamwork-Team Building
- Workplace Ethics
- Time Management
- WIOA Performance Measures
- Service Delivery & Case Management

The last day was focused on learning about the services available from our partner agencies. It provided a space for staff to learn about their respective services, foster meaningful partnerships, coordinate and leverage resources without duplicating efforts to address the needs of mutual customers.



SECTOR STRATEGIES AND CAREER PATHWAYS

The focus remains at prioritizing employment and training services to fill the pipeline of the projected skills gaps despite the looming threat of complete phase-out of the Commonwealth only Worker Program or CW-1 (US PL 110-229). Data collected by the Department of Labor Employment Services Division reports the top 10 jobs posted and the number of vacancies.

Top 10 JVA Posted and No. of Openings



In the program year, customized work-based training, occupational training with an approved ETPL, and Registered Apprenticeship Programs, are aligned with the top 10 demand driven occupations listed in the chart.

At the end of the program year, the DOL Workforce Investment Agency entered into a partnership with the CNMI's Public School System Career Technical Education Program for the Summer Enrichment College and Career Pathway initiative. The program provides high school students career exploration opportunities in demand-driven occupations in Construction, Nursing, Education, and Entrepreneurship.

PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY

PY2020 Negotiated Performance Targets

In accordance with WIOA, the state plan includes the expected performance levels for each of the prescribed indicators. As a recipient of Title I formula funds, the CNMI Workforce Investment Agency negotiated with USDOL ETA the targets across all titles as displayed in the table below that include the actual outcomes achieved. Attachment II provides a full analysis of the annual performance results for Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs.

WIOA Indicators of Performance

Program Year 2020

	Performance Measure	Program Year 2020	
Program	Employment (2 nd Qtr after Exit)	Negotiated Target	Actual Performance
Title I Adult		50.0%	39.9%
Title I Dislocated Worker		50.0%	40.5%
Title I Youth		50.0%	39.3%
Title I Adult	Employment (4 th Qtr after Exit)	50.0%	30.0%
Title I Dislocated Worker		50.0%	29.0%
Title I Youth		50.0%	40.9%
Title I Adult	Median Earnings	\$3,200	\$4,160
Title I Dislocated Worker		\$3,200	\$4,680
Title I Youth		\$3,000	\$5,002
Title I Adult	Credential Attainment Rate	66.5%	85.7%
Title I Dislocated Worker		66.5%	33.3%
Title I Youth		66.0%	55.6%
Title I Adult	Measurable Skill Gains	50.0%	66.7%
Title I Dislocated Worker		50.0%	100.0%
Title I Youth		50.0%	72.3%

Factors that Affect Performance

The COVID-19 pandemic contributed greatly to the deficits to meet our targets in the Employment 2nd and 4th quarters after exit measures. Our primary economic driver collapsed and its ripple effects forced private and public entities to either impose a reduction in force, temporary closure, or in the worst-case scenario, shut their doors permanently.

Common Exit

During the program year, the program exit policy was updated and approved by the CNMI's SWDB to include the Common Exit Policy for participants enrolled in multiple programs, specifically those administered by the DOL Workforce Investment Agency, such as the WIOA Title I (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs) and the programs under the National Dislocated Worker grants. Through consultation with USDOL ETA Performance Specialist and in line with USDOL ETA guidance's at TEGL's 10-16, Change 1; 19-16; and 21-16, enrolled and receiving concurrent services are subject to Common Exit Policy. A copy of the revised policy is included in this report as Attachment III.

Data Validation

In a series of technical assistance with USDOL ETA Performance Specialist, the CNMI's Data Validation policy was revised to satisfy the requirements in USDOL TEGL's 23-19 and 07-18 (see Attachment IV). As stated in the policy, Data validation is a series of internal controls or quality assurances techniques established to verify the accuracy, validity, and reliability of data. The policy is established to provide program staff guidelines to ensure that all program data are consistent and accurately reflect the individual data elements and the performance outcomes of WIOA core programs, National Dislocated Worker Grants, and the Apprenticeship State Expansion Grant. As such, key program staff of the DOL Workforce Investment Agency, are required to:

- Verify that the performance data reported by the State is valid, accurate, reliable, and comparable across programs;
- Identify anomalies in the data and resolve issues that may cause inaccurate reporting;
- Outline source documentation required for common data elements; and
- Improve program performance accountability through the results of data validation efforts.

The preliminary policy was implemented in the program year. Designated program staff conducted data validation on 10% of the active and exited records that was randomly selected.

STATEWIDE ACTIVITIES

As allowed in WIOA, statewide funds were utilized to support the administration of workforce investment activities by the CNMI's State Workforce Development Board and the DOL Workforce Investment Agency. These include a multitude of customized employment and training activities.

In the quarter, the following statewide activities occurred:

- Marketing and Outreach
 - SWDB/DOL Virtual Business Seminar



- Northern Marianas College Virtual Career Fair
- DNP 2021 Developmental Disabilities Month
- Disability Network Partner (DNP) Village Outreach



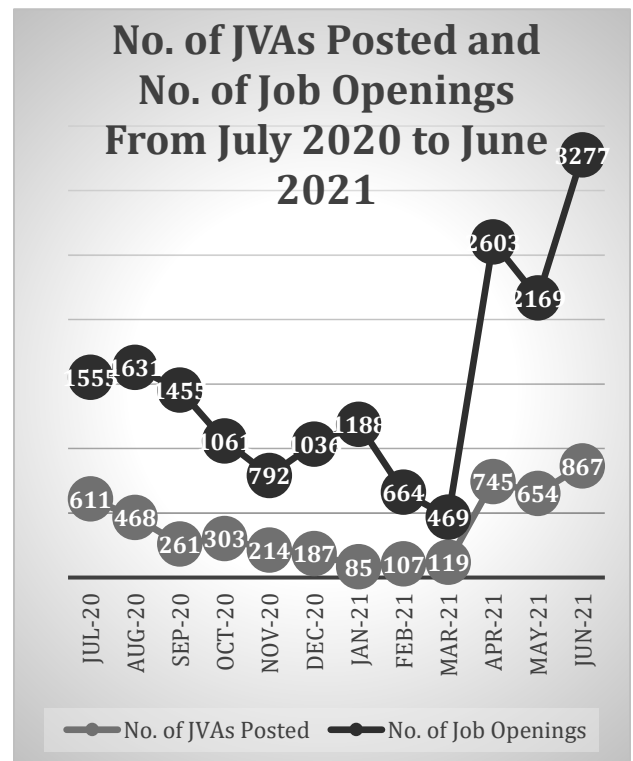
○ DOL Rota Career Connect Fair



- SWDB Business Needs Assessment Survey (BNA): Employer focused survey to gauge customer satisfaction and current needs.
- Summer Boot Camp: In-school and out-of-school youths CNMI wide engaged in an articulated culmination of education, training, and support services focused in demand driven sectors such as Construction, Nursing, Education and Entrepreneurship.

Rapid Response

In the program year, there was increased need for rapid response and layoff aversion services resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The CNMI's primary economic driver, Tourism, collapsed as the CNMI closed its borders leading to the displacement of thousands of workers. This disrupted the DOL Workforce Investment Agency attempt to deliver rapid response activities as the nation transitioned into a virtual environment. In an effort to connect affected workers with career services to reemploy or reskill in new occupations, the virtual Business Seminar was initiated. The seminar provided businesses and jobseekers labor market information to include employment and training opportunities supported by Title I and Apprenticeship. PUA/FPUC was the highlight of the event.



Data collected by the CNMI's Department of Labor Employment Services shows a drastic decline in job posting and availability in the 3rd quarter then increased in the 4th quarter.

NATIONAL DISLOCATED WORKER GRANT

DOL Workforce Investment Agency received an award of \$1.5 million to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. The grant provides support to the CNMI's COVID-19 Task Force through temporary disaster-relief jobs. Grant participants are co-enrolled in WIOA Title I programs for career and training and support services.

In the program year, sixty-two (62) participants were in a disaster-relief activity. Thirty-nine (39) participants completed a temporary disaster-relief employment. Of the thirty-nine (39), there were thirty-one (31) participants that gained employment or 79% at program exit.

Kanua Resort, a former resort hotel, is now the government's quarantine facility and alternative care site. All inbound passengers are required to quarantine at this site.



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The DOL Workforce Investment Agency received extensive technical assistance from USDOL ETA to ensure compliance, accountability, and transparency of the federal awards. Technical assistance is ongoing for the provisions of programmatic policies and procedures and fiscal management.



PROMISING PRACTICES, LESSONS LEARNED, AND SUCCESS STORIES

Promising Practices

Integral to addressing the needs of employers and jobseekers with barriers to employment, is cross agency collaboration. In the program year, the DOL Workforce Investment Agency engaged with community partners to strengthen, align, and leverage resources such as the Public School System (PSS), Adult Basic Education (NMC ABE), Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), the Disability Network Partners (DNP), Division of Youth Services (DYS), Northern Marianas College (NMC), Northern Marianas Technical Institute (NMTech), Veteran's Affairs Office (VA), Island Training Solutions (ITS), Guam Marianas Training Center (GMTC), Apprenticeship State Expansion 2019 (ASE), State Apprenticeship Expansion 2020 (SAE) private, public, and non-profit employers, and more.

Lessons Learned

While the COVID-19 challenged the many facets of the CNMI's workforce system, the experiences provided opportunities for improvements. The profound technical assistance trainings from USDOL ETA drove necessary policy changes that corroborate with the federal mandates thus enhancing service delivery.

Success Stories

PROVIDER

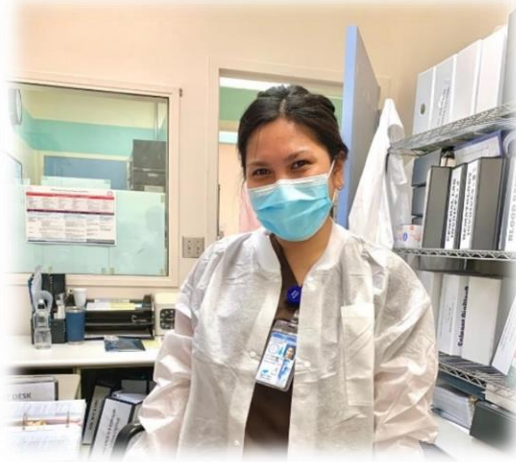
Latte Built 24 Hour Fitness officially opened its doors on January 2016. Mr. Derek Cutting the Owner and Fitness Coach first heard about WIA through neighbors of his first location. A second location was built where Derek needed staff. Per Derek, "WIA is a great win-win-win program! We actually pre-interview a pre-qualified person who has requested to work for us. If we feel based on those couple interviews, they would be a good fit, the business gets to 'test the waters' with a new potential employee by training them to our standards ... Afterwards, the business can fully hire the



trainee and they already know their responsibilities as well as the technical parts to the position.” Latte Built supportively has taken on five participants over the years and has even inspired a trainee to compete in a recent Body Building competition. Lastly, he shared, “I always recommend WIA to friends who are starting businesses.” Latte Built with its owner Derek has serviced community in more ways than one and we are elated to continue such a partnership.

NDWG COVID-19

Ms. Julie Ann Cayubit’s employment in 2020 was adversely affected by the ripple effects of COVID-19 Pandemic. Her hours were reduced and eventually dislocated. She was a single mom with 7-month-old baby residing with her mother. During assessment and planning it was found that she had numerous transferrable skills and a great temporary fit would be with the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC) as a Security/Screeners for the COVID-19 Taskforce. She eventually resigned from this post only after learning she was hired permanently. Here is her



story,

I heard about WIA from online platforms. Before I found out about WIA the work that I have been doing was very limited and minimum wage, which was hard because I had to pay my own school at that time. WIA became my stepping stone to improving my skills and experience because of the program they are offering to the community. If not for WIA I would still be working with my minimum wage and struggling to keep up with my payments. I would refer WIA to my friends and families to help them get better opportunities. I am currently working as Phlebotomist in CHCC LABORATORY. I get to work with the doctors and nurses that enhances my skill. I am living in a very affordable house and paying my bills on time. After being hired in CHCC I crave more knowledge and inspired to go back to school and continue my ASN. Always grateful for you [WIA].

Although the lab in CHCC is busy these days with COVID-19 testing, you can expect to see Julie report to work. Her patience and tenacity to keep one foot in front of the other is a great display of strength and hope. The National Dislocated Worker Program has provided people like Julie a second chance to survive and thrive in spite of the challenges of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

WIOA Out-of-School Youth

Ms. Lorenza Duenas initially heard of WIA while attending Kagman High School but was not able to participate in the elective through Cooperative learning Opportunity. After graduating from High School, she was advised by her parents to avail of training through DOL WIA. Because of her perseverance, she was able to provide all necessary documents and be determined eligible for services. Her caseworker had worked with her to determine her objectives, goals and build a strong Individual Employment plan. Additionally, through assessment, it was discovered that she would need to build some work



experience. With careful planning and support from WIA she was able to get placement at Department of Fish & Wildlife. She admitted being “nervous” at first “thinking I [Lorenza] was going to be at the dock and under the sun.” She eventually learned that there was more to her position as an Administrative Assistant Trainee. In the six (6) months training she shared she had learned and become skilled with the fishing & hunting permitting process, purchase & acquisitions, processing travel authorizations, and administrative support to name a few. She confidently shared, “I am your go-to for permitting.” It came with great delight, when WIA heard she would be taken on permanently as a Clerk. The transition was seamless and now you can find Lorenza at both the dock when needed or at the DFW Building in Puerto Rico. She’s thankful for her parent’s advice and the opportunity that WIA has provided her. She has purchased her own new car which has given her more independence and capability to be self-reliant.

CHALLENGES

COVID-19 Pandemic

Echoed throughout the report are the many challenges of COVID-19 that wrought the delivery of workforce investment activities that resulted in a drop in enrollment and spending. In PY2020, enrollments dropped 72% as compared to PY2019. As states and territories focus their efforts on reviving the economy, funding challenges may arise as the demand for services increase in the upcoming program years.

Integrated MIS Across WIOA Core Programs

The requirements in WIOA to develop an integrated management information system across the required core partners has presented challenges with the CNMI's Core Programs (Titles I, II, and VI). At present, reports are submitted on separate system. While the only joint performance measure in WIOA is effectiveness in serving employers, the directives from the federal agencies differ.

Another challenge is funding. Awards amongst the core partners vary making it difficult to meet the cost allocation plan to procure a longitudinal system that meets the needs of the core partners.



**A COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE
CNMI STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD (SWDB)
AND THE CNMI DEPARTMENT OF LABOR (DOL)
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AGENCY (WIA) DIVISION**

CNMI

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

2021 BUSINESS NEEDS ASSESSMENT

SEPT. 30TH, 2021

**AS PREPARED BY MAXINE LASZLO, MPA
MAX IMPACTS: MAXINE LASZLO CONSULTING**



Executive Summary

Over the last five (5) years, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) has experienced several external shocks impacting the economies of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. Since Super Typhoon Soudelor in 2015, followed by the rise and decline of the Gaming Industry, Typhoon Mangkhut and Super Typhoon Yutu in 2018, to now the current response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the public and private sectors have been forced to adapt to survive and maintain their operations.

The CNMI workforce has experienced unanticipated waves of opportunities and calamities due to the external shocks, and for this reason, the CNMI State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) and the CNMI Department of Labor (DOL) Workforce Investment Agency (WIA) Division administered the 2021 Business Needs Assessment (BNA) to determine the current and future needs of the CNMI private sector.

Despite the many external impacts, the 2021 BNA responses reflected the general expectations of the SWDB and DOL WIA. Employers continued to report that reliability, work ethics, and motivation to work were the most essential qualities in an employee, ranking higher than educational or work experiences. With COVID-19, staffing reductions, and the availability of a local workforce, most employers reported at least 80% of their workforce are CNMI-based workers. Employers expressed that their entities needed training, varying from soft skills to technical skills. Employers who responded are planning for expansion over the next five years, with their rate of growth dependent on the resumption of tourism operations.

Despite the economic uncertainty in the CNMI, there are concrete recommendations that would allow the SWDB and DOL WIA to continue to respond to the private sector training needs. These training needs include prioritizing soft skills training at all ages and education levels; in-house training opportunities; management training; and technical and trades education. Employers are optimistic in their future plans, and the SWDB and DOL WIA are equipped to meet their needs through the continuation and investment in core WIOA-funded partners, local educational institutions, and specialized training affiliates.

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Introduction

The CNMI Department of Labor Workforce Investment Agency (DOL WIA) and the CNMI State Workforce Development Board (SWDB) worked with Max Impacts: Maxine Laszlo Consulting (Max Impacts) to seek input from the CNMI private sector through the 2021 Business Needs Assessment (BNA). The purpose of the BNA was to better understand businesses and nonprofits' current and projected needs so that WIA and the SWDB can support the training, employment, and retention of employees in the CNMI.

Methodology

The CNMI DOL WIA and the SWDB worked with Max Impacts to share their vision and goals for the 2021 BNA. Max Impacts then drafted a survey for review by the CNMI DOL WIA and SWDB, and after the survey questions were approved, the survey was made into a paper and online version. Links to the online were distributed individually to over 100 business contacts, through listservs within the Saipan Chamber of Commerce and Society for Human Resources (SHRM), and through the Marianas Variety and Saipan Tribune. In total, the survey received 109 individual responses.

Findings

All questions and the summary of their responses can be found in Appendix A (see Page 13).

Demographics of Company Respondents of Survey

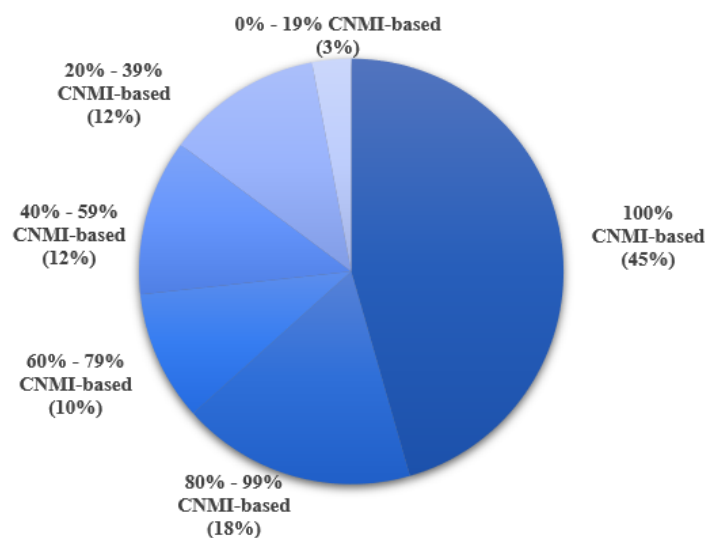
One-hundred and nine (109) survey respondents represented seventeen (17) different industries, with **top industries including Other Services (except public administration) (17%); Accommodation and Food Services (13%); Retail Trade (11%); Construction (11%); and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (9%).**

Seventy-six percent (76%) of respondents had less than 30 employees (CNMI-based and indirect hires). Only eleven percent (11%) reported employing over five (5) indirect hires or those contracted through manpower agencies.

When asked where employers primarily employed individuals, ninety percent (90%) of respondents stated **Saipan**, seven percent (7%) said **Tinian**, and three percent (3%) stated **Rota**.

Lastly, respondents were asked to consider how many CNMI-based Workers they employed as compared to non-CNMI-based Workers. The survey identified a "CNMI-based Worker" as a person who was 1) a U.S. qualified worker (e.g., U.S. Citizen, Green Card Holder), and 2) when the employer was conducting the hiring process, the person was living in the CNMI. One hundred and one (101) respondents answered the question, and of the respondents, forty-five percent (45%) reported they **only employed CNMI-based workers**. Seventy-three percent (73%) of respondents stated that that **at least sixty percent (60%) of their staff were CNMI-based**, and only three percent (3%) reported that **over eighty percent (80%) of their staff were non-CNMI-based**.

FIGURE 1: PERCENTAGE OF EMPLOYEES WHO ARE "CNMI-BASED" WORKERS (N=101)



Findings Regarding Companies' Impact from COVID-19

Respondents were asked to identify how their operations and staffing had changed between August 2019 and August 2021.

- In terms of their overall operations, **responses were split nearly between “No Reduction” (32%), “Minimal Reduction” (33%), and “Large Reduction” (30%).** Only five percent (5%) of respondents were “Temporarily Closed,” and no respondents of the survey identified as being “Permanently Closed.”
- In terms of staffing, **forty-four percent (44%) had “No Staffing Reduction,” and thirty-two percent (32%) had reduced staff by a quarter or less (1% - 25%).** Of all respondents, seven percent (7%) reduced their staffing by over seventy-five percent (75%).

Respondents were also asked to name their top three (3) concerns regarding their recovery from COVID-19. Top-ranking concerns included **“Future COVID-19 Outbreaks” (53%), “Date to Resume Tourism Operations (42%), “Local Recession” (39%), and “Rehiring, Replacing, and Retaining Workforce” (32%).**

FIGURE 2: TOP EMPLOYERS CONCERNS REGARDING THEIR RECOVER FROM COVID-19 (N=109)

Top Employer Concerns Regarding Recovery from COVID-19	Percentage of Respondents
Future COVID-19 Outbreaks	53%
Date to resume tourism operations	42%
Local recession	39%
Rehiring, replacing, and retaining workforce	32%
Access to capital to bridge financial loss	23%
Global recession	23%
Decreased consumer confidence and buying power	20%
Domestic or international supply-chain changes	20%
An exodus of the CNMI-based workforce	19%
Going out of business	11%
International trade or political unrest	4%
Other: USCIS-related and number of qualified U.S. Workers	2%
Other: Economic Uncertainty	1%
Other: Delayed payments from clients	1%
Other: None listed	1%

Findings Regarding Companies' Current Employment Landscape

Employers were asked to consider their current employment landscape between March 2020 through August 2021. During that period, forty-seven percent (**47%**) of respondents had hired a **CNMI-based worker(s)**, six percent (**6%**) had hired a **non-CNMI based worker(s)**, and eight percent (**8%**) had hired **both CNMI-based and non-CNMI-based workers**. Another ten percent (10%) had tried to hire staff and were unsuccessful.

When asked about their top three (3) challenges in hiring new CNMI-based workers, employers' highest reported responses indicated that **applicants lacked work experience (45%)**, **lacked employable skills (39%)**, and **lacked technical skills (31%)**. Additional reasons included a **low number of applicants (22%)**, **applicants lacking soft skills (15%)**, and **unemployment benefits (15%)**.

Employers were asked to consider the top three (3) character trainings or skills they value in an employee. An overwhelming majority identified **“reliability” as their top character trait (69%)**. Following top traits included other soft skills such as **“work ethics” (49%)**, **“motivation to work” (42%)**, and **“professionalism” (28%)**, then followed by hard skills such as **“work experience” (27%)** and **“technical or specific occupational skills” (26%)**.

Respondents were asked questions on the percent of CNMI-based applicants for jobs at their company. In considering qualities employers either “agreed” or “strongly agreed” to, they identified the following:

- Eighty percent (80%) believed they had the **proper U.S. immigration status** for the open position,
- Seventy-four percent (74%) believed CNMI-based workers possessed the **basic skills** for the job in which they were applying for,
- Sixty-eight percent (68%) believed they had the necessary **occupational or technical skills**,
- Sixty-five percent (65%) believed they had the necessary **soft skills**, and
- Sixty-four percent (64%) believed they possessed **all requirements** for the job.

The results showed that over one-third (1/3) of employers identified that they were “Neutral,” “Disagreed,” or “Strongly disagreed” that applicants had the soft skills or all of the requirements needed to perform the position in which they were applying.

FIGURE 3: EMPLOYERS PERCEPTIONS OF CNMI-BASED APPLICANTS “READINESS” WHEN APPLYING FOR JOBS (N VARIES)

Perception on CNMI Worker Applicants	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Number of respondents
Applicants possess all requirements for the job	18%	46%	22%	12%	2%	106
Applicants possess the basic skills required for the job	28%	46%	19%	7%	0%	107
Applicants possess the soft skills required for the job	15%	50%	23%	11%	1%	105
Applicants possess the occupational/technical skills required for the job	22%	46%	15%	12%	5%	105
Applicants possess the proper U.S. immigration status for the job	41%	39%	17%	4%	0%	106

When asked about **how employers recruit** employees, the majority stated **either via CNMI DOL Job Vacancy Announcement (JVA) listings (64%) or word of mouth (63%)**. Other top ways included social media (32%), local newspapers (24%), or the company website (22%).

Employers were asked to identify what, in their opinion, was the **most effective way to address CNMI-based Workers' skill gaps within their entity**. Responses were varied and included in-house training (35%), specialized training providers (24%), trade school (16%), college (10%), seminars/workshops (8%), or self-study or online training (6%).

Lastly, employers were asked to identify their **top three (3) current workforce challenges**. The majority of respondents identified the following reasons: **“Quality employees looking to move off-island for other opportunities” (65%)**, **“Needing to revise pay scales and benefits to retain workers” (60%)**; and **“Needing to increase training due to decreased skillsets” (52%)**.

Findings Regarding Companies' Current Vacancies

All employers were asked to identify their current vacancies in August 2021. Of the one-hundred and nine (109) respondents, there were 280 current vacancies. Vacancies were then compared to the respondents' business industry. **Industries with the most vacancies included Accommodation and Food Services (42%); Construction (15%); Other Services (except public administration) (13%); Retail Trade (9%); and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (5%)**. Industries with the lowest number of private sector vacancies with less than 1% of vacancies included Health Care and Social Assistance; Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction; Arts Entertainment and Recreation; Educational Services; and Transportation and Warehouse.

FIGURE 4: TOP FIVE (5) INDUSTRIES WITH VACANCIES IN AUGUST 2021

Respondent Industry	Number of Vacancies	Percentage of Vacancies
Accommodation and Food Services	118	42%
Construction	41	15%
Other Services (Except Public Administration)	37	13%
Retail Trade	24	9%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	14	5%

FIGURE 5: BOTTOM FIVE (5) INDUSTRIES WITH VACANCIES IN AUGUST 2021

Respondent Industry	Number of Vacancies	Percentage of Vacancies
Health Care and Social Assistance	1	0%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	1	0%
Arts Entertainment, and Recreation	0	0%
Educational Services	0	0%
Transportation and Warehouse	0	0%

Employers were then asked to identify, across career categories, what vacancies they had open in August of 2021. Top career categories included Hospitality and Tourism (35%); Architecture and Construction (21%); Agriculture, Food, & Natural Resources (14%); Business Management and Administration (9%); and Finance (7%).

FIGURE 6: CURRENT VACANCIES IN AUGUST 2021 BY CAREER CATEGORIES (N=319)

Career Categories	Percentage of current vacancies
Hospitality and Tourism	35%
Architecture and Construction	21%
Agriculture, Food, & Natural Resources	14%
Business Management and Administration	9%
Finance	7%
Arts, Audio/Video Technology, and Communication	3%
Law, Public Safety, Corrections, & Security	3%
Manufacturing	3%
Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics	1%
Transportation, Distribution, & Logistics	1%
Human Services	1%
Information Technology	1%
Education and Training	1%
Health Services	0%

When asked where the current vacancies were located, eighty-nine percent (89%) of vacancies were on Saipan, ten percent (10%) were on Tinian, and one percent (1%) were on Rota.

Employers were asked to state why they had a vacancy for the position they were trying to hire. Top reasons included “rehiring for a position that was downsized due to COVID-19 (43%), permanent business growth/expansion (23%), replacing a worker who had left but had not retired (19%), or replacing a worker who did not renew U.S. immigration status (9%).

For most vacant positions, only a high school education or GED was required (63%). Another ten percent (10%) had no specific education requirement. This means that only approximately one-fourth of all positions required post-high school education, including vocational or technical education (14%), Associates Degree (4%), Undergraduate Degree (7%), or Postgraduate Degree (2%). In terms of experience, eighty-six percent (86%) of all open vacancies required two years of experience or less, and very few required more than five years of experience (7%).

Findings Regarding Companies' Current Training Needs

Employers were asked to identify their most critical training needs. The top five categories of trainings included customer service (45%), management (28%), trades (28%), sales (25%), and accounting (16%). When asked what factors most impacted employees' participation in training programs, the majority shared their reasons: The cost to participate (52%) or the time away from work (52%).

Respondents were asked if they had previously participated in services administered by the CNMI DOL Workforce Investment Agency (WIA) Division. These services are also formally known as Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs; however, the term "WIA services" was used in the survey for respondent familiarity. Only twenty percent (20%) of the respondents had previously used WIA's services (n=21). Of those that had used WIA services, their ratings of the WIA's programming varied: Excellent (11%), Satisfactory (32%), Fair (37%), and Poor (21%). Programs respondents had previously participated in included Cooperative Training (31%), Work-based Training (28%), On-the-Job Training (21%), Internships (15%), and Registered Apprenticeship Sponsor (5%). When asked if they were likely to use WIA's services again, eighty-one percent (81%) said "yes," fourteen percent (14%) said they were unsure, and one respondent said "no."

All employers were asked if they would like to participate in WIA's services. Fifty-three (53) either responded "yes" or that they were already a current participant, while forty-two (42) said "no." Of the interested respondents, the majority wanted to participate in Work-based training (59%), On-the-Job Training (57%), or Cooperative Training (55%).

FIGURE 7: WIA PROGRAMS RESPONDENTS MOST WANTED TO PARTICIPATE IN (N=51)

Employers Responses When Asked if Which DOL WIA Programs They'd Participate In	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Work-Based Training	30	59%
On-the-Job Training	29	57%
Cooperative Training	28	55%
Internships	24	47%
Registered Apprenticeship Sponsor	15	29%

Findings Regarding Companies' Current Projected Needs Over the Next Five (5) Years

Respondents were asked to consider their potential plans for expansion or reduction over the next five years. Of the respondents that identified whether or not they had expansion plans, thirty-four percent (34%) said they would expand in the next 12 months, forty-two percent (42%) in the next 1-2 years, thirty-nine percent (39%) in the next 2-3 years, and thirty-eight percent (38%) in the next 3-5 years. Respondents said the level of expansion would depend on the economy's state, and those who answered said they would expand anywhere between one percent (1%) to five hundred percent (500%).

FIGURE 8: RESPONDENTS PLANS FOR EXPANSION OVER THE NEXT FIVE (5) YEARS

Respondents Who Were Planning an Expansion....	Percentage that answered "No"	Percentage that answered "Yes"
In the next 12 months? (n=92)	66%	34%
In the next 1 – 2 years? (n=89)	58%	42%
In the next 2 – 3 years? (n=82)	61%	39%
In the next 3 – 5 years? (n=79)	63%	38%

Those planning an expansion believed an additional 546 new jobs would be created over fourteen (14) different career categories. Top career categories included Agriculture, Food, & Natural Resources (20%), Architecture and Construction (20%), Manufacturing (20%), Hospitality and Tourism (13%), and Business Management and Administration (8%).

For employers planning to expand, the top five reasons included the following: "Responding to future market demands" (77%), "Increasing existing market shares" (51%), "Responding to current market demands" (42%), "Reducing employee overtime" 23%; or "Entering a new market" (20%). When asked what their most significant barriers were to their workforce expansion, they identified "additional labor costs" (56%), "lack of available skilled workers" (56%), "uncertainty in current market demands" (41%), "competition in existing markets" (31%), and "additional benefit costs (21%).

When asked about planning a workforce reduction over the next five (5) years, only three percent (3%) said they would reduce their workforce in the next 12 months, and only one to two percent (1% - 2%) planned to reduce their workforce over the next one to five years. When asked about reduction plans, fifty-three percent (53%) said they were not considering a reduction, twenty percent (20%) would consider reducing due to economic uncertainty, and ten percent (10%) due to a decrease in current markets.

FIGURE 9: CAREER CATEGORIES EMPLOYERS WILL PRIORITIZE DURING THEIR EXPANSION OVER THE NEXT FIVE (5) YEARS

Career Categories	Number of new positions	Number of new positions
Agriculture, Food, & Natural Resources	109	20%
Architecture and Construction	109	20%
Manufacturing	109	20%
Hospitality and Tourism	70	13%
Business Management and Administration	43	8%
Finance	23	4%
Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics	17	3%
Arts, Audio/Video Technology, and Communication	16	3%
Transportation, Distribution, & Logistics	13	2%
Information Technology	11	2%
Law, Public Safety, Corrections, & Security	9	2%
Health Services	7	1%
Education and Training	5	1%
Human Services	5	1%
Total number of new positions created	546	

Recommendations

Below are a series of recommendations based on data from the survey, as proposed by Max Impacts: Maxine Laszlo Consulting in collaboration and consultation with the CNMI SWDB and DOL WIA:

- ☉ **The SWDB could consider compensating employers for hours spent during in-house training.** When asked how employers thought the skills gap could be best addressed in their entity, their top response was in-house training (35%). Additionally, when asked the most significant barriers to have employees participate in trainings, the majority shared it was the “cost to participate” (52%) or the “time away from work” (52%). SWDB could invest in compensating employers for set periods of time for in-house training for newly hired and retained employees to address these concerns. Alternatively, SWDB could invest more resources in the WIOA “On-the-Job” Training programs or hire more specialized training providers to do in-house training with employers.
- ☉ **The SWDB could consider more specialized training for soft skills, including customer service and workplace responsibility.** When asked what types of trainings were most needed, the top response was customer service (45%) followed by management (28%). Additionally, the top three traits employers looked for more in employees included “reliability,” “work ethics,” and “motivation to work.” More specialized trainings in these areas may lead to higher job retention and better aligning new applicants with the right job opportunities. This soft skill training emphasis also includes continuing partnerships with the core WIOA-funded programs in the CNMI to emphasize soft-skills training amongst their respective client bases.
- ☉ **The SWDB could prioritize collaboration with the CNMI Public School System (PSS) to increase soft-skills programming interjected in primary education.** After reviewing the report’s findings, members of the SWDB noted that a workforce with insufficient soft skills (i.e., reliability, work ethics, motivation), were pervasive across the CNMI population. The SWDB acknowledged that the community could not solely rely on training post-high school graduation to fill this need, especially as sixty-three percent (63%) of all current vacancies only required a high school degree or GED. Therefore, SWDB wants to further explore current and future programming with PSS to emphasize soft skills and job-readiness training in primary education.
- ☉ **The SWDB could consider an emphasis on specialized management training.** “Management” was the second-highest requested training (28%) by employers. When also considering the employers’ needs for employee reliability and ethics, an argument can be made for better management training to address employee satisfaction—especially during economic and workforce instability. By emphasizing leadership and management training for supervisors, employers may see improvement in other employee performance gaps.
- ☉ **There is a growing need for trades training.** When looking at job vacancies, the second-highest number of current (21%) and future (20%) job vacancies were related to Construction or Architecture. As the second-highest identified training program type was also trades, there is a trend that this industry may need more attention in coming years.

◎ **The SWDB could advocate for resources to fund additional staff for WIOA-funded programs.**

When debriefing the findings of the 2021 BNA, the SWDB identified that another reason employers may be less favorable to using WIOA-funded services was the lengthy onboarding process involved in bringing on an employee. When employers request a WIOA-funded training participant, they often need that person within the next few weeks. However, the onboarding process can sometimes take months due to limited staffing, procurement processing, and training participants' personal issues. At that point, the employer no longer needs the WIOA-funded training participant. While all matters regarding the lengthy onboarding process are uncontrollable, one way to internally address part of the issue would be for WIOA-funded programs to have additional staff to process employer requests, match potential applicants, and file the necessary paperwork. There has been a decrease in local funding for these positions over the last few years; WIOA-funded programs and their supporters should continue to advocate for more resources for staffing to resolve employers' concerns and create more job opportunities for those entering the workforce.

Conclusion

Overall, the 2021 Business Needs Assessment findings mirrored the SWDB and DOL WIA's expectations of the current private sector needs. Arguably, the most surprising finding was that employers were still planning for expansion and would have increased workforce needs in the coming years over the next five (5) years. With this affirmation of the private sector's needs for soft skills, in-house, management, and technical training, the SWDB and DOL WIA are equipped to support, collaborate, and encourage the training programs requested by CNMI employers.

Appendix A: Responses to Survey

Section 1: Company Background

1. What is your entity's primary industry or line of business?

Industries	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Other Services (Except Public Administration)	19	17%
Accommodation and Food Services	14	13%
Retail Trade	12	11%
Construction	11	10%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	10	9%
Real Estate, Rental, and Leasing	9	8%
Finance and Insurance	7	6%
Wholesale Trade	6	6%
Health Care and Social Assistance	5	5%
Manufacturing	3	3%
Administration and Support Services	2	2%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting	2	2%
Information	2	2%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	2	2%
Transportation and Warehouse	2	2%
Arts Entertainment, and Recreation	1	1%
Educational Services	1	1%
Management of Companies and Enterprise	1	1%
Grand Total	109	100%

2. At this time, approximately how many people do you employ as direct hires (i.e., you would claim them as your employee on your 941-SS)?

Number of Direct Hire Employees	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
1 - 5	39	36%
6 - 15	34	31%
16 - 25	13	12%
26 - 50	10	9%
51 - 100	8	7%
101 - 200	3	3%
200 or more	2	2%
Grand Total	109	100%

3. At this time, approximately **how many people do you contract with** through manpower agencies or other means **as non-direct hires**?

Number of Non-Direct Hire Employees	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
1 - 5	61	84%
6 - 15	8	11%
16 - 25	3	4%
101 – 200	1	1%
Grand Total	73	100%

4. Are your **employees primarily located** on Saipan, Tinian, or Rota?

Primary Location	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Saipan	98	90%
Tinian	8	7%
Rota	3	3%
Grand Total	109	100%

5. At this time, **what percent of your direct hires are CNMI-based Workers** as compared to non-CNMI-based workers.

Percentage of CNMI-Based Workers	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
100%	46	46%
80% - 99%	18	18%
60% - 79%	10	10%
40% - 59%	12	12%
20% - 39%	12	12%
0% - 19%	3	3%
Grand Total	101	100%

Section 2: Impacts from COVID-19

6. As of 8/9/2021, **have you reduced your total operations as compared to August 2019**?

Impact on Operations	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
1 - No Reduction	35	32%
2 - Minimal Reduction	36	33%
3 - Large Reduction	33	30%
4 - Temporarily Closed	5	5%
5 - Permanently Closed	0	0%
Grand Total	109	100%

7. As of 8/9/2021, have you reduced your staffing as compared to August 2019?

Impact on Staffing	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
0% - No Change	48	44%
1% - 25% Reduction	35	32%
26% - 50% Reduction	13	12%
51%-75% Reduction	6	6%
76%-99% Reduction	5	5%
100% - I am closed	2	2%
Grand Total	109	100%

8. Please select up to three (3) of **your entities' top concerns** regarding your recovery from COVID-19.

Top Employer Concerns Regarding Recovery from COVID-19	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Future COVID-19 Outbreaks	58	53%
Date to resuming tourism operations	46	42%
Local recession	42	39%
Rehiring, replacing, and retaining workforce	35	32%
Access to capital to bridge financial loss	25	23%
Global recession	25	23%
Decreased consumer confidence and buying power	22	20%
Domestic or international supply-chain changes	22	20%
An exodus of the CNMI-based workforce	21	19%
Going out of business	12	11%
International trade or political unrest	4	4%
Other: USCIS-related and number of qualified U.S. Workers	2	2%
Other: Economic Uncertainty	1	1%
Other: Delayed payments from clients	1	1%
Other: None listed	1	1%
Number of Total Respondents	109	

Section 3: Current Employment Landscape

9. Since March 2020, have you hired any new employees?

Response to "have you hired any new employees"	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Yes, a CNMI- based worker(s)	51	47%
Yes, a non-CNMI- based worker(s)	7	6%
Yes, a CNMI- based worker(s) and a non-CNMI- based worker(s)	9	8%
No, but I tried to hire	11	10%
No, but I did not try to hire	31	28%
Grand Total	109	100%

10. In 2021, what are the **top three (3) challenges** you have had in **hiring new CNMI- based Workers?**

Top Employer Challenges in hiring new CNMI-based Workers	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Lacks Work Experience	48	45%
Lacks Employable Skills	41	39%
Lacks Technical Skills	33	31%
Low Number of Applicants	23	22%
Lacks Soft Skills	16	15%
Unemployment Benefits	16	15%
Not needed to hire new workers due to a reduction in the workforce.	10	9%
Lacks Educational Credentials	9	8%
Low Wages	7	7%
Failed Drug Test	5	5%
Criminal Record	3	3%
Not needed to hire new workers due to a reduction in the workforce	18	17%
I have not needed to hire new workers for other reasons	25	24%
Total respondents	106	

11. What are the **top three (3) character traits or skills** do you **value in an employee?**

Top Traits or Skills Employers Value in an Employee	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Reliability	74	69%
Work Ethics	52	49%
Motivation to Work	45	42%
Professionalism	30	28%
Work Experience	29	27%
Technical or Specific Occupational Skills	28	26%
Teamwork	26	24%
Critical Thinking	16	15%
Communication	15	14%
Loyalty	15	14%
Creativity	6	6%
Total Respondents	107	

12. When considering **CNMI Workers applying for open positions with your company**, please indicate, **in general, your perceptions** on the following:

Perception on CNMI Worker Applicants	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Number of respondents
Applicants possess all requirements for the job	18%	46%	22%	12%	2%	106
Applicants possess the basic skills required for the job	28%	46%	19%	7%	0%	107
Applicants possess the soft skills required for the job	15%	50%	23%	11%	1%	105
Applicants possess the occupational/technical skills required for the job	22%	46%	15%	12%	5%	105
Applicants possess the proper U.S. immigration status for the job	41%	39%	17%	4%	0%	106

13. Which of the following **resources does your business utilize for recruitment?** Select all that apply.

Resources businesses use for recruitment	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
CNMI DOL JVA listings	68	64%
Word of Mouth	67	63%
Social Media	34	32%
Local Newspapers	25	24%
Company's Website	23	22%
Online Job Boards	13	12%
Membership organizations	11	10%
Recruiting Agencies	10	9%
Other	9	8%
DOL WIA	6	6%
Referrals	3	3%
Radio	2	2%
Grand Total	106	

14. What would be the **most effective way to address CNMI-based Workers' skill gaps** in your entity?

Employers' opinion on most effective way to address skills gaps	Number of Responses	Percentage of Respondents
In-house training	38	35%
Specialized training provider	26	24%
Trade school	17	16%
College	11	10%
Seminars/Workshops	9	8%
Self-study or Online Training	7	6%
No training needed	1	1%
Grand Total	109	

15. In 2021, **what are the top three (3) workforce challenges** currently impacting your operations.

Employers Perception of Top Workforce Challenges	Number of Responses	Percentage of Respondents
Quality employees looking to move off-island for other opportunities	67	65%
Needing to revise pay scales and benefits to retain workers	62	60%
Needing to increase training due to decreased skillsets	54	52%
Needing to lower job requirements to fill open positions	26	25%
Operations becoming more automated/Employees becoming irrelevant	8	8%
Other: Finding quality applicants with relevant skillset and education level	5	5%
Other: Inconsistent or lack of employee reliability or work ethics	4	4%
Other: Low sales or economic uncertainty impacting employee retention	2	2%
Other: Unemployment benefits-related	2	2%
Other: Applicants expecting higher pay than skillset or education justifies	1	1%
Other: Applicants unwilling to relocate within the CNMI	1	1%
Other: Competing with government jobs	1	1%
Other: Demanding work environment not attractive to applicants/employees	1	1%
Other: Employee morale during economic downturn	1	1%
Other	1	1%
No challenges	6	6%
Total Respondents	103	

Section 4: Current Vacancies

16. Please list the number of vacancies you currently have across your entire company.

Respondent Industry	Number of Vacancies	Percentage of Vacancies
Accommodation and Food Services	118	42%
Construction	41	15%
Other Services (Except Public Administration)	37	13%
Retail Trade	24	9%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	14	5%
Manufacturing	13	5%
Management of Companies and Enterprise	10	4%
Real Estate, Rental, and Leasing	5	2%
Wholesale Trade	5	2%
Finance and Insurance	4	1%
Administration and Support Services	3	1%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting	2	1%
Information	2	1%
Health Care and Social Assistance	1	0%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	1	0%
Arts Entertainment, and Recreation	0	0%
Educational Services	0	0%
Transportation and Warehouse	0	0%
Grand Total Number of Vacancies	280	

17. For each career category, please list the number of vacancies your entity has in August 2021

Career Categories	Number of current vacancies	Percentage of current vacancies
Hospitality and Tourism	112	35%
Architecture and Construction	67	21%
Agriculture, Food, & Natural Resources	46	14%
Business Management and Administration	29	9%
Finance	21	7%
Arts, Audio/Video Technology, and Communication	10	3%
Law, Public Safety, Corrections, & Security	9	3%
Manufacturing	9	3%
Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics	4	1%
Transportation, Distribution, & Logistics	4	1%
Human Services	3	1%
Information Technology	3	1%
Education and Training	2	1%
Health Services	0	0%
Total number of current vacancies	319	100%

18. Of your current vacancies, **how many are located in each island jurisdiction** (total number should equal that reported in Q16):

Island in which vacancy is located	Number of current vacancies	Percentage of current vacancies
Saipan	248	89%
Tinian	28	10%
Rota	4	1%
Total number of current vacancies	280	

19. Of your current vacancies, how many fall into each category for **the main reason for the vacancy** (total number should equal that reported in Q16):

Reason for Vacancy	Number of current vacancies	Percentage of current vacancies
Rehiring for a position that was downsized due to COVID-19	119	43%
Permanent business growth/expansion	65	23%
Replacing worker who has left (not retired)	53	19%
Replacing workers who did not renew U.S. immigration status	24	9%
Seasonal business growth/expansion	15	5%
Replacing retired employee	1	0%
Total number of current vacancies	277	

20. Of your current vacancies, what is the current educational level required for the vacancy (total number should equal that reported in Q16):

Current Level of Education Required	Number of current vacancies	Percentage of current vacancies
High school education/GED	188	63%
Vocational or technical education	41	14%
No specific educational requirement	29	10%
Undergraduate degree	22	7%
Associate degree	13	4%
Postgraduate Degree	7	2%
Total number of current vacancies	300	

21. Of your current vacancies, what experience level is required for the vacancy (total number should equal that reported in Q16):

Current Level of Education Required	Number of current vacancies	Percentage of current vacancies
No experience required	25	8%
Less than 1 year	115	35%
1 – 2 years	143	43%
3 – 5 years	26	8%
6 – 8 years	13	4%
8 + years	11	3%
Total number of current vacancies	333	

Section 5: Current Training Needs

22. What types of training program(s) are most needed by your business at this time (please select no more than two (2))?

Employers perceptions on what types of training programs are most needed by their business	Number of responses	Percentage of responses
Customer Service	47	45%
Management	29	28%
Trades	29	28%
Sales	26	25%
Accounting	17	16%
Hospitality	15	14%
Other: Trades	3	3%
Other: Hospitality	2	2%
Other: Writing	2	2%
Other: Advocacy	1	1%
Other: Animal Handling	1	1%
Other: Apprenticeship	1	1%
Other: Childcare Training	1	1%
Other: Graphic Arts	1	1%
Other: HR	1	1%
Other: Insurance	1	1%
Other: Interior Design	1	1%
Other: Operations	1	1%
Other: Safety	1	1%
Other: Security	1	1%
Other: Soft skills	1	1%
Other: Taxes	1	1%
Tota responses	104	

23. What factors are affecting your employees' participation in a training program?

Factors most impacting employees' participation in training programs	Number of responses	Percentage of responses
Cost to participate	50	52%
Time away from work	50	52%
Length of training	33	34%
Language barriers	12	12%
Transportation	9	9%
None/no need for trainings	7	7%
Other: No trainings available for specific needs	4	4%
Other: Employee attitude	2	2%
Other	2	2%
Number of Respondents	97	

24. Has your company participated in a training program administered by the DOL Workforce Investment Agency (WIA) Division?

Response to having participated in DOL WIA programs	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
No	83	80%
Yes	21	20%
Number of Respondents	104	

25. If you answered "yes" to Q24, please rate your experience with participating in a program administered by the DOL WIA division.

Rating of DOL WIA Division Programming	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
Excellent (4)	2	11%
Satisfactory (3)	6	32%
Fair (2)	7	37%
Poor (1)	4	21%
Number of Respondents	19	

26. If you answered "yes" to Q24, please select the programs you participated in:

DOL WIA Programs Respondents have Previously Participated In	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Cooperative Training	12	31%
Work-Based Training	11	28%
On-the-Job Training	8	21%
Internships	6	15%
Registered Apprenticeship Sponsor	2	5%
Number of Respondents	21	

27. If you answered “yes” to Q24, are you likely to use WIA Services again?

If Respondent Would Use DOL WIA Programs Again	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Yes	17	81%
Unsure	3	14%
No	1	5%
Grand Total	21	

28. Is your company interested in participating in a program administered by the DOL WIA Division (examples listed in question 26)?

Employers Responses When Asked if They’d Like to Participate in DOL WIA Programs	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Yes	50	53%
No	42	44%
Current Participant	3	3%
Grand Total	95	

29. If you answered “yes” to Q28, please select the programs you are interested in:

Employers Responses When Asked if Which DOL WIA Programs They’d Participate In	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Work-Based Training	30	59%
On-the-Job Training	29	57%
Cooperative Training	28	55%
Internships	24	47%
Registered Apprenticeship Sponsor	15	29%
Total Number of Responses	51	

Section 6: Projected Needs Within the Next Five (5) Years

30. Please consider your plans to expand your current workforce over the next five (5) years:

Respondents planning an Expansion....	Percentage that answered “No”	Percentage that answered “Yes”	If yes, what percent increase as compared to your current workforce?
In the next 12 months? (n=92)	66%	34%	Between 1% - 500% (n=31)
In the next 1 – 2 years? (n=89)	58%	42%	Between 2% - 120% (n=37)
In the next 2 – 3 years? (n=82)	61%	39%	Between 3% - 120% (n=32)
In the next 3 – 5 years? (n=79)	63%	38%	Between 3% - 120% (n=30)

31. If you plan to expand your entities' workforce, **what career categories will you prioritize over**

Career Categories	Number of new positions	Number of new positions
Agriculture, Food, & Natural Resources	109	20%
Architecture and Construction	109	20%
Manufacturing	109	20%
Hospitality and Tourism	70	13%
Business Management and Administration	43	8%
Finance	23	4%
Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics	17	3%
Arts, Audio/Video Technology, and Communication	16	3%
Transportation, Distribution, & Logistics	13	2%
Information Technology	11	2%
Law, Public Safety, Corrections, & Security	9	2%
Health Services	7	1%
Education and Training	5	1%
Human Services	5	1%
Total number of new positions created	546	

the next five (5) years?

32. If you plan to expand your entities' workforce in the next five (5) years, **what are the top three (3) reasons you are planning an expansion?**

Reasons Employers are Planning an Expansion	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Respond to future market demands	50	77%
Increase existing market share	33	51%
Respond to current market demands	27	42%
Reduce employee overtime	15	23%
Entering a new market	13	20%
Opening a new location	9	14%
Insourcing contracted operations	7	11%
Changes in tax or regulatory incentives	4	6%
Planned merger or acquisition	1	2%
Total Responses	65	

33. If you plan to expand your entities' workforce in the next five (5) years, **what are the top three (3) most significant barriers to your workforce expansion?**

Barriers Hindering Employers from Workforce Expansion	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Additional labor costs	38	56%
Lack of available skilled workers	38	56%
Uncertainty in current market demands	28	41%
Competition in the existing market	21	31%
Additional benefits costs	14	21%
Limited access to capital financing	12	18%
Lack of physical space	7	10%
Not planning an expansion	5	7%
Unsure how to expand operations	5	7%
Tax or regulatory matters	4	6%
Barriers to entering new markets	3	4%
No desire to expand	3	4%
Barriers to adequate supply chain	2	3%
Total Responses	68	

34. Please consider your plans to **decrease** your current workforce over the next five (5) years:

Respondents planning a Reduction....	Percentage that answered "No"	Percentage that answered "Yes"	If yes, what percent decrease as compared to your current workforce?
In the next 12 months? (n=99)	97%	3%	10% - 50% (n=3)
In the next 1 – 2 years? (n=89)	99%	1%	3% (n=1)
In the next 2 – 3 years? (n=87)	98%	2%	10% (n=2)
In the next 3 – 5 years? (n=87)	98%	2%	10% - 100% (n=2)

35. If you plan to decrease your entities' workforce, **what career categories will you eliminate over the next five (5) years?**

Career Categories	Number of new positions	Number of new positions
Architecture and Construction	22	79%
Health Services	3	11%
Business Management and Administration	1	4%
Finance	1	4%
Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics	1	4%
Agriculture, Food, & Natural Resources	0	0%
Arts, Audio/Video Technology, and Communication	0	0%
Education and Training	0	0%
Hospitality and Tourism	0	0%
Human Services	0	0%
Information Technology	0	0%
Law, Public Safety, Corrections, & Security	0	0%
Manufacturing	0	0%
Transportation, Distribution, & Logistics	0	0%
Total number of positions eliminated	28	

36. If you plan to decrease your entities' workforce in the next five (5) years, what are the top three (3) reasons you are planning a reduction?

Reasons Employers Would Need to Plan a Reduction	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Not planning a reduction	26	53%
Economic uncertainty	10	20%
Reduction in future market demands	5	10%
Reduced profits from current operations	3	6%
Business sale or closure	2	4%
Replacing workforce with technology or streamlined processes	2	4%
Reduction in current market demands	1	2%
Total Number of Respondents	49	

Attachment II

OMB Control Number 1205-0526
Expiration Date: 05-31-2024

ETA-9169

Statewide Performance Report													Certified in WIPS: 10/1/2021 6:37 AM EDT	
PROGRAM WIOA Youth					TITLE (select one):									
STATE: Northern Marianas Title I Local Area:					Title I Adult		<input type="checkbox"/>		Title II Adult Education		<input type="checkbox"/>			
REPORTING PERIOD COVERED (Required for current and three preceding years.)					Title I Dislocated Worker		<input type="checkbox"/>		Title III Wagner-Peyser		<input type="checkbox"/>			
From (mm/dd/yyyy) : 7/1/2020 To (mm/dd/yyyy) : 6/30/2021					Title I Youth		<input type="checkbox"/>		Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation		<input type="checkbox"/>			
					Title I and Title III combined		<input type="checkbox"/>							
SUMMARY INFORMATION														
Service		Participants Served Cohort Period:		Participants Exited Cohort Period: 4/1/2020-3/31/2021		Funds Expended Cohort Period: 7/1/2020-6/30/2021		Cost Per Participant Served Cohort Period: 7/1/2020-6/30/2021						
Career Services		59		17		\$115,679		\$1,961						
Training Services		2		0		\$5,188		\$2,594						
Percent training-related employment ¹ :				Percent enrolled in more than one core program:				Percent Admin Expended:						
				15.3%				9.4%						
BY PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS														
		Total Participants Served Cohort Period: 7/1/2020-6/30/2021	Total Participants Exited Cohort Period: 4/1/2020-3/31/2021		Youth Employment/Education/ Training Rate (Q2) Cohort Period: 7/1/2019-6/30/2020		Youth Employment/Education/ Training Rate (Q4) Cohort Period: 1/1/2019-12/31/2019		Median Earnings Cohort Period: 7/1/2019-6/30/2020		Credential Rate ³ (Cohort Period: 1/1/2019-12/31/2019)		Measurable Skill Gains ³ Cohort Period: 7/1/2020-6/30/2021	
					Num	Rate	Num	Rate	Earnings	Num	Rate	Num	Rate	
Total Statewide		59	17	Negotiated Targets										
				Actual	11	39.3%	9	40.9%	\$5,002	5	55.6%	34	72.3%	
Sex	Female	32	10		7	43.8%	3	27.3%	\$5,002	1	25.0%	15	57.7%	
	Male	27	7		4	33.3%	6	54.5%	\$4,833	4	80.0%	19	90.5%	
Age	< 16	10	0		0		0			0		5	50.0%	
	16 - 18	39	4		2	50.0%	3	42.9%		4	66.7%	28	77.8%	
	19 - 24	9	12		9	37.5%	6	40.0%	\$5,002	1	33.3%	1	100.0%	
	25 - 44	1	1		0		0			0		0		
	45 - 54	0	0		0		0			0		0		
	55 - 59	0	0		0		0			0		0		
	60+	0	0		0		0			0		0		
Ethnicity/Race	American Indian / Alaska Native	0	0		0		0			0		0		
	Asian	27	2		1	33.3%	3	75.0%		3	100.0%	12	54.5%	
	Black / African American	1	0		0		0			0		0	0.0%	
	Hispanic / Latino	0	0		0		0			0		0		
	Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	37	15		10	38.5%	6	31.6%	\$5,002	2	33.3%	24	85.7%	
	White	0	0		0		0			0		0		
	More Than One Race	6	0		0	0.0%	0	0.0%		0		2	50.0%	

BY EMPLOYMENT BARRIER ⁴												
	Total Participants Served	Total Participants Exited		Youth Employment/Education/ Training Rate (Q2)		Youth Employment/Education/ Training Rate (Q4)		Median Earnings	Credential Rate ³		Measurable Skill Gains ³	
				Num	Rate	Num	Rate		Num	Rate	Num	Rate
Total Statewide	59	17	Negotiated Targets									
			Actual	11	39.3%	9	40.9%	\$5,002	5	55.6%	34	72.3%
Displaced Homemakers	0	0		0		0			0		0	
English Language Learners, Low Levels of Literacy, Cultural Barriers	35	5		2	25.0%	3	33.3%		2	33.3%	25	83.3%
Exhausting TANF within 2 years (Part A Title IV of the Social Security Act)	0	0		0		0			0		0	
Ex-offenders	0	0		0		0			0		0	
Homeless Individuals / runaway youth	1	0		0		0			0		0	
Long-term Unemployed (27 or more consecutive weeks)	25	8		6	37.5%	5	35.7%	\$4,631	4	50.0%	21	100.0%
Low-Income Individuals	58	17		11	39.3%	9	40.9%	\$5,002	5	55.6%	34	72.3%
Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers	0	0		0		0			0		0	
Individuals with Disabilities (incl. youth)	6	1		0	0.0%	0	0.0%		1	50.0%	5	100.0%
Single Parents (Incl. single pregnant women)	1	2		1	33.3%	0	0.0%	\$7,800	0		0	
Youth in foster care or aged out of system	0	0		0		0			0		0	
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:												

¹Applies to Title I only.

²This indicator also includes those who entered into a training or education program for the Youth program.

³Credential Rate and Measurable Skill Gains do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser program.

⁴Barriers to Employment are determined at the point of entry into the program.

Public Burden Statement (1205-ONEW)

Persons are not required to respond to this collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. Respondent's reply to these reporting requirements is mandatory (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Section 116). Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 30 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate to the Office of Policy Development and Research • U.S. Department of Labor • Room N-5641 • 200 Constitution Ave., NW, • Washington, DC • 20210. Do NOT send the completed application to this address.

Statewide Performance Report					Certified in WIPS: 10/1/2021 6:37 AM EDT	
PROGRAM WIOA Adult				TITLE (select one):		
STATE: Northern Marianas		Title I Local Area:		Title I Adult		<input type="checkbox"/>
REPORTING PERIOD COVERED (Required for current and three preceding years.)				Title I Dislocated Worker		<input type="checkbox"/>
From (mm/dd/yyyy) : 7/1/2020		To (mm/dd/yyyy) : 6/30/2021		Title I Youth		<input type="checkbox"/>
				Title I and Title III combined		<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
				<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

SUMMARY INFORMATION				
Service	Participants Served Cohort Period:	Participants Exited Cohort Period: 4/1/2020-3/31/2021	Funds Expended Cohort Period: 7/1/2020-6/30/2021	Cost Per Participant Served Cohort Period: 7/1/2020-6/30/2021
Career Services	114	91	\$129,148	\$1,133
Training Services	3	3	\$16,999	\$5,666
Percent training-related employment¹:		Percent enrolled in more than one core program:		Percent Admin Expended:
100.0%		18.4%		9.4%

BY PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS													
		Total Participants Served Cohort Period: 7/1/2020-6/30/2021	Total Participants Exited Cohort Period: 4/1/2020-3/31/2021		Employment Rate (Q2) ² Cohort Period: 7/1/2019-6/30/2020		Employment Rate (Q4) ² Cohort Period: 1/1/2019-12/31/2019		Median Earnings Cohort Period: 7/1/2019-6/30/2020	Credential Rate ³ (Cohort Period: 1/1/2019-12/31/2019)		Measurable Skill Gains ³ Cohort Period: 7/1/2020-6/30/2021	
					Num	Rate	Num	Rate	Earnings	Num	Rate	Num	Rate
Total Statewide		114	91	Negotiated Targets									
				Actual	59	39.9%	27	30.0%	\$4,160	12	85.7%	2	66.7%
Sex	Female	60	40		37	39.8%	17	30.9%	\$4,160	6	75.0%	1	50.0%
	Male	54	51		22	40.0%	10	28.6%	\$4,225	6	100.0%	1	100.0%
Age	< 16	0	0		0		0			0		0	
	16 - 18	8	5		2	28.6%	1	25.0%	\$4,176	2	100.0%	0	
	19 - 24	51	45		23	35.4%	9	23.7%	\$3,957	5	71.4%	0	0.0%
	25 - 44	51	40		30	46.9%	16	44.4%	\$4,326	5	100.0%	2	100.0%
	45 - 54	2	1		4	40.0%	1	11.1%	\$5,426	0		0	
	55 - 59	2	0		0	0.0%	0	0.0%		0		0	
	60+	0	0		0		0	0.0%		0		0	
Ethnicity/Race	American Indian / Alaska Native	0	0		0		0			0		0	
	Asian	29	14		12	46.2%	4	25.0%	\$4,436	1	100.0%	0	
	Black / African American	1	0		1	100.0%	0		\$2,360	0		0	
	Hispanic / Latino	2	1		0	0.0%	0	0.0%		0		0	
	Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	100	84		50	37.9%	25	30.1%	\$4,160	12	85.7%	2	66.7%
	White	3	2		0	0.0%	0			0		0	
	More Than One Race	17	9		4	33.3%	2	22.2%	\$3,960	1	100.0%	0	

BY EMPLOYMENT BARRIER ⁴												
	Total Participants Served	Total Participants Exited		Employment Rate (Q2) ²		Employment Rate (Q4) ²		Median Earnings	Credential Rate ³		Measurable Skill Gains ³	
				Num	Rate	Num	Rate	Earnings	Num	Rate	Num	Rate
Total Statewide	114	91	Negotiated Targets									
			Actual	59	39.9%	27	30.0%	\$4,160	12	85.7%	2	66.7%
Displaced Homemakers	1	0		0		0			0		0	
English Language Learners, Low Levels of Literacy, Cultural Barriers	16	6		9	42.9%	3	21.4%	\$3,957	0	0.0%	1	100.0%
Exhausting TANF within 2 years (Part A Title IV of the Social Security Act)	0	0		0		0			0		0	
Ex-offenders	8	4		0	0.0%	0	0.0%		0		0	
Homeless Individuals / runaway youth	2	0		0		0			0		1	100.0%
Long-term Unemployed (27 or more consecutive weeks)	52	38		21	35.6%	3	10.7%	\$4,160	2	50.0%	1	50.0%
Low-Income Individuals	93	64		37	35.2%	19	29.2%	\$4,160	7	77.8%	2	66.7%
Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers	0	0		0		0			0		0	
Individuals with Disabilities (incl. youth)	2	1		0		0	0.0%		0		0	
Single Parents (Incl. single pregnant women)	15	10		12	66.7%	4	40.0%	\$4,371	1	100.0%	1	100.0%
Youth in foster care or aged out of system	0	0		0		0			0		0	

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

¹Applies to Title I only.

²This indicator also includes those who entered into a training or education program for the Youth program.

³Credential Rate and Measurable Skill Gains do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser program.

⁴Barriers to Employment are determined at the point of entry into the program.

Numbers entered into cells in this template are the same as the corresponding "report item number" on the report specification document. Clicking on each hyperlink will take the user to the plain text language

Public Burden Statement (1205-ONEW)

Persons are not required to respond to this collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. Respondent's reply to these reporting requirements is mandatory (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Section 116). Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 30 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate to the Office of Policy Development and Research • U.S. Department of Labor • Room N-5641 • 200 Constitution Ave., NW, • Washington, DC • 20210. Do NOT send the completed application to this address.

Statewide Performance Report					Certified in WIPS: 10/1/2021 6:38 AM EDT	
PROGRAM WIOA Dislocated Worker			TITLE (select one):			
STATE: Northern Marianas Title I Local Area:			Title I Adult <input type="checkbox"/>		Title II Adult Education <input type="checkbox"/>	
REPORTING PERIOD COVERED (Required for current and three preceding years.)			Title I Dislocated Worker <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Title III Wagner-Peyser <input type="checkbox"/>	
From (mm/dd/yyyy) : 7/1/2020 To (mm/dd/yyyy) : 6/30/2021			Title I Youth <input type="checkbox"/>		Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation <input type="checkbox"/>	
			Title I and Title III combined <input type="checkbox"/>			

SUMMARY INFORMATION				
Service	Participants Served Cohort Period:	Participants Exited Cohort Period: 4/1/2020-3/31/2021	Funds Expended Cohort Period: 7/1/2020-6/30/2021	Cost Per Participant Served Cohort Period: 7/1/2020-6/30/2021
Career Services	68	57	\$78,156	\$1,149
Training Services	2	1	\$5,947	\$2,973
Percent training-related employment ¹ :		Percent enrolled in more than one core program:		Percent Admin Expended:
33.3%		27.9%		13.4%

BY PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS													
		Total Participants Served Cohort Period: 7/1/2020-6/30/2021	Total Participants Exited Cohort Period: 4/1/2020-3/31/2021		Employment Rate (Q2) ²		Employment Rate (Q4) ²		Median Earnings	Credential Rate ³		Measurable Skill Gains ³	
					Cohort Period: 7/1/2019-6/30/2020		Cohort Period: 1/1/2019-12/31/2019		Cohort Period: 7/1/2019-6/30/2020	Cohort Period: 1/1/2019-12/31/2019		Cohort Period: 7/1/2020-6/30/2021	
					Num	Rate	Num	Rate	Earnings	Num	Rate	Num	Rate
Total Statewide		68	57	Negotiated Targets	15	40.5%	9	29.0%	\$4,680	1	33.3%	2	100.0%
Sex	Female	27	15	Actual	6	50.0%	2	33.3%	\$5,465	0		2	100.0%
	Male	41	42		9	36.0%	7	28.0%	\$4,581	1	33.3%	0	
Age	< 16	0	0		0		0			0		0	
	16 - 18	1	0		2	100.0%	0		\$4,381	0		0	
	19 - 24	15	14		2	22.2%	1	14.3%	\$5,099	1	100.0%	0	
	25 - 44	38	30		8	36.4%	5	31.3%	\$6,375	0	0.0%	2	100.0%
	45 - 54	10	8		2	100.0%	2	40.0%	\$2,477	0		0	
	55 - 59	4	4		0		0	0.0%		0		0	
	60+	0	1		1	50.0%	1	50.0%	\$3,016	0		0	
Ethnicity/Race	American Indian / Alaska Native	0	0		0		0			0		0	
	Asian	11	4		1	33.3%	0	0.0%	\$4,581	0		0	
	Black / African American	0	0		0		0			0		0	
	Hispanic / Latino	2	1		0		0			0		0	
	Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	60	54		14	38.9%	8	27.6%	\$4,714	1	33.3%	2	100.0%
	White	1	2		0	0.0%	1	100.0%		0		0	
	More Than One Race	4	3		0	0.0%	0	0.0%		0		0	

BY EMPLOYMENT BARRIER ⁴												
	Total Participants Served	Total Participants Exited		Employment Rate (Q2) ²		Employment Rate (Q4) ²		Median Earnings	Credential Rate ³		Measurable Skill Gains ³	
				Num	Rate	Num	Rate	Earnings	Num	Rate	Num	Rate
Total Statewide	68	57	Negotiated Targets									
			Actual	15	40.5%	9	29.0%	\$4,680	1	33.3%	2	100.0%
Displaced Homemakers	1	0		0		1	100.0%		0		0	
English Language Learners, Low Levels of Literacy, Cultural Barriers	8	4		1	50.0%	0	0.0%	\$3,016	0		0	
Exhausting TANF within 2 years (Part A Title IV of the Social Security Act)	0	0		0		0			0		0	
Ex-offenders	11	12		1	33.3%	0	0.0%	\$3,016	0		0	
Homeless Individuals / runaway youth	2	2		0		2	100.0%		0	0.0%	1	100.0%
Long-term Unemployed (27 or more consecutive weeks)	33	27		6	28.6%	3	20.0%	\$4,664	0		1	100.0%
Low-Income Individuals	59	47		13	40.6%	6	27.3%	\$4,581	0	0.0%	2	100.0%
Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers	0	0		0		0			0		0	
Individuals with Disabilities (incl. youth)	1	2		0	0.0%	0			0		0	
Single Parents (Incl. single pregnant women)	7	2		0		1	50.0%		0		1	100.0%
Youth in foster care or aged out of system	0	0		0		0			0		0	

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

¹Applies to Title I only.

²This indicator also includes those who entered into a training or education program for the Youth program.

³Credential Rate and Measurable Skill Gains do not apply to the Wagner-Peyser program.

⁴Barriers to Employment are determined at the point of entry into the program.

Numbers entered into cells in this template are the same as the corresponding "report item number" on the report specification document. Clicking on each hyperlink will take the user to the plain text language

Public Burden Statement (1205-ONEW)

Persons are not required to respond to this collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. Respondent's reply to these reporting requirements is mandatory (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Section 116). Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 30 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate to the Office of Policy Development and Research • U.S. Department of Labor • Room N-5641 • 200 Constitution Ave., NW, • Washington, DC • 20210. Do NOT send the completed application to this address.

Attachment III

4.60 PROGRAM EXITS

Participants who have not received a qualifying participant level service for 90 consecutive calendar days and are not scheduled for future services are considered to have exited the program. The date of exit is set retroactively after 90 days back to the date of the last qualifying participant level service. Self-services, information-only services or activities; or follow-up services do not delay, postpone, extend, or affect the date of exit. Exits occur automatically retroactive to the actual end dates of keyed services/activities on HireMarianas.

A. Program Exit Requirements

The date of exit is the date of the last qualifying participant level service was provided to a participant. Because the date of exit is retroactive to the last date of a qualifying participant level service, follow-up services may begin immediately following the anticipated last date of service if it is expected that the participant will not receive any future services other than follow-up services.

In preparation for the system exit, staff must ensure the following have been completed:

- The IEP/ISS is closed
- All keyed services/activities are closed.
- Credentials gained during participation are captured and entered in HireMarianas.
- Measurable Skill Gains are captured and entered in HireMarianas.
- Documents to validating gainful unsubsidized employment are obtained for entry into HireMarianas.

Soft Exits

A “soft exit” is no staff-assisted services for 90 consecutive days prompting the system, HireMarianas, to exit the participant automatically. The date of WIOA exit will correspond to the last day of WIOA Title I staff or partner assisted service. This date should correspond to the last participant level service/activity.

Case Notes

Case notes should support the last date of a participant level service and include the reason for completing the program/closing the case/beginning the follow up, i.e., completion of training, successful transition into employment, loss of contact, etc.

B. Common Exit

A “common exit” occurs when a participant, enrolled in multiple DOL WIA administered partner programs, has not received services from any DOL WIA administered program to which the common exit applies for at least 90 consecutive days, and no future participant level services are scheduled.

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A participant who receives concurrent participant services in whole or in part from the partner programs listed below, must complete participant services from all programs in which the participant is co-enrolled in order for the “common exit” to be effectuated. When a participant receives services from multiple programs, the most recent qualifying, participant-level service end date is the date of the auto-exit. Follow-up services, self-service and informational only services provided to participants do not extend the exit date.

This common exit policy applies to participants co-enrolled in the following DOL-WIA administered programs utilizing the same Management Information System or MIS:

1. WIOA Adult Program;
2. WIOA Dislocated Worker Program;
3. WIOA Youth Program; and
4. National Dislocated Worker Grant Programs

C. Future Scheduled Services

If a future service is scheduled after 90 consecutive days of no qualifying, participant-level services for any WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, or Youth Program participant, that participant may continue to be enrolled following 90 days of no service and not be exited. Future scheduled services under these programs may only delay exit when they are scheduled to accommodate start dates for training, educational, or other services provided by these programs that begin more than 90 days after the last date of service. If no future services are scheduled, then the participant is exited from the program.

D. Exclusions

Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker participants will not be counted in performance if exclusions are recorded for any of the following reasons:

- The participant has become incarcerated in a correctional institution or has become a resident of an institution or facility providing 24-hour support such as a hospital or treatment center during the course of receiving services as a participant.
- The participant is receiving medical treatment and that treatment last longer than 90 days and precludes entry into unsubsidized employment or continued participation in the program.
- The participant is deceased.
- The participant is a member of the National Guard or other reserve military unit of the armed forces and is called to active duty for at least 90 days.

Title I Youth participant will not be counted in performance for any of the following reasons:

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- The participant has become incarcerated in a correctional institution or has become a resident of an institution or facility providing 24-hour support such as a hospital or treatment center during the course of receiving services as a participant.
- The participant receives medical treatment and that treatment last longer than 90 days and precludes entry into unsubsidized employment or continued participation in the program.
- The participant is deceased.
- The participant is a member of the National Guard or other reserve military unit of the armed forces and is called to active duty for at least 90 days.
- The participant is in the foster care system as defined in 45 CFR 1355.20(a), and has moved from the local workforce area as part of such a program or system.

Case Closure

Cases closed manually is considered a “hard exit.” Only in the cases of “exclusions” will staff initiate recording an exclusion to close a case. The date of exit will be set to the date of the last qualifying, participant-level service after entry of the exclusion reasons.

10.30 Data Validation

Data validation is a series of internal controls or quality assurances techniques established to verify the accuracy, validity, and reliability of data. This policy is established to provide program staff guidelines to ensure that all program data are consistent and accurately reflect the individual data elements and the performance outcomes of WIOA core programs, National Dislocated Worker Grants, and the Apprenticeship State Expansion Grant. As such, the DOL Workforce Investment Agency, as the administering entity of WIOA Title I Programs, Apprenticeship Program Grants, and the National Dislocated Worker Grants are required to:

- Verify that the performance data reported by the State is valid, accurate, reliable, and comparable across programs;
- Identify anomalies in the data and resolve issues that may cause inaccurate reporting;
- Outline source documentation required for common data elements; and
- Improve program performance accountability through the results of data validation efforts.

Record Sampling Methodology

As part of the overall data integrity assurances, all participant records of the programs will be examined periodically during program participation, training services, exit, and follow-up for data entry review and quality assurance. Quarterly performance reports will be reviewed each quarter for accuracy.

For data element validation, which verifies data and compares data reported to source documentation, data validation will be conducted quarterly. These reviews will occur after the quarter ends.

When data validation is conducted, 50% of all active participants and exiter records will be sampled for that program year. This will achieve at least a 95% confidence level in the sampling methodology.

Data Validation and Integrity Review

Assigned program staff will conduct periodic reviews of all participant records for quality assurance on the accuracy, validity, and reliability of the required Data Element Validation (DEV) of enrolled and exited individuals as well as the performance outcomes required data elements identified in the chart. Attachment A – Procedural Guidance Data Validation outlines the processes for program to conduct the review.

On a quarterly basis, the Performance Specialist at USDOL provides CNMI DOL Workforce Investment Agency feedback reports to assist in regular data integrity and quality assurance in addition to data validation. The analysis will include, but is not limited to, a review of the data submitted, anomalies and outliers, and other potential data quality issues, which may indicate reporting inaccuracies. DOL Workforce Investment Agency will use these feedback reports to conduct quarterly data integrity reviews of program data errors, missing data, out-of-range variances in values reported, and other anomalies.

Annual training on source documentation and data validation requirements will be provided to all staff.

Correcting Missing or Erroneous Data

If any missing or erroneous data is discovered throughout the validation process, staff must take appropriate actions to correct it within 30 days. These corrective actions may include, but not limited to:

- Submitting detailed Change Requests to correct inaccurate data to the immediate supervisor;
- Retain copies of the pre-correction data element and documents;
- Working with the vendor of the management information system or MIS to resolve data errors;
- Providing additional training or technical assistance to workforce staff responsible for the erroneous data entry, if applicable;
- Collecting missing documentation to ensure accuracy of elements, if applicable.

A pass/error ration below a 5% reporting error rate is considered a pass for each data element. If the ratio is above 5% reporting error rate, DOL Workforce Investment Agency will have 60 days to conduct research, analyze case files, review policy and/or procedures, provide feedback to staff on the data elements with high error rate trends, and develop training plans to address the inaccurate data elements to resolve ongoing issues.

DOL WIA Procedural Guidance on Data Validation

The Procedural Guidance on Data Validation outlines the processes for program staff to conduct Data Validation and Integrity Review, Correcting Missing or Erroneous Data, and Records Retention.

'TEGL 23-19/7-18

DOL WIA Procedural Guidance on Data Validation

Required Individual and Performance Data Element Validation

The data element source documentation table or Exhibit 1 – Data Validation Checklist lists the data elements that are required to validate. The table displays the Participant Individual Record Layout or PIRL data element numbers, name, acceptable or required source documentation to validate each data element, and the applicable grant program the data element is required.

Source Documentation

For most data elements, the validation guidelines provide multiple forms of acceptable source documentation. If multiple sources for the same data element and the sources conflict, the most objective source should be used to determine if the data element is valid and accurate. In all elements where Self-Attestation is allowed, Self-Attestation shall be the last resort for source documentation. All source documentation shall be frozen or retained in copies in the data validation records at all times.

These source documentation types include:

1. **Cross-Match:** A cross-match requires validators to find detailed supporting evidence for the data element in a database. An indicator or presence of a Social Security Number (SSN) in an administrative non-WIOA database, i.e., a database not maintained by a WIOA core program such as data from the State's Department of Motor Vehicles, is not sufficient evidence for a cross-match. State validators must also confirm supporting information such as dates of participation and services rendered. Data sharing agreements must be in place as appropriate.
2. **Self-Attestation:** Self-attestation (also referred to as a participant statement) occurs when a participant states his or her status for a particular data element, such as pregnant or parenting youth, and then signs and dates a form acknowledging this status. The key elements for self-attestation are: (a) the participant identifying his or her status for permitted elements, and (b) signing and dating a form attesting to this self-identification. The form and signature can be on paper or in the management information system, with an electronic signature. Self-Attestation shall be used as a last resort for source documentation.
3. **Case Notes:** Case notes refer to either paper or electronic statements by the case manager that identify, at a minimum, the following: (a) a participant's status for a specific data element, (b) the date on which the information was obtained, and (c) the case manager who obtained the information.
4. **Electronic Records:** Electronic records are participant records created, stored, or transferred in a form that only a computer can process and maintained in the State's management information system. Records can be numeric, graphic, or text. They can also include magnetic storage media as tapes or disks.

Records Retention

Per the Federal records retention guidelines (2 CFR 200.333) data element validation or DEV documentation must be maintained as follows:

Financial records, supporting documents, statistical records, and all other non-Federal entity records pertinent to a Federal award must be retained for a period of three years from the date of submission of the final expenditure report or, for Federal awards that are renewed quarterly or annually, from the date of the submission of the quarterly or annual financial report, respectively, as reported to the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity in the case of a subrecipient. Federal awarding agencies and pass-through entities must not impose any other record retention requirements upon non-Federal entities. The only exceptions are the following:

(a) If any litigation, claim, or audit is started before the expiration of the 3-year period, the records must be retained until all litigation, claims, or audit findings involving the records have been resolved and final action taken.

(b) When the non-Federal entity is notified in writing by the Federal awarding agency, cognizant agency for audit, oversight agency for audit, cognizant agency for indirect costs, or pass-through entity to extend the retention period.

(c) Records for real property and equipment acquired with Federal funds must be retained for 3 years after final disposition.

(d) When records are transferred to or maintained by the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity, the 3-year retention requirement is not applicable to the non-Federal entity.

(e) Records for program income transactions after the period of performance. In some cases recipients must report program income after the period of performance. Where there is such a requirement, the retention period for the records pertaining to the earning of the program income starts from the end of the non-Federal entity's fiscal year in which the program income is earned.

(f) Indirect cost rate proposals and cost allocations plans. This paragraph applies to the following types of documents and their supporting records: indirect cost rate computations or proposals, cost allocation plans, and any similar accounting computations of the rate at which a particular group of costs is chargeable (such as computer usage chargeback rates or composite fringe benefit rates).

(1) If submitted for negotiation. If the proposal, plan, or other computation is required to be submitted to the Federal government (or to the pass-through entity) to form the basis for negotiation of the rate, then the 3-year retention period for its supporting records starts from the date of such submission.

(2) If not submitted for negotiation. If the proposal, plan, or other computation is not required to be submitted to the Federal government (or to the pass-through entity) for negotiation purposes, then the 3-year retention period for the proposal, plan, or computation and its supporting records starts from the end of the fiscal year (or other accounting period) covered by the proposal, plan, or other computation.



WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AGENCY

WIOA Program

Procedural Guidance

DATA VALIDATION

All participant records of the WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, In-School/Out-of-School Youth Programs, NDWG grant and Apprenticeship grant are subject to periodic Data Integrity and quarterly Data Element Validation to ensure the accuracy, validity, and reliability of the data. Moreover, data validation ensures the accuracy of quarterly and performance reports, safeguarding of data integrity, and the timely resolution of data anomalies and inaccuracies.

I. SAMPLING METHODOLOGY

The entire universe of WIOA Title I participant and exiter records are subject to quarterly Data Validation Review for accuracy and periodic or ongoing data integrity reviews for quality assurance and integrity on the accuracy, validity, and reliability of the data as stated in the Data Validation policy. Regular data integrity checks will be conducted to ensure accurate data entry in the case management system in each participant record, and assure that quarterly aggregate data is reported accurately. Individual data elements and source documentation are checked during data element validation.

II. DATA VALIDATION CHECKLIST

All participant and exiter records must include the Data Validation Checklist (Exhibit 1A). The checklist will be utilized by program staff to validate that the acceptable verification and source documentation was used by program staff to validate the required data element.

III. DATA VALIDATION REVIEW

For data integrity checks of accurate data entry, designated program staff will conduct a periodic review of all WIOA participant record at program entry; participation in a WIOA approved training service or activity; exit; and the duration of the follow-up period or the required data elements identified in Exhibit 1A. Exhibit 1B provides a flowchart of the process.

Data element validation will be conducted quarterly, and will compare what is reported in each data element against the source documentation and other information in the participant and exiter records.

IV. DATA REVIEW PASS OR FAIL FOR DATA VALIDATION

A case note will be completed in the participant's or exiter's record in the Management Information System or HireMarianas that a data validation review was conducted, at what participant level service that the review was conducted (program entry, participation in a program activity, exit, and follow-up), and whether the record passed or failed the review.

Records that fail the review will be addressed immediately and must be corrected within 30 days. Data in the MIS not matching source documentation or documents that did not meet the acceptable source documentation



WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AGENCY

WIOA Program

Procedural Guidance

DATA VALIDATION

of the required data element will be retained/frozen in the data validation file. Screen shots of erroneous data in the MIS will be taken and saved before the data is corrected in the MIS. The findings and error rates for data elements with high error trends will be shared with all program staff during the weekly briefing to ensure that it is not repeated.

For the duration of an individual's participation in a WIOA program, all records must be retained/frozen in the electronic file and the physical file. No documents, files will be destroyed for the required records retention period and is subject to the records retention policy (2 CFR 200.333).

EXHIBIT 1B
WORK PROCESS FOR DATA VALIDATION AND QUALITY ASSURANCE
AT
PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

The flowchart below details the processes for the periodic Data Quality Assurance Check at participation and eligibility determination and the duration of program participation leading to program exit and the follow-up period. It will also be used for quarterly data element validation reviews.

