

SOUTHWESTERN AREA  
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD  
PY2024-PY2027  
LOCAL WORKFORCE PLAN

# Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board

Local Four-Year Plan

July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2027  
PY2024 – PY2027

---

## Contact Information

Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board

PO Box 1072

Elephant Butte, NM 87935

(575) 744-4857

[www.EmployNM.com](http://www.EmployNM.com)

*The Southwestern Area Workforce Development SAWDB is an Equal Opportunity Employer and will make every effort to provide reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities who wish to attend a public meeting. Please provide notification at least 72 hours before the meeting by calling (575) 744-4857. WIOA Title I-financial assisted programs and activities are an Equal Opportunity Employer/Program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Relay New Mexico: 711 (Voice) or 1-800-659-8331 (TTY). For federal grant funding disclosures, visit <https://www.employnm.com/funding>*

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION .....	4
STRATEGIC PLANNING ELEMENTS.....	8
A. Economic and Workforce Analysis .....	8
B. Analysis of Workforce Development Activities.....	50
C. Strategic Vision and Goals .....	55
OPERATIONAL ELEMENTS .....	60
A. Local Workforce System Structure .....	60
B. Local Workforce Development System Alignment.....	89
C. Local Strategy Implementation .....	101
D. One-Stop Delivery System .....	113
E. Service Implementation for Indicated Populations.....	123
F. Coordination of Services Across Programs .....	159
ADMINISTRATIVE ELEMENTS .....	179
G. Fiscal and Performance Management.....	179
H. Definitions.....	183
I. Note on Regional Planning.....	185
J. Assurances.....	186
K. Attachments .....	188
Public Comment .....	195

## INTRODUCTION

The Southwestern Area workforce system comprises the following counties: Catron, Doña Ana, Grant, Hidalgo, Luna, Sierra, and Socorro. Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board (SAWDB or Board) must adhere to WIOA Sections 106 through 108 in preparing and submitting a Local Four-Year Plan (Local Plan). This Local Plan addresses the economic impact of COVID and the drastic shift in automation and remote opportunities. It outlines how the SAWDB and its workforce partners will devise actionable strategies to meet the needs of employers, job seekers, youth, and other targeted groups, including individuals with disabilities, veterans, older adults, low literacy, and low-income individuals. The WIOA Program Year (PY) 2024, July 1, 2024-June 30, 2027, Local Plan provides current information and includes all local policies. The Local Plan supports aligning with the goals and strategies contained in the New Mexico WIOA Combined State Plan PY 2024-2027.

The SAWDB introduces a relevant and highly efficient workforce development system. This system, designed to cultivate adaptable, work-ready, and skilled talent, aligns to meet the current and future demands of workers and businesses in our region. Our ultimate aim is to achieve and sustain economic prosperity, ensuring that Southwestern New Mexicans are well-equipped for the jobs of today and the evolving opportunities of tomorrow.

Performance management fosters a culture of accountability, transparency, and continuous improvement, ensuring that the SAWDB and WIOA Administrator effectively drive the vision of the Local Plan through the One-Stop Operator and WIOA providers. The SAWDB will develop a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) directly tied to the goals and objectives of the Local Plan. These KPIs will be communicated to the One-Stop Operator and WIOA providers and measured regularly, ensuring everyone aligns with the SAWDB's vision.

To realize this vision, we will foster dynamic collaboration with local industry sectors and engage closely with workforce and industry partners to deliver the skilled workforce our local industries require. Throughout the Local Plan, we refer to "stakeholders" and "workforce partners." Stakeholders encompass individuals or organizations with a vested interest in or those potentially affected by our policies, regulations, initiatives, or projects. Workforce partners comprise the WIOA mandatory core partners under Title I and other essential partners specified in the Act. CFR 678.400 lists the following partners:

1. Programs authorized under Title I of WIOA, including:
  - (i.) Adults;
  - (ii.) Dislocated workers;
  - (iii.) Youth;
  - (iv.) Job Corps;
  - (v.) YouthBuild;
  - (vi.) Native American programs; and
  - (vii.) Migrant and seasonal farmworker programs;
2. The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.), as amended by WIOA Title III;
3. The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) program authorized under Title II of WIOA;
4. The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program authorized under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.), as amended by WIOA Title IV;
5. The Senior Community Service Employment Program authorized under Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.);
6. Career and technical education programs at the postsecondary level authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.);
7. Trade Adjustment Assistance activities authorized under chapter 2 of Title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.);
8. Jobs for Veterans State Grants programs authorized under chapter 41 of Title 38, U.S.C.;
9. Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.);
10. Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development;
11. Programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws (in accordance with applicable Federal law);
12. Programs authorized under sec. 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17532); and
13. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) authorized under part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.), unless exempted by the Governor under § 678.405(b).

As regional collaborations expand, the SAWDB will focus on fostering strong partnerships across all workforce sectors. By working closely with all workforce partners, the SAWDB is committed to creating a cohesive and dynamic regional

workforce system that effectively addresses the needs of job seekers, employers, and communities. Over the next four years, the priority will be to strengthen and grow industry sector partnerships, ensuring deeper collaboration with business leaders to align workforce development efforts with the evolving demands of key industries in the Southwestern region.

### **Priority Industries**

The SAWDB has identified aerospace, agriculture, education, healthcare, logistics and warehousing, manufacturing, mining, hospitality, tourism, and information technology as its priority industries. Many of the Board's priorities align with the State's priority sectors, which are advanced manufacturing, aerospace, biosciences, broadband expansion, construction industries, early childhood education and care, energy transition and climate resilience, first responders, healthcare, including behavioral health, natural resource management, and sustainable and value-added agriculture.

The Career Pathways Plan is a strategic initiative designed to build a robust, adaptable workforce that meets the evolving needs of our region's industries. This plan follows the Department of Labor's Career Pathways Tool Kit and includes the following critical phases:

- Build Cross-Agency Partnerships
- Identify Industry Sectors and Engage Employers
- Design Education and Training Programs
- Identify Funding Needs and Resources
- Align Policies and Programs
- Measure System Change and Reporting

The SAWDB has identified healthcare and education as the primary sectors for initial engagement, employing a sector partnership strategy that brings together employers, training providers, and workforce partners. This targeted approach began years ago when the SAWDB's administrative entity partnered with the Centers for Health Innovation to initiate collaborations with rural healthcare employers. The SAWDB continues to focus on the healthcare sector, convening stakeholders to analyze existing career pathways and develop plans to strengthen and expand them. The exact process will be applied to the education sector in collaboration with public schools and educational entities, ensuring alignment with the Career Pathways Plan. This plan is accessible on the [employnm.com](https://employnm.com) website.

The SAWDB supports career pathway opportunities through America's Job Center offices. These offices assess individual needs and develop personalized employment plans, guiding individuals through steps leading to credential attainment and career

opportunities. Individuals can also use the online career exploration tools available at [employnm.com](http://employnm.com). These tools assist individuals in making informed career decisions based on their work interests and values. They also include a budget tool, “Why I Work,” which helps users understand the earnings needed to support their desired lifestyle. Users can explore various career paths, job outlooks, education requirements, and more with the assistance of a case manager at America’s Job Center to finalize their personal employment plans.

**Budget**

WIOA provides state Governors with funding that supports the needs of employers, job seekers, and youth through various funding streams. As per 20 CFR § 683.710, the local Chief Elected Officials (CEOs) in the Southwestern area of New Mexico are the grant recipients of the funds and work with the SAWDB to allocate funds for use within the region.

The SAWDB’s Local Plan describes the goals and service delivery strategies for adults, dislocated workers, and youth supported by the funding. The SAWDB invests the funds in career services, tuition assistance, on-the-job training, transitional jobs training, customized training, youth services, and supportive services.

The U.S. Department of Labor provides funding to the State of New Mexico, which allocates funds to the four local regions using a formula. The increases and decreases from one program year to another are solely based on the formula methodology.

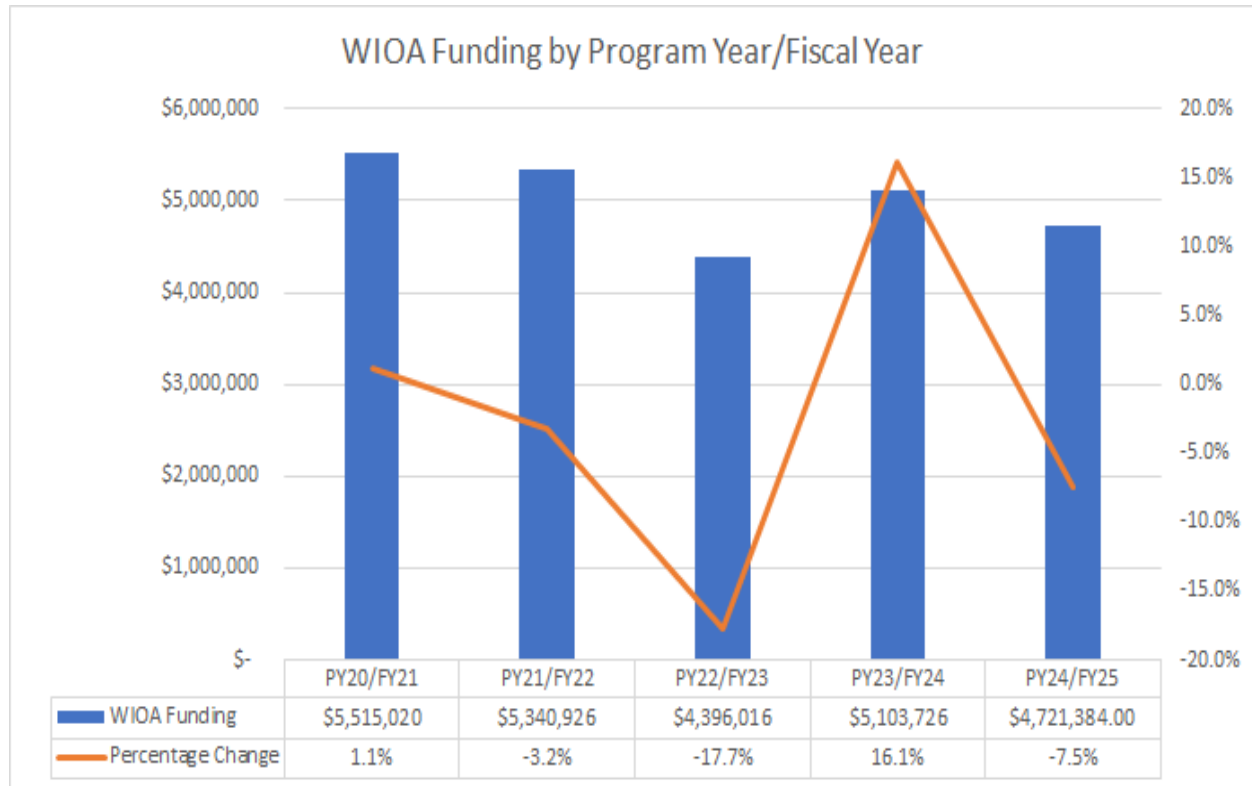
**Funding by Program Year**

Program Allocation	PY20/FY21	PY21/FY22	PY22/FY23	PY23/FY24	PY24/FY25
Administration (10% of Total)	\$ 551,401	\$ 534,092.00	\$ 439,601.00	\$ 510,373.00	\$ 472,139.00
Adult	\$ 1,232,683	\$ 1,216,353.00	\$ 952,829.00	\$ 1,143,028.00	\$ 1,035,554.00
Dislocated Worker	\$ 1,890,806	\$ 1,691,740.00	\$ 1,543,938.00	\$ 1,855,275.00	\$ 1,868,436.00
Youth	\$ 1,839,130	\$ 1,898,741.00	\$ 1,459,648.00	\$ 1,595,050.00	\$ 1,345,255.00
<b>Total Allocation</b>	<b>\$ 5,514,020</b>	<b>\$ 5,340,926.00</b>	<b>\$ 4,396,016.00</b>	<b>\$ 5,103,726.00</b>	<b>\$ 4,721,384.00</b>

Funds are allocated to each of the four local workforce boards by a formula based on factors described in the U.S. Department of Labor’s Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 16-19 for the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Allocations. New Mexico TEGL 16-19 requirements use prior-year data from the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions’ (NMDWS) Economic Research & Analysis Bureau.

In the following graph, the Percentage Change Y-axis shows changes in funding from one year to the next. In PY23, there is a 16.1% change from PY22, illustrating an increase in funding, and in PY24, a -7.5% decrease.

**WIOA Funding by Program/Fiscal Year**



**STRATEGIC PLANNING ELEMENTS**

**A. Economic and Workforce Analysis**

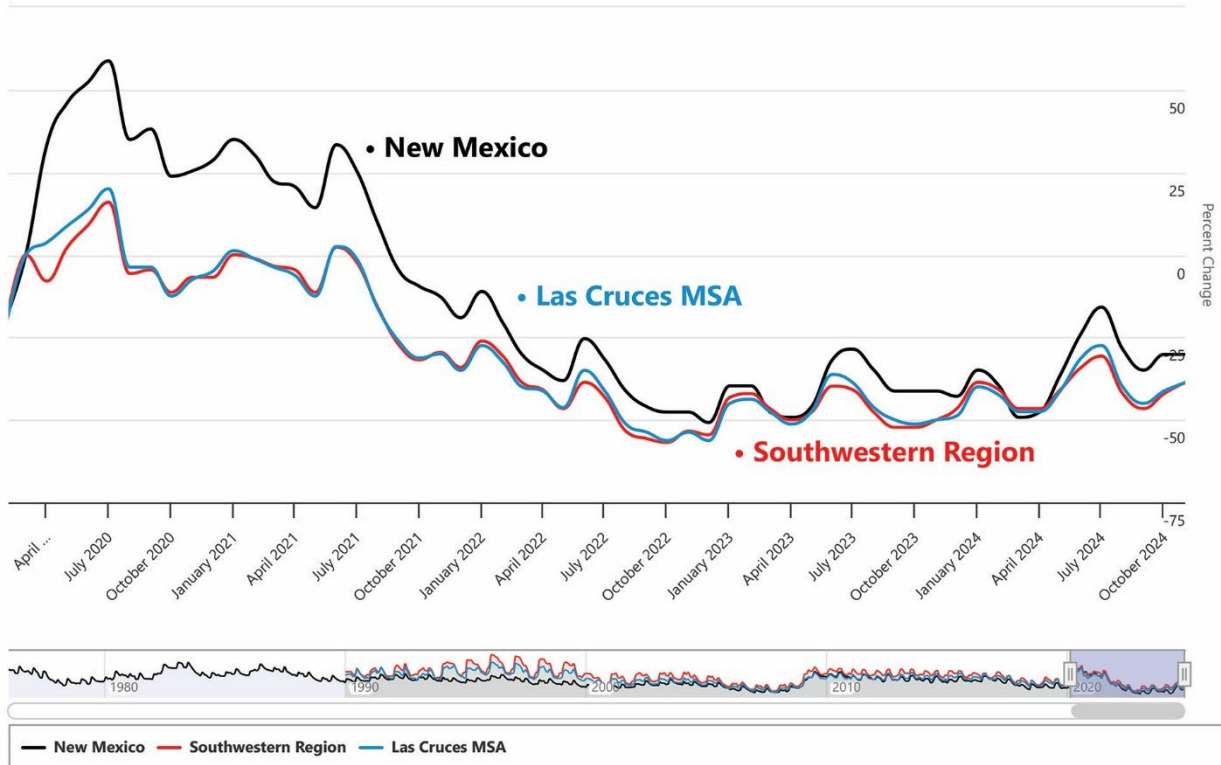
§679.560(a)(1)(i) Economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

In July 2020, the total civilian labor force (not seasonally adjusted) for New Mexico was 924,282. Of the 924,282, 831,832 were employed, and 92,450 were unemployed, giving New Mexico an unemployment rate of 10.0%. In the Southwestern Region, the total civilian labor force (not seasonally adjusted) in July 2020 was 129,974, of which 116,768 New Mexicans were employed and 13,206 were unemployed. The region’s unemployment rate was 10.2%, only 0.2% higher than the State. In the same month, the Las Cruces MSA had a total civilian labor force (not seasonally adjusted) of 94,808, with 85,716 individuals employed and 9,092 unemployed, resulting in an unemployment rate of 9.6%.

Two years later, in July 2022, New Mexico’s unemployment rate dropped to 4.3%, the Southwestern Region’s fell to 5.0%, and the Las Cruces MSA dipped to 5.2%. In July 2024, New Mexico reported a total civilian labor force (not seasonally adjusted) of 984,548 with an unemployment rate of 5.3%, 6.1% for the Southwestern Region, and 5.8% for the Las Cruces MSA. This trend shows that the Southwestern region’s



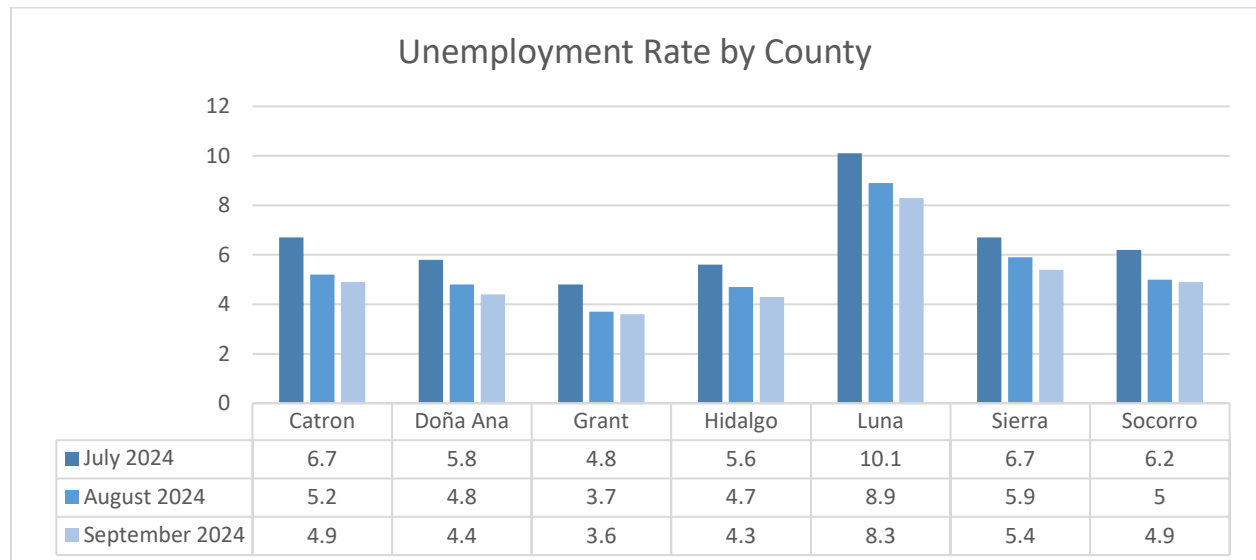
Not seasonally adjusted Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment data in Multiple Areas  
 Unemployment Rate (%) July 2020 - July 2024



Source: NMDWS, Local Area Unemployment Statistics program in conjunction with U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics  
 Downloaded: 01/14/2025 12:23 PM

unemployment rate is consistently higher than that of the entire state of New Mexico but always within 1%. The Las Cruces MSA reports more active unemployment that began lower than the State's in 2020 (coming in under 10%), tied with the State in July 2021 at 7.9%, ending this four-year trend in the middle of the State and Southwestern region's numbers.

Unemployment Rate by County



At 10.1 percent in July 2024, Luna County had New Mexico's highest (not seasonally adjusted) unemployment rate. Luna County faces unique challenges due to its proximity to the border and a high population of migrant seasonal farmworkers (MSFWs). This distinct location results in a confluence of factors contributing to its high unemployment rate. The county's economic landscape is shaped by its reliance on seasonal agricultural work and its status as a border community, which creates barriers to stable, year-round employment and impacts the availability of diverse job opportunities. Some of the reasons for the low unemployment rates in Luna County are as follows:

1. **Seasonal Nature of Employment:** The agricultural jobs that many MSFWs rely on are highly seasonal. Farmworkers may find it challenging to secure stable employment during off-seasons, contributing to higher unemployment rates.
2. **Limited Diversification of the Economy:** Luna County's economy may rely heavily on agriculture and other sectors, leading to limited job opportunities outside of the peak agricultural season. This lack of diversification can result in higher unemployment rates when there are downturns in those specific sectors.
3. **Lack of Access to Stable, Year-Round Employment:** MSFWs often face barriers to stable, year-round jobs due to limited education, language barriers, and lack of transferable skills outside of agriculture. These barriers create a cycle of dependence on seasonal work and leave them vulnerable to periods of unemployment.
4. **Rural and Isolated Location:** Luna County's rural and isolated location means fewer employers and less access to various job opportunities. Additionally, transportation barriers may limit residents' ability to travel to other areas for work.
5. **Barriers to Workforce Participation:** Many MSFWs face inadequate housing, healthcare, childcare, and education, affecting their ability to find and maintain employment. The high unemployment rate may reflect these systemic challenges that prevent individuals from fully participating in the workforce.
6. **Undocumented or Unauthorized Status:** Some MSFWs may be undocumented or have limited work authorization, restricting their employment options to the informal or seasonal job market. Such restrictions can skew official unemployment rates as many in this demographic may not qualify for unemployment benefits or are not considered part of the labor force.
7. **Impact of the Cliff Effect:** Workers transitioning from seasonal farm work to better-paying jobs may lose childcare or food assistance benefits. The fear of losing these benefits (the Cliff Effect) can discourage them from seeking year-round employment, contributing to the region's unemployment rate.
8. **Fluctuating Agricultural Market:** Changes in agricultural demand, pricing, and policies can affect the number of available jobs for MSFWs, leading to increased unemployment during periods of low demand.

Addressing these issues requires targeted interventions, such as workforce training programs, access to supportive services, and economic diversification strategies.

To address the high unemployment rate, the SAWDB can implement several realistic solutions:

1. Expand Access to Year-Round Employment Opportunities through Skills Training and Apprenticeships
  - Skills Training and Certification Programs: The one-stop system and its partners can focus on developing targeted skills training programs that align with year-round employment opportunities beyond agriculture. For example, training programs in healthcare, manufacturing, hospitality, and renewable energy would provide MSFWs with more stable employment. Courses could cover soft skills, language proficiency (ESL), digital literacy, and industry-specific skills.
  - Registered Apprenticeships and On-the-Job Training (OJT): Promoting apprenticeships and OJT programs can provide MSFWs, especially youth, with pathways to earn while they learn. Partnering with local businesses and employers in the manufacturing, logistics, construction, and healthcare sectors will help them gain credentials and experience, leading to more permanent employment.
2. Co-Enrollment and Resource Braiding for Comprehensive Support Services
  - Co-Enrollment with Core WIOA Partners: By co-enrolling MSFWs in WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, and other core partner programs (e.g., TANF, Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education), MSFWs can access a broader range of services, including skills training, job placement, and wraparound supports. This approach ensures a more integrated service delivery model tailored to their individual needs.
  - Wraparound Support Services: Addressing barriers like transportation, childcare, housing, and healthcare can ensure MSFWs can participate in training and employment. The WIOA system can braid resources from various funding streams to provide comprehensive support. For example, leveraging partnerships with the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) and Motivational Education and Training (METS), NMSU College Assistant Migrant Program (CAMP), community organizations, and state agencies to provide supportive services that reduce barriers to workforce participation.

By implementing these strategies within the WIOA system, Luna County can help MSFWs move into more stable, year-round employment, ultimately reducing the region's high unemployment rate.

## Major Employers

The major employers in the Southwestern region of New Mexico are the State of New Mexico, White Sands Missile Range, the City of Las Cruces, New Mexico State University, federal and municipal government, regional hospitals, and the international US/Mexico border complex (Border Plex).

In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, significant shifts have occurred in the workforce across the country, and Southwestern New Mexico is no exception. The pandemic accelerated trends like remote work, automation, and digital transformation, reshaping how businesses operate and workers engage with their jobs.

Remote work, once a niche option, has become a mainstream mode of employment. Many organizations in the Southwestern region have adopted hybrid work models, allowing employees to split their time between working from home and the office. This flexibility has increased job satisfaction and expanded access to talent by enabling employers to recruit from a broader geographic area. However, it also presents challenges, particularly in rural areas where reliable broadband connectivity remains a concern. Addressing this digital divide is crucial for ensuring all residents can fully participate in the evolving workforce.

Automation and the adoption of advanced technologies have also seen a surge. From manufacturing to healthcare, businesses across various sectors have increasingly integrated automated systems and artificial intelligence to enhance efficiency, reduce costs, and maintain operations during disruptions. In the Southwestern region, industries like agriculture, mining, and logistics are exploring automation to address labor shortages and improve productivity. While this shift opens new opportunities for high-tech jobs, it also necessitates upskilling the existing workforce to meet the demands of more technology-driven roles.

The rise of gig and freelance work is another trend gaining traction. Many workers in the Southwestern region have turned to gig economy platforms to supplement their income or as a primary source of employment. This shift reflects a broader trend toward more flexible, project-based work arrangements, which appeal to those seeking autonomy and work-life balance.

The workforce trends in Southwestern New Mexico underscore the need for targeted workforce development strategies. The region must focus on equipping its labor force with the skills required for remote work, digital literacy, and adapting to new technologies. Educational institutions and training providers are pivotal in this effort, offering programs that align with the needs of emerging industries and the demands of a post-pandemic economy.

### Industries by Projected Growth

The following table shows the industries with the highest total employment change in Southwestern New Mexico for the 2022-2032. Health Care and Social Assistance ranks highest with current estimated employment, highest projected employment, and highest employment increase over a ten-year period with a total percentage change of 38%. Educational Services ranks second for projected employment in 2032 but only sees an estimated employment change of 847 individuals. Although Accommodation and Food Services ranks fifth in the table for estimated employment and projected employment, the total employment change ranks second, after Health Care and Social Assistance, with 2,169 estimated jobs filled.

Industry Employment Projections - Long Term

The table below shows the industries with the highest total annual percent change in the Southwestern Region, NM for the 2022-2032 time period.

Rank	Industry	Estimated Employment	Projected Employment	Total Employment Change	Annual Percent Change	Total Percent Change
1	Health Care and Social Assistance	20,743	28,606	7,863	3%	38%
2	Educational Services	14,214	15,061	847	1%	6%
3	Total Government (Projections)	12,583	12,453	-130	0%	-1%
4	Retail Trade	11,054	12,049	995	1%	9%
5	Accommodation and Food Services	10,342	12,511	2,169	2%	21%
6	Construction	4,692	5,189	497	1%	11%
7	Manufacturing	4,429	5,176	747	2%	17%
8	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	4,101	4,609	508	1%	12%
9	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	4,044	4,479	435	1%	11%
10	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	3,661	3,603	-58	0%	-2%

Source: NMDWS, Employment Projections program

Downloaded: Fri Aug 30 2024 08:57:02 GMT-0600 (Mountain Daylight Time)

### Emerging In-Demand Industry Sectors

The table above shows the top ten industries with the highest total employment change. The Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation industry has an estimated employment projection of 1,272. It is not a significant enough number to make it to the top ten list. However, when looking at an estimated employment of 815 in 2022, that is an increase of 56% over ten years. This sector is rapidly growing, particularly with the film industry's rise in Southwestern New Mexico. Establishing a new film studio in Las Cruces and associated tax incentives have spurred job creation in film production, event coordination, and related fields. The arts and entertainment sector contributes significantly to the local economy, offering diverse career opportunities.

### Economic Conditions and In-Demand Industry Sectors in Southwestern New Mexico

Southwestern New Mexico's economic landscape is experiencing significant shifts influenced by existing and emerging industry trends. The region sees substantial growth in several key sectors, driven by local and national economic factors. Understanding

these conditions is crucial for aligning workforce development strategies with market needs.

### Existing In-Demand Industry Sectors

The Top Industries by Advertised Jobs table shows that Health Care and Social Assistance leads with 1,642 job openings, followed by Educational Services at 882. Administrative and Support roles and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services have 790 and 726 openings, respectively, indicating strong demand.

Retail Trade of 416 and Public Administration of 351 also offer notable job opportunities. Accommodation and Food Services, Manufacturing, and Other Services show moderate demand, with 212, 170, and 119 positions each. Job in Wholesale Trade rounds out the list with 95 openings, illustrating a range of available roles across various sectors.

### Top Industries by Advertised Jobs

Industries by Advertised Jobs			
Top Industries by Advertised Jobs	Rank	Industry	Job Openings
	1	Health Care and Social Assistance	1,642
	2	Educational Services	882
	3	Administrative and Support and Waste Management	790
	4	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	726
	5	Retail Trade	416
	6	Public Administration	351
	7	Accommodation and Food Services	212
	8	Manufacturing	170
	9	Other Services (except Public Administration)	119
10	Wholesale Trade	95	

Source: NMDWS, Online advertised jobs data

**Healthcare and Social Assistance:** The healthcare sector remains a cornerstone of Southwestern New Mexico's economy, with a continuous demand for healthcare professionals driven by an aging population and increased healthcare needs. Jobs in nursing, medical assisting, and social work are prevalent and growing. A robust network of healthcare facilities and educational institutions provides stable employment opportunities.

**Educational Services:** Educational institutions, including schools and vocational training centers, play a vital role in the local economy. With a focus on academic attainment and skills development, there is a strong demand for educators, administrative staff, and educational support roles. This sector is crucial for preparing the future workforce and supporting lifelong learning initiatives.

The Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services sector includes businesses that provide routine support for other organizations' daily operations, often on a contract or fee basis. Services offered include office administration, personnel hiring, clerical work, security, cleaning, and waste disposal. While these activities may also be done in-house, companies in this sector specialize in delivering these services across various industries. Establishments handling strategic planning for a company are classified under Sector 55, Management of Companies and Enterprises, while government program management falls under Sector 92, Public Administration.

### **Aligning Workforce Development with Economic Trends**

The local workforce system must align its strategies with these economic conditions to effectively support these growing sectors. By leveraging WIOA funds and collaborating with industry partners, the workforce system can provide targeted training programs and career pathways that meet the demands of these in-demand industries. Initiatives should focus on:

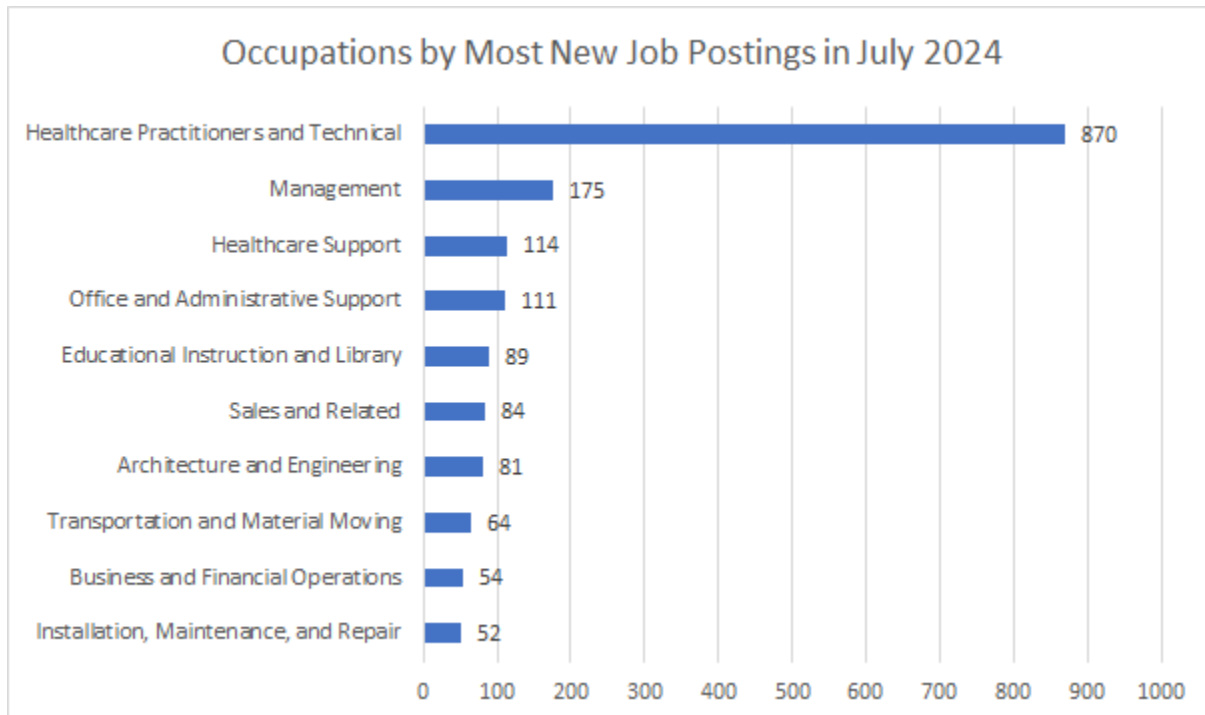
- (1) **Training and Certification Programs:** Developing and expanding training programs that align with the skills needed in these growing sectors, including healthcare certifications, hospitality management courses, and film production training.
- (2) **Partnerships with Local Employers:** Establishing strong partnerships with local businesses and industry leaders to ensure that training programs are relevant and responsive to current job market needs.
- (3) **Supportive Services:** Providing supportive services such as childcare, transportation assistance, and financial aid to help individuals navigate career pathways and gain the necessary skills to thrive in these in-demand sectors.

By addressing these economic conditions and developing relevant skills, the Southwestern region can enhance its workforce readiness and support the growth of key industry sectors, ultimately driving regional economic development.

The following is a comprehensive overview of the economic conditions in the Southwestern region, highlighting both existing and emerging sectors while outlining strategic actions to align workforce development efforts with these trends.

The SAWDB's Individual Training Account policy and guidance letter describe the criteria for an occupation in-demand within the seven-county area and participant eligibility. The Board defines an "occupation in demand" as those with annual openings of 4 or more or a yearly total percent change of 8% or more. Staff can find projections in the labor market information on the New Mexico Workforce Connection Online System

(NMWCOS) and upload them into the participant's online file. The Board may also approve training services for occupations determined in sectors of the economy that have a high potential for sustained demand or growth in the local area and/or those designated as priority industries within the region.



### **1. Occupations by Fastest Growth:**

#### **Occupations with the Fastest Growth in the Southwestern Region:**

For 2024, employment projections for key sectors in the Southwestern Region of New Mexico indicate strong growth trends. Here's an updated breakdown based on the latest data:

- **Healthcare Support:** In 2024, the healthcare sector employed approximately 9,750 individuals in Healthcare Support roles. This number is expected to grow to about 14,450 by 2034, reflecting a robust annual growth rate of 3.95%. This sector remains critical in meeting the healthcare needs of a growing and aging population.
- **Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations:** Employment in this sector is projected to rise from 6,650 in 2024 to around 8,950 by 2034, with an average annual growth rate of 2.70%. The increase highlights the growing demand for healthcare professionals in the region.
- **Community and Social Service Occupations:** The sector employed 2,120 individuals in 2024 and is projected to grow to 2,590 by 2034, with an annual

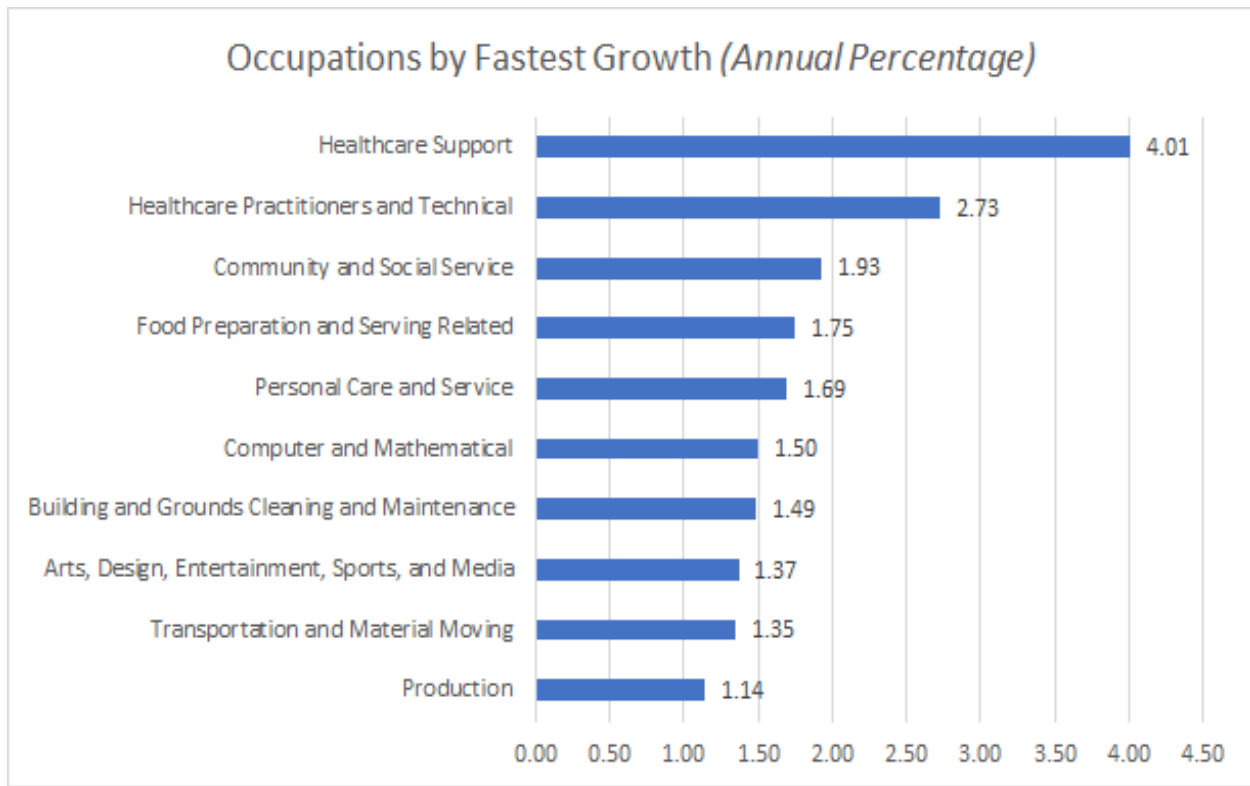


growth rate of 2.08%. This growth reflects the ongoing need for social services as communities focus on improving well-being.

- **Food Preparation and Serving-Related Occupations:** The number of people employed in food preparation and serving-related roles was around 9,950 in 2024 and is projected to grow to approximately 11,850 by 2034, with an annual growth rate of 1.75%. As tourism and hospitality industries recover, this sector shows steady growth.
- **Production Occupations:** Employment in production roles is expected to increase from 3,880 in 2024 to 4,380 by 2034, with a more modest annual growth rate of 1.22%. This slower growth reflects the broader shift toward automation and technology in manufacturing.

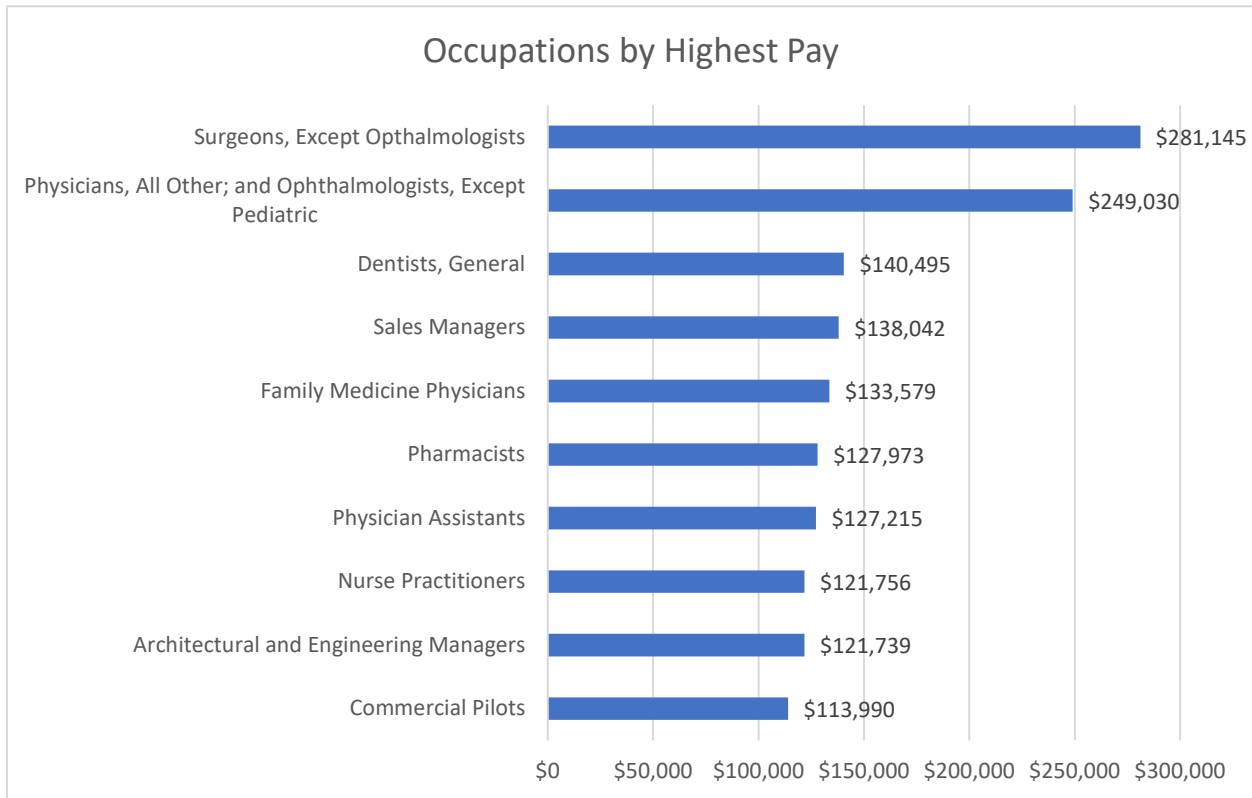
These projections underscore the continued importance of Healthcare Support and Practitioners while other sectors, such as Social Services and Food Preparation, maintain steady growth. For workforce development and WIOA strategies, this data can inform resource allocation and program development to prepare the workforce for the demands of these expanding sectors. This aligns with broader WIOA goals to equip workers with the necessary skills for in-demand industries and foster regional economic growth.

For more detailed projections and data, refer to NMWCOS's occupational outlook and employment projections resources.



**2. Occupations by Highest Pay:**

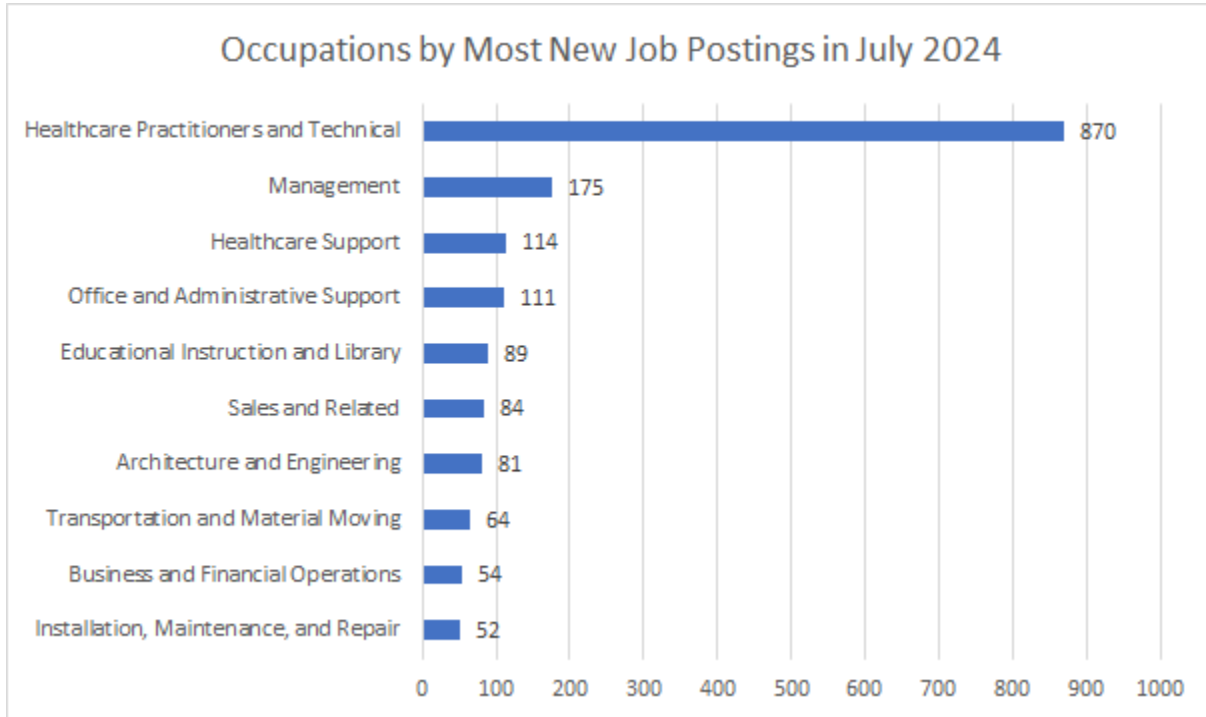
A closer look at the emerging high-demand occupations in high-wage occupations in the Southwestern region reveals that the positions with the highest pay are in a handful of categories, including Surgeons, Physicians, Dentists, Sales Managers, Pharmacists, Physician Assistants, Nurse Practitioners, Architectural and Engineering Managers, and Commercial Pilots.



**3. Occupations by Most Job Openings**

As reflected in the following table, in July 2024, the Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations category led in new job postings with 870 openings, reflecting high demand for patient care roles. Management positions followed with 175 postings, supporting the need for leadership across industries. Healthcare Support had 114 openings, which is essential for assisting primary healthcare providers.

Other sectors with important job postings include Educational Instruction and Library with 89, Sales and Related Services with 84, and Architecture and Engineering with 81, each playing vital roles in education, sales, and infrastructure. Transportation and Material Moving had 64 job postings, Business and Financial Operations 54, and Installation, Maintenance, and Repair had 52 postings, highlighting operational and logistical needs across industries.



**Economic Conditions—Unemployment Rates**

The data contained in the chart below shows the trend in the average unemployment rate for the SW Region and New Mexico from 2019-2023. In 2019, the rates of 6.2% regionally and 5.0% in New Mexico experienced significant shifts in 2020, mainly reflecting the impacts of the pandemic. As the economy started to recover, the unemployment rates began to fall in 2021. They continued to drop over the next two years, resulting in unemployment rates of 4.7% in the Southwestern region and 3.8% in New Mexico.

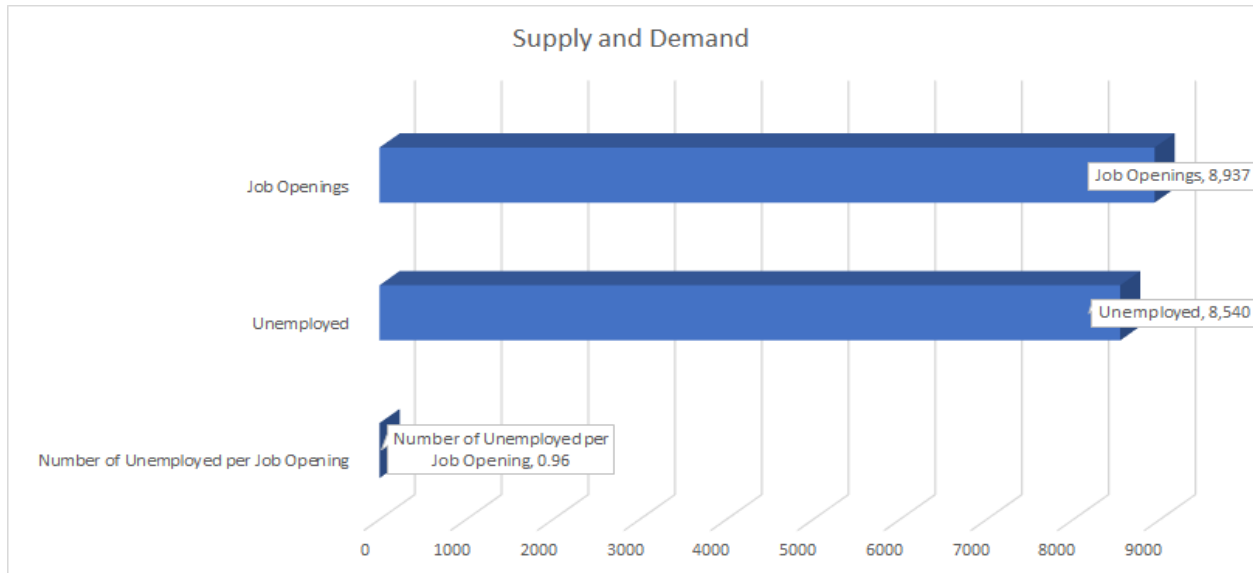
**1. Average Unemployment Rate by Year**

SW Region / New Mexico

<b>Average Unemployment Rate by year</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>SW</b>	<b>NM</b>
	2019	6.2%	5.0%
	2020	8.4%	7.9%
	2021	7.6%	7.1%
	2022	4.9%	4.1%
	2023	4.7%	3.8%

Source: NMDWS, Local Area Unemployment Statistics program in conjunction with U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

## Supply and Demand



In analyzing the current labor market conditions in Southwestern New Mexico, recent data highlights a critical aspect of our regional employment landscape. The graph shows that there are currently 8,937 job openings compared to 8,540 unemployed individuals in the region. This results in a ratio of approximately 0.96 unemployed individuals per job opening.

This data is particularly significant for the Local Plan for workforce development and implementing the WIOA one-stop system. The near parity between the number of job openings and the number of unemployed individuals suggests a tight labor market. However, the close ratio also indicates potential employment placement and job-matching challenges.

### Implications for the Local Four-Year Plan and WIOA System:

**Enhanced Job Matching Services:** The data indicates that job-matching efficiency could be improved while there are nearly as many job openings as unemployed individuals. The Board plans to improve job matching services within the WIOA one-stop system to better align job seekers with available opportunities, including leveraging data-driven tools and resources to ensure that job seekers are aware of and prepared for available positions.

**Targeted Workforce Development:** The near equilibrium between job openings and unemployment underscores the need for targeted workforce development programs. The Board will address skill gaps by ensuring that training programs closely align with the skills demanded by employers. In doing this, the Southwestern region can improve job seekers' employability and increase their chances of securing unoccupied positions.

**Support for Job Seekers:** The data highlights the importance of providing robust support services to job seekers, particularly those who may face additional barriers to employment. The Board will devise strategies to enhance access to career counseling, résumé building, interview preparation, and targeted support for individuals with disabilities and other challenges.

**Employer Engagement:** Engaging with employers to understand their specific needs and challenges can help bridge the gap between job openings and job seekers. The WIOA one-stop system will facilitate stronger partnerships with local businesses to tailor job training and placement services to meet the demands of the regional labor market.

The current unemployment data underscores the need for a dynamic and responsive workforce development strategy. By focusing on job matching, targeted skills development, comprehensive supportive services, and employer engagement, the Local Plan can effectively address the employment needs of the Southwestern region and support a more balanced and efficient labor market.

---

[§679.560\(a\)\(1\)\(ii\) Include a regional analysis of employment needs of employers in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations.](#)

---

**Top Ten Industries**

The table below lists the top ten industries posting jobs in the region. These industries are experiencing a shortage of skilled applicants for two significant reasons. First is the skills gap in healthcare and education, especially in rural areas. Second is the decline in the labor participation rate, currently at 57.4% in the region compared to 62.9% across the US.

**Top Industries by Advertised Jobs**

Industries by Advertised Jobs			
Top Industries by Advertised Jobs	Rank	Industry	Job Openings
	1	Health Care and Social Assistance	1,642
	2	Educational Services	882
	3	Administrative and Support and Waste Management	790
	4	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	726
	5	Retail Trade	416
	6	Public Administration	351
	7	Accommodation and Food Services	212
	8	Manufacturing	170
	9	Other Services (except Public Administration)	119
	10	Wholesale Trade	95

Source: NMDWS, Online advertised jobs data

## Existing and Emerging In-Demand Industry Sectors

### **Healthcare:**

**Current Needs:** The healthcare sector remains a significant employer in the region, driven by major facilities such as Memorial Medical Center and Gila Regional Medical Center. There is a strong demand for positions in nursing, medical assisting, healthcare administration, and mental health services.

**Emerging Trends:** Increasing emphasis on telehealth and digital health technologies requires IT support, telemedicine operations, and data management skills.

### **Technology:**

**Current Needs:** Technology roles are expanding due to IT support, software development, and cybersecurity growth. Key players include institutions like New Mexico State University and tech startups.

**Emerging Trends:** Advancements in artificial intelligence, data analytics, and software development are driving demand for specialized skills in these areas.

### **Manufacturing:**

**Current Needs:** Manufacturing is a core industry, with companies like Freeport-McMoRan Copper & Gold driving demand for skilled labor in operations, logistics, and equipment maintenance.

**Emerging Trends:** There is a growing need for workers skilled in advanced manufacturing technologies, including automation and robotics.

### **Agriculture:**

**Current Needs:** Agriculture remains vital, focusing on labor for crop production, livestock management, and agricultural technology.

**Emerging Trends:** The sector is seeing increased demand for skills in precision agriculture, sustainability practices, and agricultural technology integration.

### **Film Industry:**

**Current Needs:** The film industry is emerging as a significant sector, with growing interest in New Mexico as a filming location. Key roles include production assistants, set designers, and post-production technicians.

**Emerging Trends:** As the industry expands, there is an increasing need for specialized skills in digital media, animation, and film production technology.

## Top Ten Occupations

The table below illustrates the top ten occupations within the industries mentioned on the previous page. In Southwestern New Mexico, as with the rest of the state, jobs in the healthcare industry are prevalent. Applicants from other states will mostly fill these

jobs. Recruiting young professionals to move to rural locations has been a problem many organizations have been working on for decades. The lack of available transportation in most rural communities only exasperates the barrier to employing local talent and attracting a younger workforce from larger cities.

**Occupations by Advertised Jobs**

<b>Occupations by Advertised Jobs</b>			
<b>Top Occupations by Advertised Jobs</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Job Openings</b>
	1	Registered Nurses	239
	2	Physicians, All Other	159
	3	Personal Care Aides	145
	4	Customer Service Representatives	93
	5	Nurse Practitioners	84
	6	Physical Therapists	66
	7	Nursing Assistants	61
	8	Retail Salespersons	59
	9	Office Clerks, General	57
	10	Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	55

*Source: NMDWS, Online advertised jobs data*

Today’s healthcare workers are starting to age out of the workforce system and are retiring, and fewer young people are seeking education to fill these positions. Also, more Americans are entering retirement. This elderly population will only increase the need for workers with the skills to care for them.

**Top Growing Occupations**

The following table shows the annual employment projections by potential regional job openings. The projections demonstrate that demand for entry-level positions will be substantial in some areas. However, these positions do not pay a sustaining wage for employees who are head of their household. On the other hand, these positions are vital and can be a gateway to starting a career pathway for younger people. The workforce region will work to increase the amount of entry-level skills training programs to keep these workers on a career pathway that will lead to jobs that pay a living wage.

### Top Growing Occupations



Source: NMDWS Employment Projections program and Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics (OEWS) Program

= 80 Annual Openings

Career pathways in Southwestern New Mexico are essential for helping workers progress from entry-level positions to higher-wage, sustainable careers. The unique position of the workforce system facilitates this transition by offering training, education, and support services tailored to the needs of both workers and employers.

Career pathways aim to create a clear, accessible route for individuals to gain the skills and credentials needed to advance in their chosen industry. Workers often begin in entry-level jobs, but with targeted interventions such as on-the-job training, apprenticeships, and partnerships with local educational institutions, they can develop the competencies required for higher-level positions. The SAWDB and its one-stop partners are committed to supporting these efforts through WIOA-funded programs tailored to meet the demands of local industries, such as healthcare, manufacturing, and the film industry.

One challenge workers face on career pathways is the "Cliff Effect," where wage increases result in the loss of social benefits like childcare subsidies and housing assistance. Without these supportive services, workers may struggle to sustain higher earnings, leading to a potential return to poverty. This issue underscores the importance of developing local solutions, such as braiding WIOA funds with TANF resources to extend supportive services. Integrating the TANF program into the one-stop system presents an opportunity to mitigate the Cliff Effect by creating more robust support mechanisms for individuals transitioning from entry-level jobs to higher-paying careers, allowing for a more comprehensive approach to service delivery, ensuring that workers continue receiving essential supportive services even as their income rises.

Career pathways can be designed to include flexible training options that align with the schedules and needs of workers, helping them overcome barriers to career advancement while receiving continuous assistance through the one-stop system.



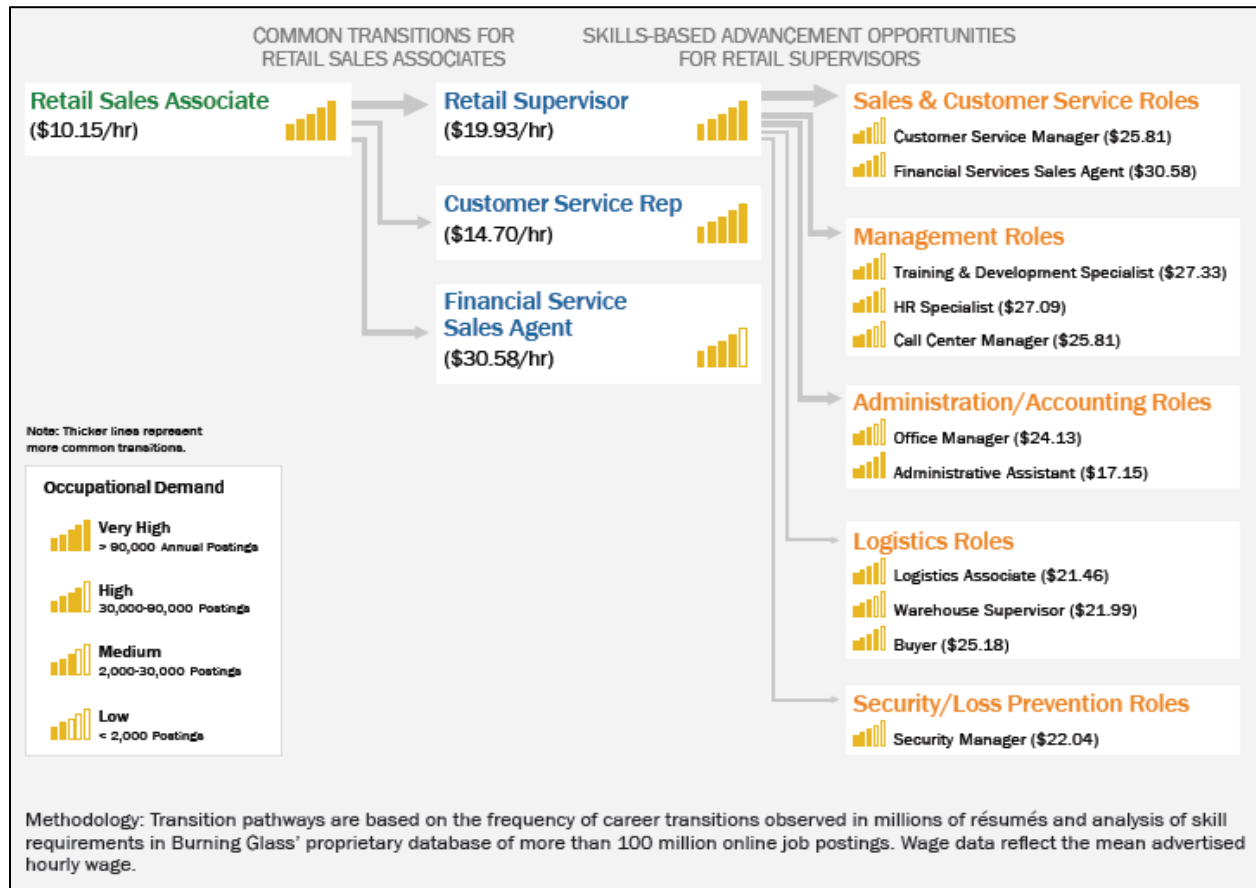
Through strong partnerships with local industries, educational institutions, and service providers, the workforce system in the Southwestern region can help workers successfully navigate these pathways. The result is a more resilient, well-trained workforce that meets the needs of the region's growing industries while providing workers with the opportunity for upward mobility.

Through strong partnerships with local industries, educational institutions, and service providers, the workforce system in Southwestern New Mexico can help workers successfully navigate these pathways. The result is a more resilient, well-trained workforce that meets the needs of the region's growing industries while providing workers with the opportunity for upward mobility.

### Sample Career Pathway

The next page shows an example of a career pathway for an entry-level sales associate position. An entry-level employee only needs specific short-term training programs to move to the next level of employment, as most of the skills required will come with experience as the employee moves across the chart.

### Sample Career Pathway



---

§679.560(a)(2) Knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of employers in the region, including employment needs in In-Demand industry sectors and occupations.

---

In Southwestern New Mexico, the demand for skilled workers across several in-demand sectors rapidly evolves due to automation, remote work, and technology integration shifts. Key sectors such as Healthcare and Social Assistance, Accommodation and Food Services, Educational Services, Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Manufacturing, and Agriculture all see the need for workers with both foundational and specialized skills to adapt to these trends.

### **Automation Trends**

Automation is driving a need for workers skilled in digital tools, data management, and machine operation across industries. In Healthcare, for example, medical coding and data management are becoming more automated, requiring workers to possess health informatics and data analysis skills. Similarly, in Manufacturing, robotics, and automated systems are on the rise, creating the need for workers with both traditional trade skills and the ability to operate and maintain these new technologies.

Automation reshapes farming practices by introducing advanced machinery, automated irrigation systems, and data-driven farming techniques. Workers must be proficient in using agricultural technologies, including drones, GPS-guided equipment, and crop monitoring software, to enhance productivity and sustainability.

### **Remote Work**

The shift to remote work is affecting various industries, particularly in professional services, education, and even some segments of agriculture, like agricultural technology and data analysis roles. Employers are now seeking workers with strong digital communication skills, familiarity with remote collaboration tools, and the ability to self-manage. Educational services require educators who can effectively deliver online instruction and navigate educational platforms, while digital content creation and marketing have become essential in arts and entertainment.

### **Healthcare and Social Assistance**

Telehealth and digital health platforms are expanding, requiring healthcare professionals to develop skills in patient care and medical software while also mastering telecommunication technologies for remote consultations. Workers need clinical care and technology training to meet the growing demand for remote healthcare services.

### **Hospitality and Food Services**

With the growth of tourism and the Arts and Entertainment sector, particularly in Las Cruces, and the development of the new film studio, there is an increased need for customer service, digital marketing, and management skills. The hospitality sector also sees automation in hotels and kitchens, where workers must now operate and maintain automated systems.

### **Agriculture**

The agriculture sector is modernizing, with technology playing an increasing role in everything from planting and harvesting to supply chain management. Agricultural workers must develop precision agriculture, data analysis, and equipment management skills to stay competitive in the industry.

By focusing on the specific needs of the agricultural sector, particularly chile farming, and the migrant and seasonal workforce that supports it, the SAWDB can create career pathways that lead to more stable and higher-paying jobs. This will strengthen the agricultural industry and provide long-term economic opportunities for workers across the region.

### **Addressing Trends through Workforce Development**

Southwestern New Mexico's workforce system will prioritize digital literacy, technology skills, adaptability, and continuous training to meet growing demands. WIOA-funded programs coordinated through One-Stop partners can provide the necessary training in automation technologies, remote work competencies, and industry-specific technical skills. This approach will allow workers to progress into career pathways that support long-term growth in the region's evolving job market while ensuring industries like agriculture, healthcare, and manufacturing remain competitive and innovative.

By aligning training with industry needs, the workforce system can ensure employers and workers benefit from a skilled workforce ready to meet the challenges of automation, remote work, and other trends.

### **Technology**

The addition of technology, such as computer-based intelligence, will replace the need for human capital. Manual jobs will be most at risk, while jobs that require empathy, like caretakers and social workers, will still be in demand. These changes do not necessarily mean a loss of employment, as new jobs will be created to adapt. The need to develop new training programs to meet the needs of employers today and tomorrow will determine the success of this and any workforce program.

**Work Experience of Jobs and Candidates**

The following table shows the minimum required work experience for job openings advertised online in the Southwestern region and the percentage of potentially qualified candidates in the workforce system that are looking for work.

As of August 31, 2024, data from the workforce system indicates that the most prevalent experience level among job seekers in the Southwestern region is "More than 10 Years," comprising 39.02% of all candidate résumés, followed by those with "2 to 5 Years" of experience, accounting for 18.42% of résumés, and "5 to 10 Years" of experience, which makes up 18.14% of the total candidate pool.

These insights highlight a workforce rich in experienced professionals, underscoring the need for targeted strategies to leverage their skills in sectors that align with regional economic priorities. The SAWDB can use this data to guide employers in accessing this talent pool and tailor workforce programs that match job seekers' skills and experience levels with current and future industry demands.

**Work Experience of Jobs & Candidates**

Minimum Required Work Experience				
Work Experience of Jobs & Candidates	Rank	Experience	Job Openings	% Potential Candidates
	1	Entry Level	344	N/A
	2	Less than 1 year	82	12.01%
	3	1 Year to 2 Years	4,545	12.41%
	4	2 Years to 5 Years	98	18.42%
	5	5 Years to 10 Years	41	18.14%
	6	More than 10 Years	4	39.02%

*Source: NMDWS, Online advertised jobs data*

**Top Ten Tools or Tech Skills**

The table below shows the top ten tools or tech skills needed by employers in the list is taken from job advertisements employers post on the state online database and gives us a very focused list of degrees, certifications, and training programs that need to be available in all seven counties of the workforce region. While employees may obtain cash register and forklift skills on the job, employers still want new employees to have

these skills before applying, thus delaying some participants from starting employment and possibly prolonging their career development.

### **Advertised Tools & Technologies for Job Openings**

<b>Tool and Technologies in Job Openings Advertised Online</b>			
<b>Advertised Tools and Technology</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Tool or Technology</b>	<b>Jobs Openings</b>
	1	Microsoft (MS) Office	559
	2	Personal protective equipment	299
	3	Microsoft PowerPoint	253
	4	Masks	199
	5	Personal Computer (PC)	190
	6	Video cassette recorders	117
	7	Cash Register	116
	8	Forklift	99
	9	Motor Vehicles	93
10	Artificial intelligence software	75	

*Source: NMDWS, Online advertised jobs data*

### **Education Level of Jobs and Candidates**

The most common education level among job seekers in the Southwestern Region is a High School Diploma or Equivalent, making up 36.76% of the total. The second-largest group comprises candidates with less than a high school education, at 21.01%.

Individuals with a Bachelor's degree represent 10.15%, followed by those with some college education but no degree at 6.18%. Candidates with an Associate's degree make up 7.48%. Other education levels, including vocational school certificates and varying years of college or technical school experience, comprise smaller workforce percentages.

This data indicates a strong presence of individuals with basic education levels, with opportunities for enhancing skills through targeted educational and training programs to meet regional job market needs.

**Education Level of Jobs and Candidates**

<b>Minimum Level of Education Requested by Employers</b>				
<b>Education Level of Jobs &amp; Candidates</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Education Level</b>	<b>Job Openings</b>	<b>% Potential Candidates</b>
	1	No Minimum Education	0	N/A
	2	Less than High School	1,312	21.01%
	3	High School Diploma or Equivalent	2,294	36.76%
	4	1 Year of College or a Technical or Vocational School	359	5.75%
	5	2 Years of College or a Technical or Vocational School	330	5.29%
	6	3 Years of College or a Technical or Vocational School	150	2.40%
	7	Some College	2	0.03%
	8	Vocational School Certificate	386	6.18%
	9	Associate's Degree	467	7.48%
	10	Bachelor's Degree	634	10.15%
	11	Master's Degree	251	4.02%
	12	Doctorate Degree	33	0.53%
	13	Specialized Degree (e.g. MD, DDS)	24	0.38%
	14	Not Specified	1	0.02%

*Source: NMDWS, Online advertised jobs data*

### **1. Aerospace, Space, and Defense Industry Sector**

Participants included Jacobs Technology, White Sands Missile Range, Spaceport American, Virgin Galactic, Boeing, and the Physical Sciences Lab at New Mexico State University.

### **2. Key Findings are the Following:**

- Federal mandates for candidate requirements may stifle innovation or alternate routes to qualification.
- The number of jobs requiring significant years of experience creates a chasm between what local colleges and universities can produce and the prospective talent already available in the region. This talent pipeline requires strategic partnerships to reach outside the county and into other areas and target audiences.
- A high percentage of jobs require security clearances, and currently, there is not an intentional effort to proactively identify and educate prospective candidates on what those requirements are.
- Work-based learning opportunities must be expanded to support greater access to students and contribute to work experience requirements for employers.

### **3. International Industries**

The Borderland area in Santa Teresa, New Mexico, has become a growing hub for manufacturing jobs. The one-stop system and its partners can play a crucial role in supporting career pathways in this industry by aligning training programs and resources with the needs of local manufacturers. These industries often require skills in areas like machinery operation, quality control, logistics, and engineering. By fostering partnerships between educational institutions and local businesses, the one-stop system can ensure that job seekers are trained in skills that meet the evolving needs of the manufacturing sector.

Additionally, the system can support workers in this field by offering work-based learning opportunities such as apprenticeships, on-the-job training, and customized training that help bridge the gap between entry-level positions and long-term career growth. By addressing manufacturers' immediate and long-term skill needs, the one-stop system and its partners will help create sustainable career pathways that benefit workers and employers in the region.

§679.560(a)(3) An analysis of the regional workforce, including current labor force employment and unemployment data, information on labor market trends, and educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment.

---

### **Regional Workforce Analysis for Southwestern New Mexico Current Labor Force Employment and Unemployment Data**

The total civilian labor force (not seasonally adjusted) for Southwestern New Mexico in June 2023 was 138,057. Of that 138,057 total, 130,713 individuals were employed, and 7,344 were unemployed, giving us an unemployment rate of 5.3%. In June 2024, the number of employed individuals increased to 131,878. Although the economy added more jobs, it couldn't keep up with the number of people who entered the labor force. This "labor supply shock" increased the region's unemployment rate to 5.8%, the region's highest since February 2022.

For 2024, the labor force participation rate in Southwestern New Mexico is approximately 57.4%, which aligns with the state average of New Mexico. This rate continues to reflect a region that, due to its rural nature and demographic challenges like aging populations, has a participation rate below the national average of around 62%.

The region's unemployment rate has shown improvement post-COVID-19, now fluctuating between 4.7% and 5.8% as of mid-2024. These numbers are lower than in previous years, signaling recovery from the economic impacts of the pandemic, though some underemployment issues persist in the broader state context. These figures indicate that workforce development efforts must focus on increasing participation, mainly through improved access to training and employment opportunities.

The following tables compare unemployment rates by county during the first 6 months of 2023 and 2024. Luna County's unemployment rate is consistently above 10%, except in June 2023, when it dipped to 9.5%. Grant County boasts the lowest unemployment rate in the tables, reporting 2.1% in March 2024.



**Six-Month Employment Comparison, 2023 to 2024**

<b>Unemployment Rate SW Region - 6-Month Comparison by County (January through March)</b>						
<b>COUNTY</b>	<b>JAN 2023</b>	<b>JAN 2024</b>	<b>FEB 2023</b>	<b>FEB 2024</b>	<b>MAR 2023</b>	<b>MAR 2024</b>
<b><i>Catron</i></b>	5.4	4.9	5.6	4.3	4.8	3.9
<b><i>Doña Ana</i></b>	4.4	4.8	4.5	4.6	4.2	4.2
<b><i>Grant</i></b>	3.9	3.6	3.8	3.3	3.2	2.1
<b><i>Hidalgo</i></b>	3.0	3.8	3.2	3.8	2.9	3.3
<b><i>Luna</i></b>	11.7	13.4	12.6	13.4	12.2	12.6
<b><i>Sierra</i></b>	6.7	7.1	7.4	7.0	6.9	6.4
<b><i>Socorro</i></b>	4.3	4.5	4.0	4.4	3.4	3.6

Source: WCOS, Labor Force Employment and Unemployment (LAUS)

<b>Unemployment Rate SW Region - 6-Month Comparison by County (April through June)</b>						
<b>COUNTY</b>	<b>APR 2023</b>	<b>APR 2024</b>	<b>MAY 2023</b>	<b>MAY 2024</b>	<b>JUN 2023</b>	<b>JUN 2024</b>
<b><i>Catron</i></b>	4.1	3.8	4.3	4.3	4.6	5.4
<b><i>Doña Ana</i></b>	3.9	4.2	4.2	4.7	5.1	5.5
<b><i>Grant</i></b>	2.9	2.9	3.2	3.5	4.0	4.1
<b><i>Hidalgo</i></b>	2.8	3.4	3.0	4.1	3.7	4.7
<b><i>Luna</i></b>	11.0	12.0	10.2	11.5	9.5	10.8
<b><i>Sierra</i></b>	6.2	6.4	6.6	6.7	5.7	5.9
<b><i>Socorro</i></b>	3.4	3.9	3.9	4.5	5.2	5.7

Source: WCOS, Labor Force Employment and Unemployment (LAUS)

## Labor Market Trends

Several labor market trends are shaping the regional workforce in Southwestern New Mexico:

**Healthcare and Social Assistance Growth:** The healthcare sector continues to expand, with growing demand for registered nurses, medical assistants, and home health aides driven by an aging population and the broader need for healthcare services in rural areas.

- **Remote Work Opportunities:** The shift toward remote work, especially in tech-related fields, administrative roles, and customer service, is influencing the regional labor market. This trend is opening new doors for workers in rural areas with access to broadband infrastructure.
- **Manufacturing Expansion:** Santa Teresa's Borderland area has seen increased manufacturing jobs, particularly in logistics, warehousing, and production roles, due to its proximity to the border and growing trade activity.
- **Agricultural Employment:** The agricultural sector remains vital in the region, with seasonal employment in the farming fields producing onions, chile, apples, and pecans. Migrant and seasonal farmworkers contribute significantly to this industry, particularly in peak seasons, but they also face challenges in gaining stable year-round employment and accessing necessary services.

## Educational and Skill Levels of the Workforce

The workforce in Southwestern New Mexico faces a mixture of educational attainment levels:

- Approximately 25% of the population holds a bachelor's degree or higher, with many working in fields like education, healthcare, and management.
- 35%-40% of the workforce holds a high school diploma or equivalent, and many individuals are employed in sectors like manufacturing, retail, and accommodation services.
- Another 20%-25% of workers have some post-secondary education or vocational training, especially those engaged in trades like welding, plumbing, carpentry, and machine operation.

A sizable portion of the workforce comprises individuals with lower educational attainment levels, making it challenging to access higher-wage jobs without additional training. This is particularly true for individuals with barriers to employment, such as those with disabilities, limited English proficiency, and those impacted by the cliff effect, which occurs when individuals lose social benefits as their wages increase.

## Individuals with Barriers to Employment

The region faces significant challenges in addressing the needs of individuals with barriers to employment, including:

- **Individuals with Disabilities:** Approximately 12% of the region's workforce faces physical or cognitive disabilities that hinder their ability to participate fully in the labor market. The one-stop system and its partners are committed to providing training and accommodation services to this population.
- **Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers:** These individuals often experience inconsistent employment due to the seasonal nature of agricultural work, and they may lack access to essential services such as healthcare, transportation, and childcare.
- **Low-Income Workers:** The cliff effect disproportionately affects workers in entry-level jobs in fields like retail, food services, and agriculture, making it difficult for them to advance in their careers without losing essential social benefits such as rental assistance and childcare subsidies.

A unique blend of rural and urban dynamics, emerging industries, and longstanding agricultural roots shape Southwestern New Mexico's regional workforce. The region's labor market trends indicate growth in healthcare, manufacturing, and remote work, while educational attainment and skill levels reflect the need for more accessible training and education opportunities. The one-stop system and its partners will play a critical role in addressing these challenges and ensuring that workers, especially those with barriers to employment, have the resources and training they need to succeed.

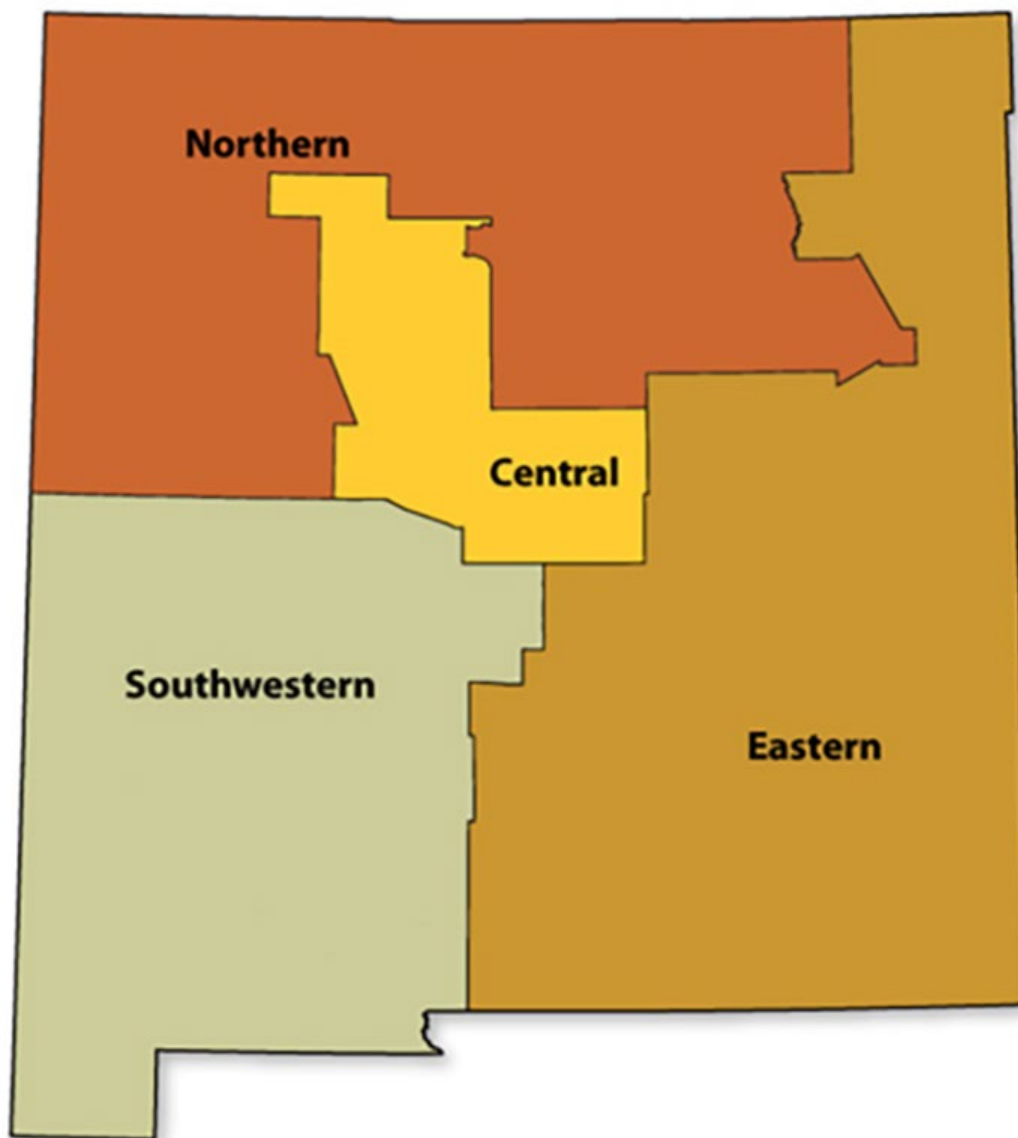
Apprenticeships have become a critical strategy in addressing labor market trends by providing a direct pathway for individuals to gain in-demand skills while earning a wage. As industries in the Southwestern region, such as manufacturing, healthcare, and the trades, continue to grow, apprenticeships offer a practical solution to close skill gaps. These programs allow employers to tailor training to their specific needs while helping workers advance in their careers, particularly in fields like carpentry, plumbing, and advanced manufacturing, which are essential for the region's evolving economic landscape.

The NMDWS State Apprenticeship Office representatives, accessible through America's Job Center offices, play a vital role in supporting apprenticeship programs across the state by helping offset training costs. These programs cover training fees and related expenses such as supplies and tools. Participants can earn certificates, degrees, or industry-recognized credentials, making apprenticeships a cost-effective way to gain the skills needed to meet the demands of in-demand industries like manufacturing,

construction, healthcare, and more while addressing critical workforce needs in the Southwestern region.

### **Projected Growth by Region**

For 2024, employment in New Mexico is projected to grow from 878,470 to around 930,208 between 2018 and 2028, an increase of about 6%. In the Southwestern region, employment is anticipated to expand from 106,790 to approximately 113,870 by 2028, reflecting a growth of about 6.6%. This growth will predominantly occur in Las Cruces, part of the region's Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), which is expected to see the highest rate of employment increase in the state.



The sectors with the most significant employment gains in Southern New Mexico include government, education, and health services, which have shown robust growth in 2024. Over the past year, government employment alone expanded by 5.6%, adding over 1,000 jobs, while professional and business services grew by 5.7%. Other areas like construction and mining saw some contraction, reflecting ongoing economic adjustments.



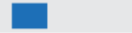



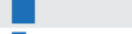

















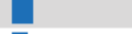





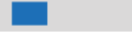



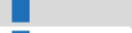













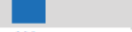














This growth aligns with the strategic workforce development initiatives under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), emphasizing high-demand sectors and creating long-term employment opportunities in the region.

**Projected Employment Growth by Region & MSA**

<b>Projected Employment Growth by Substate Area</b>					
<b>2018–2028</b>					
		<b>2018</b>	<b>2028</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>New Mexico</b>		<b>875,470</b>	<b>930,280</b>	<b>54,810</b>	<b>6.3%</b>
<b>REGIONS</b>	Central	401,030	425,640	24,610	6.1%
	Eastern	145,260	154,130	8,870	6.1%
	Northern	197,840	210,350	12,510	6.3%
	Southwestern	106,790	113,870	7,080	6.6%
<b>MSAs</b>	Albuquerque	401,030	425,640	24,610	6.1%
	Farmington	49,950	53,060	3,110	6.2%
	Las Cruces	77,410	82,840	5,430	7.0%
	Santa Fe	65,230	68,830	3,600	5.5%

In the Southwestern region, Health Care, and Social Services will have both the most and fastest growth followed by education and mining. The industries with the most projected decline in jobs will be manufacturing, utilities, information, and retail.

**Industry Sectors with the Largest Projected Employment Growth**

Industry Sectors With the Largest Projected Employment Growth 2018–2028					
MOST GROWTH			FASTEST GROWTH		
Central/AB Q MSA	Health Care & Social Assist	 10,990	 16.5%	Health Care & Social Assist	
	Accomm. & Food Svcs	 3,980	 11.7%	Professional & Tech Svcs	
	Professional & Tech Svcs	 3,630	 11.1%	Construction	
	Construction	 2,600	 9.5%	Accomm. & Food Svcs	
	Self Employed	 1,440	 6.7%	Arts & Entertainment	
Eastern	Health Care & Social Assist	 2,830	 17.1%	Health Care & Social Assist	
	Mining	 1,840	***	Mining	
	Accomm. & Food Svcs	 1,410	***	Construction	
	Construction	 1,080	 11.7%	Professional & Tech Svcs	
	Educational Services	 470	 8.8%	Accomm. & Food Svcs	
Northern	Health Care & Social Assist	 5,260	 16.9%	Health Care & Social Assist	
	Accomm. & Food Svcs	 2,080	 11.7%	Professional & Tech Svcs	
	Professional & Tech Svcs	 1,820	 11.4%	Construction	
	Construction	 950	 8.8%	Accomm. & Food Svcs	
	Educational Services	 690	 7.1%	Mining	
S. Western	Health Care & Social Assist	 3,590	 18.8%	Health Care & Social Assist	
	Accomm. & Food Svcs	 1,050	 11.7%	Professional & Tech Svcs	
	Educational Services	 540	 11.2%	Construction	
	Construction	 510	 10.2%	Accomm. & Food Svcs	
	Professional & Tech Svcs	 480	 6.5%	Arts & Entertainment	
Farmington MSA	Health Care & Social Assist	 1,220	 16.1%	Health Care & Social Assist	
	Accomm. & Food Svcs	 480	 12.1%	Construction	
	Construction	 420	 11.7%	Professional & Tech Svcs	
	Mining	***	 10.4%	Accomm. & Food Svcs	
	Educational Services	 190	***	Mining	
Las Cruces MSA	Health Care & Social Assist	 2,760	 19.1%	Health Care & Social Assist	
	Accomm. & Food Svcs	 780	***	Professional & Tech Svcs	
	Professional & Tech Svcs	***	 11.0%	Construction	
	Construction	 390	 10.7%	Accomm. & Food Svcs	
	Educational Services	 390	***	Mining	
Santa Fe MSA	Health Care & Social Assist	 1,650	 18.0%	Health Care & Social Assist	
	Accomm. & Food Svcs	 840	 11.7%	Professional & Tech Svcs	
	Professional & Tech Svcs	 310	 10.9%	Construction	
	Construction	 300	 8.5%	Accomm. & Food Svcs	
	Self Employed	 210	 6.9%	Arts & Entertainment	

Source: NMDWS Economic Research and Analysis Bureau, Employment Projections and Occupational Employment Statistics Programs, projected numeric growth for industries is rounded.

**Projected Growth by Industry**

In the Southwestern region, the Health Care and Social Assistance sectors are projected to have the highest employment growth in the state. Employment in

Accommodation and Food Services is projected to be strong in all regions as are Educational Services.

### **Projected Employment Growth by Major Industry**

The employment projections for the Southwestern Region of New Mexico from 2022 to 2032 indicate diverse growth trends across various industries, reflecting both opportunities and challenges for the local workforce and economy.

### **Key Employment Trends in the Southwestern Region:**

#### ***High-Growth Sectors:***

Accommodation and Food Services and Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation are expected to see the most significant growth, with projected increases of 20.97% and 56.07%, respectively, by 2032. This growth is indicative of a strengthening tourism and hospitality sector in the region, which could be driven by increased regional tourism, cultural investments, and recreational activities. The rapid expansion in these areas presents opportunities for job seekers, especially those in entry-level or service-oriented roles.

#### ***Steady Growth in Construction and Support Services:***

Construction and Administrative and Support and Waste Management Services are projected to grow steadily, reflecting ongoing demand for infrastructure development and administrative support across industries. With growth rates of 10.59% and 12.39%, respectively, these sectors will provide stable employment opportunities for those with trade skills, administrative capabilities, and environmental management expertise.

#### ***Challenges in Agriculture:***

Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting are the only sectors forecasted to experience a decline in employment (-1.58%). This decline could present challenges for rural communities heavily reliant on agricultural jobs, especially for Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs), who represent a significant portion of the workforce in these sectors. With New Mexico designated as one of 20 Significant MSFW States by the U.S. Department of Labor, innovative strategies will be essential to support this population, including transitioning them into other growing industries through training and skill development programs. Pursuant to 20 CFR 653.107 (a)(4), there must be full-time, year-round outreach staff to conduct outreach duties.

The projected decline in the Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting sector in New Mexico is driven by several converging factors, particularly impacting rural areas and Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs). Key reasons for this decline include:

**Technological Advancements:** The agriculture industry has increasingly adopted automation and advanced technologies, reducing the need for manual labor. While this improves efficiency and yields, it diminishes the demand for workers traditionally employed in farming, particularly MSFWs who often engage in labor-intensive tasks.

**Climate Change and Water Scarcity:** The Southwestern U.S. faces ongoing challenges related to water availability, exacerbated by climate change. Agriculture, heavily reliant on irrigation, is particularly vulnerable to droughts and shifting weather patterns, making it harder for farmers to maintain consistent production levels. This, in turn, reduces the demand for labor in agriculture.

**Economic Shifts and Global Competition:** Globalization has heightened competition in agricultural markets, putting pressure on U.S. farmers to cut costs. This often means fewer jobs for farmworkers as farms consolidate and seek more cost-effective methods, including technological solutions. Additionally, fluctuating commodity prices can make agricultural employment unstable.

**Labor Supply and Immigration Policies:** The agricultural workforce in New Mexico, heavily composed of MSFWs, is affected by immigration policies that can limit the availability of seasonal workers. Stricter regulations or shortages of available visas for foreign workers may contribute to workforce instability in the sector.

### ***Challenges for Rural Communities and MSFWs***

The decline in agricultural employment is particularly concerning for rural communities that rely on farming as an economic driver. Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers, in particular, face significant challenges as opportunities dwindle in the sector. With New Mexico designated as a "Significant State" for MSFWs by the U.S. Department of Labor, the state will need to develop innovative solutions to support these workers.

### ***Transition Strategies***

To mitigate the impact of job losses in agriculture, the Board, in coordination with partners, will focus on the following strategies:

**Expand Training and Skill Development:** Programs focused on transitioning MSFWs to other industries, such as manufacturing, construction, or the growing healthcare sector, would be essential. Upskilling through Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)-funded initiatives will help them adapt to the labor market's evolving needs.

**Diversify Local Economies:** Rural areas could benefit from investment in industries that show growth potential or developing new industries, such as renewable energy, tourism



and hospitality, technology and remote work, and agricultural technology, which can absorb displaced MSFWs.

**Targeted Support Services:** Providing social and economic support services, including language training, financial literacy, and housing assistance, can help MSFWs integrate into new sectors and communities, ensuring a smoother transition.

By implementing these strategies, New Mexico can address both the sector's decline and the needs of its agricultural workforce, particularly vulnerable populations like MSFWs. This aligns with the state's broader workforce development goals under WIOA.

**Implications for the Borderplex Region:**

The Borderplex region, including key areas like Santa Teresa, is uniquely positioned at the intersection of manufacturing, logistics, and cross-border trade. While manufacturing jobs are expected to grow modestly, the region can capitalize on its geographic advantages by aligning workforce development with the needs of the logistics and trade industries. This requires a focus on training programs that prepare workers for jobs in transportation, warehousing, and production support, which are crucial for sustaining economic growth in these areas.

**Strategic Implications for Workforce Development:**

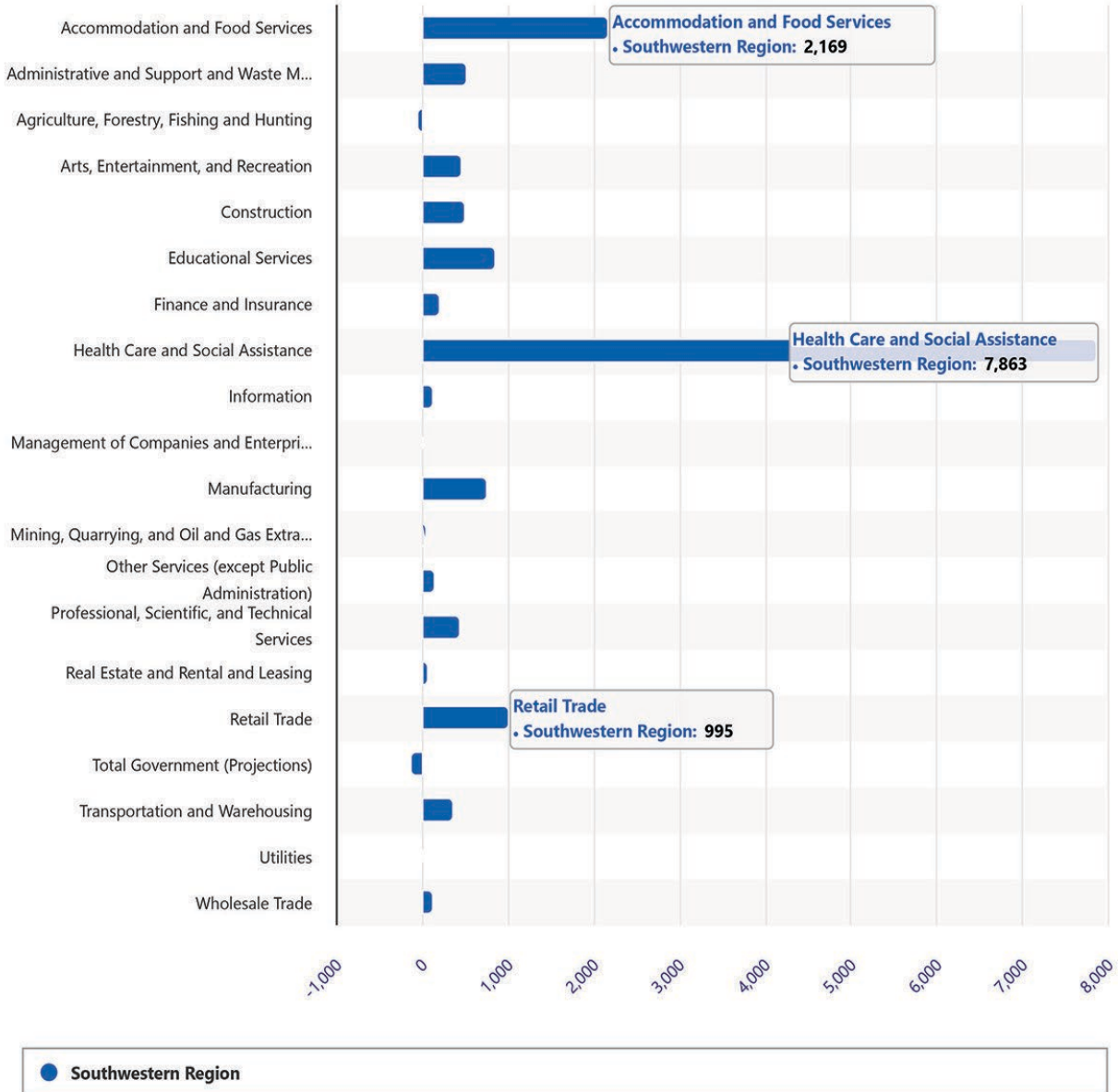
**Targeted Workforce Strategies:** The SAWDB can leverage these employment trends to focus on high-growth sectors, such as hospitality and recreation, by aligning training and apprenticeship programs with industry needs. Similarly, addressing the decline in agricultural jobs with re-skilling programs will help MSFWs transition into stable, growing sectors.

**Braided Funding for Rural Outreach:** Utilizing braided funding approaches can create innovative solutions to support rural communities, especially in areas where economic diversification is needed. Collaborative efforts with the State Monitor Advocate, local organizations, and educational institutions can enhance outreach and provide tailored support to underserved populations.

**Investing in the Borderplex Workforce:** Focusing on skill-building in trade, logistics, and manufacturing can drive economic development in the Borderplex region, ensuring that the workforce is prepared to meet the demands of these strategic sectors.

These employment trends underscore the need for a flexible, responsive, and inclusive workforce development strategy that leverages local strengths, addresses industry challenges, and fosters sustainable economic growth in the Southwestern region.

**The graph below shows the long term industry projections for Multiple Industries in Southwestern Region for the 2022-2032 projection period.  
Total 2022-2032 Employment Change**



Source: NMDWS, Employment Projections program  
Downloaded: 09/01/2024 4:23 PM

**Projected Growth by Occupation**

Growth in the occupational groups of home health aides, personal care aides, speech-language pathologists, physician assistants, food preparation and serving, construction, extraction, healthcare practitioners, and technical areas represents 62.2 percent of total projected employment growth between 2024 and 2028. New demand for workers in

these occupational groups is projected to grow quickly. Jobs for personal care and service workers are projected to grow by 25.0 percent, while jobs for food preparation and servers are projected to increase by 11.0 percent. Jobs for construction and extraction workers are expected to increase by 10.8 percent, while healthcare practitioners and techs are projected to increase by 10.9 percent.

Community and social service occupations are projected to increase by 9.9 percent. In contrast, the occupations of office and administrative support, sales and related, and production are expected to have job losses over the projection period.

The SAWDB strongly supports the development of a skilled workforce for both the jobs that exist today and those that are emerging in the region. As we advance, the SAWDB aims to learn more about and engage further with the Southwestern region's local businesses and industries to develop training programs that will result in a well-developed career pipeline tailored to the needs of local businesses and industries within the Southwestern region.

### **Level of Education**

The following table shows the minimum level of education requested by employers on job openings advertised online, as well as the educational attainment of potential candidates in the workforce system who are looking for jobs in Southwestern New Mexico. The data shows the region's workforce has a pool of 1,312 job seekers with less than a high school education. Nearly 37% of the region's job postings require a high school diploma or equivalent.

**Education Level of Advertised Jobs**

Rank	Education Level	Job Openings	Percentage of Job Openings	Potential Candidates	Percentage of Potential Candidates
1	No Minimum Education Requirement	222	4.34%	0	N/A
2	Less than High School	0	N/A	1,312	21.01%
3	High School Diploma or Equivalent	536	10.48%	2,295	36.76%
4	1 Year of College or a Tech or Vocational School	4	0.08%	359	5.75%
5	2 Years of College or a Tech or Vocational School	0	N/A	330	5.29%
6	3 Years of College or a Tech or Vocational School	4	0.08%	150	2.4%
7	Some College	0	N/A%	2	0.03%
8	Vocational School Certificate	18	0.35%	386	6.18%
9	Associate's Degree	29	0.57%	467	7.48%
10	Bachelor's Degree	117	2.29%	634	10.15%
11	Master's Degree	43	0.84%	251	4.02%
12	Doctorate Degree	2	0.04%	33	0.53%
13	Specialized Degree (e.g. MD, DDS)	13	0.25%	24	0.38%
14	Not Specified	4,126	80.68%	1	0.02%

Source: Job Source: Online advertised jobs data

**WIOA Title II: The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, or AEFLA**

The New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED) is the State's eligible agency for administering Adult Education and Literacy programs under WIOA, and the Adult Education Division (NMHED-AE) oversees this effort. NMHED is required to award multi-year grants or contracts on a competitive basis to eligible providers within the State or outlying area to develop, implement, and improve adult education and literacy activities within the State. Eligible providers must use AEFLA funds to establish or operate programs that provide adult education and literacy activities, including programs that provide these concurrently. As outlined in Section 203 of WIOA, sanctioned activities include:

- Adult education;
- Literacy;
- Workplace adult education and literacy activities;

- Family literacy activities;
- English language acquisition activities;
- Integrated English literacy and civics education;
- Workforce preparation activities; or
- Integrated education and training that—
  1. Provides adult education and literacy activities, concurrently and contextually with both, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, and
  2. Is for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

NMHED-AE held its last competitive grant process in the spring of 2021. The new 4-year grant cycle began on July 1, 2021, with 26 awards issued to local providers in all four workforce regions, including four program providers who serve the Southwestern region.

### **“MANY PATHWAYS, ONE BRIGHT FUTURE”**

#### **In a nutshell, Adult Education programs help New Mexicans to:**

- Strengthen core literacy, numeracy, digital literacy, and workplace readiness skills
- Earn a High School Equivalency (HSE) credential or New Mexico Adult Diploma
- Become college ready and enter or progress along an in-demand career pathway, which may include “fast tracking” and enrolling in an Integrated Education and Career Training Program
- Enhance parent and caregiver ability to support children’s learning needs
- Learn English as a second language (ESL) and civics + prepare for citizenship if applicable

WIOA Title II includes a requirement that states provide corrections education (Section 225). Corrections education is for criminal offenders who reside in correctional institutions. In the Southwestern region, corrections education is provided at the Southern New Mexico Correctional Facility located in Las Cruces in Doña Ana County.

The following table lists the WIOA Title II Adult Education providers in the Southwestern region.

**Southwestern Program Providers with PY22 and PY23 Service Numbers**

Summary	Doña Ana Community College		University of New Mexico – Valencia		Western New Mexico University		Southern New Mexico Corrections Facility	
	FY 21/22	FY 22/23	FY 21/22	FY 22/23	FY 21/22	FY 22/23	FY 21/22	FY 22/23
Total number of qualified students served in Title II programs	746	781	164	164	86	75	147	124
Total number of qualified students participating in Adult Basic Education and Adult Secondary Education Programs	193	224	119	112	79	73	147	124
Total number of qualified students participating in the English as a Second Language Program	553	557	45	52	4	2	0	0
Percent of qualified students who made educational gains	35.05 %	30.34 %	31.73 %	32.53 %	7.86 %	31.16 %	28.85 %	50.0 %

Source: LACES student management system; NMHED

The National Reporting System (NRS) is a key framework used to measure and report the outcomes of Adult Education participants. For a student's outcomes to be reported to the NRS, they must have at least 12 contact hours in the program and complete an assessment to determine their initial academic level.

**What Do These Numbers Represent?**

**Enrollment Numbers:** Reflect Adult Education participants who have completed a minimum of 12 contact hours and have undergone an assessment. This assessment helps to establish their starting academic level and ensures they are included in the NRS reporting.

**Measurable Skill Gains (MSG):** This metric captures the progress of Adult Education participants and represents the percentage of individuals who have:

- Achieved an academic level gain,
- Earned a High School Equivalency (HSE) credential,
- Transitioned to college or post-secondary training, or
- Obtained a training credential.

**Implications for the Southwestern Region:**

For the Southwestern Region, these metrics highlight the importance of not only enrolling individuals in Adult Education programs but also ensuring they remain engaged long enough to achieve measurable outcomes. This is particularly relevant in rural and underserved communities, where access to educational resources may be limited. By focusing on increasing contact hours and providing assessments and targeted support, the region can better align adult education efforts with workforce needs, such as filling gaps in high-growth sectors. Moreover, tracking MSG outcomes provides valuable insights into how well educational programs are preparing residents for career advancement, college, and credential attainment, contributing to overall economic development in the region.

For more information about Adult Education (Title II of WIOA, administered by USDE), see the Adult Education program-specific section of New Mexico's Combined State Plan, as well as Title II contributions woven throughout the main Plan body. In addition, we invite you to visit the Higher Education Department website:

[https://www.dws.state.nm.us/Portals/0/DM/Partners/NM\\_WIOA\\_State\\_Plan\\_Modification\\_2022-2023\\_.pdf?ver=2022-06-27-170901-447](https://www.dws.state.nm.us/Portals/0/DM/Partners/NM_WIOA_State_Plan_Modification_2022-2023_.pdf?ver=2022-06-27-170901-447)

[https://hed.state.nm.us/students-parents/adult\\_education](https://hed.state.nm.us/students-parents/adult_education)

**Work Experience**

The table below shows the minimum required work experience on job openings advertised online in the region and the experience level of potential candidates in the workforce system looking for jobs in Southwestern New Mexico on September 1, 2024.

**Work Experience of Advertised Jobs**

Rank	Experience	Job Openings	Percentage of Job Openings	Potential Candidates	Percentage of Potential Candidates
1	Entry Level	344	6.73%	0	N/A
2	Less than 1 Year	82	1.60%	750	12.01%
3	1 Year to 2 Years	4,545	88.87%	775	812.41%
4	2 Years to 5 Years	98	1.92%	1,150	18.42%
5	5 Years to 10 Years	41	0.80%	1,133	18.14%
6	More than 10 Years	4	0.08%	2,437	39.02%

Source: Job Source: Online advertised jobs data

## TOP SKILLS

In the Borderland areas of Southwestern New Mexico, several critical skill gaps are prevalent that hinder workers' ability to meet the evolving demands of regional employers. One major gap is language proficiency, particularly in Spanish, which is essential in this border region for both customer-facing roles and collaborative work environments. Additionally, soft skills, such as communication, problem-solving, and teamwork, are often lacking and are crucial for success across industries, from retail to manufacturing.

Basic computer literacy, including proficiency in Microsoft Office, is also a significant gap, as these skills are necessary for clerical, administrative, and even frontline jobs in manufacturing and warehouse settings. With automation rising, workers need math and technical skills to adapt to new machinery and processes. This gap is particularly relevant in sectors like manufacturing and warehousing, where technological advances drive the need for a more skilled workforce.

In the retail and service sectors, the workforce often struggles with these same gaps in soft skills and basic computer skills, limiting their upward mobility and the ability to transition into management or higher-level positions. Bridging these skill gaps through targeted training programs and partnerships between educational institutions and employers can help to develop a stronger, more resilient workforce in Southwestern New Mexico.

The workforce system can develop apprenticeship programs and on-the-job training targeting manufacturing, warehouse, and retail sectors by leveraging partnerships with employers and core partners. These programs could focus on career pathways that include technical and soft skills, allowing workers to upskill while earning. Special provisions can be made for migrant seasonal farmworkers by coordinating flexible schedules and transportation assistance through partner organizations like TANF, NMSU, DACC, WNMU, NM Tech, and other training institutions.

The following table shows the top skills employers require in online job postings against potential candidates in the workforce system who possess those skills.

The need for bilingual, Spanish-speaking skills is currently the greatest. Technology continues to be challenging, and the need for personal computers and skills is primarily due to remote work and school.



**Skill Gaps: SAWDB**

Skill	Candidates #	Openings #	Gap #
Spanish	329	562	-233
Personal Computers (PC)	164	341	-177
Home Health Care	160	285	-125
Cash Registers	186	286	-99
Microsoft Office	531	610	-79
Medical Terminology	52	121	-70
Word Processing	122	184	-62
Retail Sales	176	229	-53
Hospitality	128	178	-49
Mathematics	201	249	-48
Teaching/Training, School	403	377	26
Pallet Jacks	62	34	27
Adding Machine	37	7	30
Typing 41-50 wpm	34	1	33
Manufacturing	139	101	38
Microsoft Word	265	223	42
Cash Handling (Cashier)	481	428	54
Working With Children	87	34	54
People Skills	124	67	57
Medication Administration	110	8	102
<p>Source: <a href="#">JobsEQ®</a>            Data as of 2021Q4; openings and candidate sample compiled in August 2021.            Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding.            Supply and demand data may be based upon source data from broader geographies. For further details, see the export by skill at the 6-digit SOC level.</p>			

## **B. Analysis of Workforce Development Activities**

§679.560(a)(4) An analysis of workforce development activities, including education and training, in the region. This analysis must include the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities and capacity to provide the workforce development activities to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of employers.

The following table contains a summary report that provides a look at the number of services provided at America's Job Centers in the region to individuals and employers who have registered in NMWCOS.

The report contains data on the number of individuals who registered in the system, distinct (unduplicated) individuals receiving services, the total number of services provided to individuals, the total number of internal job orders created, and the total number of job referrals, as well as services provided to employers. The report represents twelve months from July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024, for the entire seven-county area of Southwestern New Mexico.

<b>Summary</b>	<b>Total</b>
Total number of Individuals that Registered	4,700
Total number of Distinct Individuals Receiving Services	11,051
Total number of Services Provided to Individuals	131,645
Total number of Résumés Added	4,674
Total number of Internal Job Orders Created	3,562
Total number of Internal Job Referrals	5,491
Total number of Services Provided Employers	14,521

*Source: New Mexico Workforce Connection Online System*

*Master Summary Report by LWIA*

*Region/LWIA: Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board - Date range: 07/01/2023 – 06/30/2024*

## Strengths

### ***America's Job Center System***

The America's Job Center system is a partnership of organizations working as a team to promote a universal approach to providing practical workforce assistance to job seekers and businesses. This collaboration of state, regional, and local organizations provides a seamless program and service delivery system.

The impact of the America's Job Center system extends into public education, mainly through Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. These partnerships help prepare youth for high-demand careers by directly integrating academic and technical training into the classroom. By collaborating with public schools, the America's Job Center system and its partners ensure that students enrolled in CTE programs have access to valuable work-based learning opportunities such as internships, apprenticeships, and job shadowing, connecting them to real-world experiences that align with the needs of regional employers. These collaborations help align CTE curricula with local labor market trends, providing students with the knowledge and skills needed in growing sectors like healthcare, manufacturing, and information technology. This support helps ensure that CTE students are not only graduating with diplomas but are also equipped with the certifications, skills, and experiences that make them competitive candidates for future employment or further education. By bridging the gap between education and the workforce, the America's Job Center system plays a critical role in developing a pipeline of talent that supports regional economic growth.

### ***Employer Services***

NMWCOS allows employers to post job openings, view registered job seekers for potential candidates, and search labor market information. Qualified employers appreciate the availability of federal funds for Training Reimbursement, Tuition Assistance, and In-School and Out-of-School Youth programs. On-the-Job Training (OJT) helps reduce employer training costs while providing new employees with the necessary skill sets required for the job. If a business plans to hire, the employer could get reimbursed for up to half of the employee's wages for up to six months. The program is available to train new employees or existing employees who are moving to a different position within the business but will need additional in-house training programs to do the job.

A key strength is the comprehensive approach to workforce development, which leverages partnerships with local agencies like Rapid Response, Economic Development organizations, Chambers of Commerce, training institutions, public schools, and Income Support Offices. These relationships help provide wraparound

services to job seekers, students, and employers, ensuring a more holistic support system. By coordinating efforts across these entities, the workforce system can better align training programs with the skill needs of local industries while addressing barriers such as language proficiency, transportation, and childcare. For example, integrating economic development efforts with workforce activities ensures that as new industries grow, the necessary training and employment pathways are created to meet employer demand. Rapid Response services also play a critical role in minimizing the impact of layoffs, offering immediate support to displaced workers through retraining and upskilling initiatives.

### ***Job Seeker Services***

One of the benefits of America's Job Centers is that they allow an employer to hold hiring events, interview candidates, set up skills assessment tests with potential candidates, and more. Job seekers utilize services to create résumés and work closely with case managers to search the job database for careers that suit them while addressing barriers to employment, including disabilities.

The Tuition Assistance program has been successful in helping low-income participants gain skills that lead to better-paying jobs. From 2019 to 2023, the Southwestern region assisted participants with over one million dollars in tuition assistance and support.

### ***Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs***

Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) programs are essential tools for helping workers who have lost their jobs due to changes in global trade, outsourcing, or increased imports. These programs provide critical services to support dislocated workers in finding new employment and achieving long-term career stability. In the Southwestern region, where industries like manufacturing, agriculture, and mining are key economic drivers, TAA is especially important for workers affected by trade fluctuations.

TAA offers various services that can integrate as activities within the one-stop system. These include job training, income support (such as Trade Readjustment Allowances or TRA), job search assistance, and relocation support. Additionally, TAA provides wage subsidies for workers over 50 who are re-employed at lower wages than their previous jobs, and it offers opportunities for workers to earn industry-recognized credentials and certifications that can help them transition into new sectors.

TAA activities can include targeted outreach to workers in industries particularly susceptible to trade impacts, such as manufacturing, agriculture, and mining. This could involve job fairs, industry-specific workshops, and partnerships with local employers to provide on-the-job training or apprenticeships. TAA programs collaborate with other

workforce system partners to braid resources and ensure that dislocated workers receive wraparound services like career counseling, training, and job placement.

Trade-related job losses can significantly affect the local economy, and TAA is an essential bridge to new opportunities. Through activities like retraining and certification programs, TAA helps workers reenter the workforce in in-demand industries like healthcare, logistics, and the growing film industry while ensuring they receive the necessary support to transition smoothly.

### ***Veteran Services***

Veteran services are a crucial component of the one-stop system. The system is designed to support veterans transitioning from military to civilian employment. The one-stop centers in Southwestern New Mexico are committed to providing tailored services that recognize veterans' unique needs and skills, ensuring they receive priority in job placement, training, and supportive services.

Veteran services within the one-stop system include specialized staff, such as Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVERs). Trained staff members help veterans overcome barriers to employment by providing intensive job search assistance, career counseling, and referrals to training programs. Veterans can also receive help translating their military experience into civilian credentials or certifications, making them more competitive in the job market.

The one-stop system partners with local employers to identify job opportunities well-suited to veterans' skills, particularly in industries like healthcare, manufacturing, and transportation, which are in demand in the Southwestern region. Veterans are connected to training programs and apprenticeships that align with their career goals, offering pathways into high-wage, high-demand industries.

Wraparound services for veterans often include assistance with housing, access to healthcare, and support for mental health and wellness, provided through partnerships with local veteran service organizations and agencies like the VA. By leveraging the resources of all workforce partners, the one-stop system ensures that veterans receive support when searching for employment and achieving long-term career stability.

The one-stop system also focuses on outreach to underrepresented veteran populations, such as homeless veterans, veterans with disabilities, and those recently separated from service, ensuring that they have access to the comprehensive services available. Through these efforts, the workforce system helps veterans successfully

transition into civilian life and contributes to the economic growth of the Southwestern region.

### **Weaknesses**

The Southwestern region consists of seven counties. Six are small rural communities with dispersed populations farthest from employment, education, and training opportunities. The Southwestern region has limited resources for addressing the barriers limiting people from accessing the workforce.

Through discussions with workforce partners about areas to overcome in the region's workforce system, the SAWDB compiled the following list of improvements to focus on:

1. Lack of an integrated software system for referrals and case management among WIOA partners
2. Limited facility space at America's Job Centers for additional core programs
3. Limited resources to provide additional outreach and community awareness
4. Funding resources
5. Lack of job and education services in rural communities
6. Limited or nonexistent broadband access for training programs and workforce services

As the Southwestern region moves into its sector strategy efforts, the capacity to provide workforce development activities to address the education and skill needs of the local workforce will improve and better adapt to the needs of local employers. A more concise understanding of what employers need will help the SAWDB enhance programs for individuals with barriers to employment.

One barrier to employment seen in the Southwestern region is English as a Second Language (ESL) during job placement. Many ESL individuals, particularly in areas with a large migrant or immigrant workforce, have the skills necessary for employment but face difficulties securing jobs matching their abilities due to limited English proficiency. Employers may be hesitant to hire individuals who struggle with language barriers, particularly for roles requiring clear communication or customer interaction. ESL learners may be unaware of available resources that cater to their needs, such as job placement services or skill development programs.

Job placements that require technical language or specialized terminology may pose an added hurdle. For example, industries like healthcare, manufacturing, or information technology often require a higher level of language proficiency in specialized areas, preventing ESL learners from advancing in their careers.

Finding ways to support these learners by offering bilingual training, focusing on industry-specific English learning, and providing wraparound services (such as coaching and mentoring) will help bridge the gap between ESL learners and job placement opportunities. Partnerships with employers willing to offer training or internships for ESL learners will help build confidence and foster skills while overcoming language barriers.

### **C. Strategic Vision and Goals**

---

§679.560(a)(5) A description of the local board's strategic vision to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. This must include goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment), and goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on performance indicators described in §677.155(a)(1) of the WIOA Joint Rule.

---

#### **Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board Vision**

The SAWDB's vision is for a skilled and ready workforce in current and emerging occupations for regional businesses and industries.

#### **Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board Mission**

The SAWDB's mission is to empower individuals with access to quality employment, education, and training, fostering a skilled workforce that meets local employer needs and drives community economic growth.

#### **Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board Goals**

The SAWDB, pursuant to its vision, established the following local goals for the program years 2024 - 2027:

**Goal 1:** Establish sector partnerships and career pathways within target industry sectors that support the economic and workforce development of the region by providing individuals with lifelong training opportunities leading to good jobs by

- 1) increasing the availability of short-term training directly related to the target industry sectors and leading to industry-recognized credentials.
- 2) working with industry to identify skills and credentials (including stackable credentials) and with community colleges and training institutions to identify existing or develop new training programs.
- 3) Prioritizing sector strategies and career pathways in this current plan and expanding on the goals and objectives in the next 4-year plan to strengthen the region's economic and workforce development efforts.

**Goal 2:** Enhance training programs for stakeholders to understand the SAWDB's vision, regulations, contractual obligations, as well as the region's strengths and weaknesses in the workforce system by

- 1) building an online training platform for training providers, service providers, staff, and board members that includes board duties and responsibilities, policy review, training provider duties and responsibilities, and labor market information.

**Goal 3:** Use systems that will incrementally improve the SAWDB's negotiated performance measures identified in Attachment E by

- 1) capitalizing on the functions of the database quality management system (Future Works) and focusing on monitoring and measuring performance data to provide compliance of negotiated performance measures and conduct periodic reporting to the SAWDB.

**Goal 4:** Build a more sustainable value-added agriculture industry in the region by

- 1) working with training providers, economic developers, and local farmers and ranchers to enhance the production and manufacturing processes.
- 2) assisting regional agencies to determine what workforce services are needed to expand markets for local agricultural products.

**Goal 5:** Build a trained and ready workforce to replace workers who are retiring and leaving the industry by

- 1) working with employers to develop targeted and customized programs, especially for the large entities such as White Sands Missile Range, that are rapidly losing employees.
- 2) recruiting new participants, such as WIOA youth participants and individuals with barriers to employment, to the workforce within these career areas.

**Goal 6:** Provide community stakeholders, workforce partners, and the public with an understanding of the workforce needs of each respective county and how to address them by

- 1) developing a Customized Workforce Development Action Plan in a minimum of three counties of the region.

**Goal 7:** Strengthen the regional workforce by increasing credential completion rates from post-secondary institutions by

- 1) identifying individuals who are nearing credential completion and training in occupations-in-demand but lack funding for tuition, supplies, or other items and



enroll them into WIOA Title IB Individual Training Accounts and Supportive Services.

**Goal 8:** Increase the number of co-enrollments among the required partner programs to improve braided funding and efficiencies of the workforce system by

- 1) identifying policies that will encourage co-enrollments of participants.

The SAWDB understands that people and businesses create healthy economies. Its vision and mission align with that of the New Mexico Governor and Cabinet Secretary for the Department of Workforce Solutions to keep New Mexicans working by utilizing an “All Hands” approach to connect New Mexican workers with New Mexico businesses. The goal of this approach is to keep our economy competitive while providing good-paying jobs for people so they can support themselves and their families.

---

[§679.560\(a\)\(6\) Taking into account analyses described in Sections A and B above, describe the local board’s overall strategy for working with the entities that carry out the core programs and required partners to align resources available to the local area, to achieve the strategic vision and goals.](#)

---

The SAWDB’s overall strategy for working with the entities that carry out the core programs and align the available resources in the local area to achieve the strategic vision and goals is two-pronged. The Core partners are the WIOA Title IB Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs; Title II Adult Education and Literacy programs; Title III Wagner-Peyser programs; and Title IV Rehabilitation Act programs.

### **Career Pathways Plan**

The State recognizes the importance of career pathways and saw that each workforce board had little guidance when developing and implementing one for their region. The State plans to initiate the development of a Career Pathways Plan, and with team members from each region, it will become the State’s universal template for them.

The SAWDB approved a Career Pathways Plan at the end of 2019 and the onset of COVID-19 in early 2020 paused its implementation. After returning from the COVID shutdown, the WIOA Project Manager researched the use of career pathways in the region. He discovered that many organizations were already utilizing a version they created. SAWDB members agreed that the current Career Pathways Plan is outdated and that the Planning Committee will revise it. After the update, the SAWDB’s administrative staff will make its best effort to implement and focus on the priorities in

the plan and ensure alignment with the state's creation and implementation of career pathway initiatives.

As described in the SAWDB's Career Pathways Plan, the first step will be to use a traditional approach to provide quick support to the various industries in the region. That begins with convening a leadership team to work on developing career pathways information sheets for the eight Priority Industries.

"A Leadership Team (WIOA Project Manager or Administrative Entity designee [Lead], SAWDB Chair [or appointed representative], WIOA Administrator, and One-Stop Operator) will identify entry points, recruitment strategies, career ladders, and lattices. Industry leaders will be involved in the design process of the career pathways system."

Underscoring this work is the understanding that central to developing career pathways information sheets is the simultaneous development of training programs that provide community members with the training necessary to participate in the eight priority industries. The Leadership Team will develop and disseminate career information sheets for each industry throughout the region. The information sheets will provide information on the education needed for the careers in that industry, the available hands-on experience, the particular careers in that field, and possible salaries.

Partners and educational providers will be encouraged to post a link to the career pathways webpage and provide hardcopy career information sheets to the public and their staff.

After developing the Initial Career Strategies information sheets for all industries and producing and disseminating information, work can then begin on the new Sector Strategies approach that will result in Career Pathways for the first two priority industries, Education and Healthcare.

Cross-agency partners and employers in the region will form the Core Team with the following members:

1. WIOA Project Manager or Administrative Entity designee (Lead)
2. SAWDB Chair or designated participant
3. WIOA Administrator
4. One-Stop Operator Manager
5. Employers from the Designated Industries
6. Core program partners
  - a. WIOA Adult program
  - b. WIOA Dislocated Worker program

- c. WIOA Youth program
  - d. WIOA Wagner-Peyser program
  - e. WIOA Adult Education Services program
  - f. WIOA Vocational Rehabilitation programs
7. Education (K-12 and higher education)
  8. Economic Development
  9. Community-based organizations

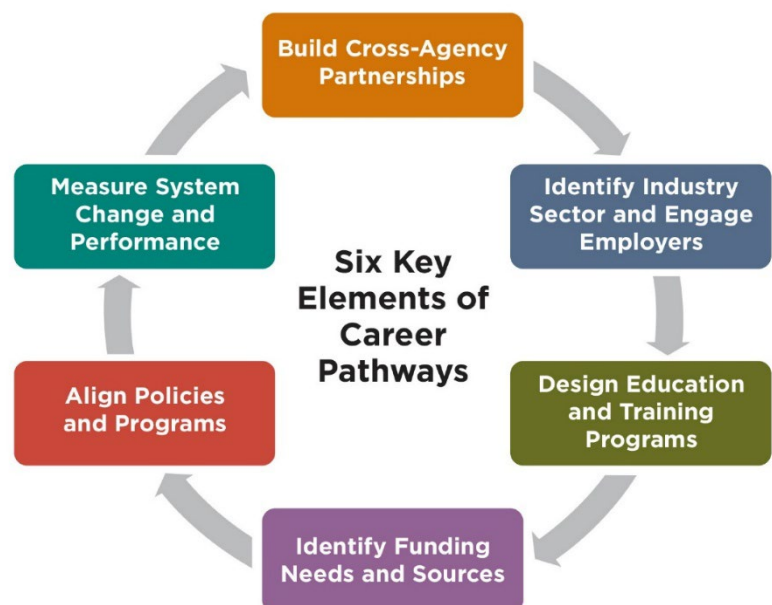
Career pathways are developed through the collaboration of core partners and industry, who gather and analyze information to help customers create an awareness of the employment needs of the local industries that will help customers make informed career choices. A key goal is to engage workforce partners, businesses, and education to form a team that works together to meet the industry's workforce needs through workforce development.

The six elements of the Career Pathways Plan are the following:

1. Building cross-agency partnerships and clarifying roles within the workforce system
2. Identifying industry sectors and engaging employers
3. Designing education and training programs to meet the needs of employers
4. Identifying funding needs and sources
5. Aligning policies and programs
6. Measuring system change and performance

### ***Six Elements of Career Pathways***

View the SAWDB Career Pathways Plan for additional information at <https://www.employnm.com/reports>.



## OPERATIONAL ELEMENTS

### A. Local Workforce System Structure

---

§679.550(c) Local Board Area Profile. Describe the geographical workforce development area, including the LWDA's major communities, major employers, training, and educational institutions (technical and community colleges, universities, etc.), population, diversity of the population, and relevant growth trends.

---

#### **Geographical Workforce Development Area**

The Southwestern Workforce Investment Region comprises seven counties: Catron, Doña Ana, Grant, Hidalgo, Luna, Sierra, and Socorro. The region shares a border with Arizona, Texas, and Mexico.

Agriculture, including chile production, and copper mining, provide many jobs in this area. Military installments such as White Sands Missile Range and NASA also provide many jobs as well as the more than 100 industries located in the Border Industrial Area (BIA) along the border with Mexico, where over 500 jobs (and growing) are located. New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, New Mexico State University, and Western New Mexico University are also important sources of employment in the region. Tourist attractions include Gila, Cibola, and Apache National Forests; several state parks; Elephant Butte Lake; the Town of Mesilla; and Truth or Consequences and their hot mineral springs.

#### **Major Communities**

**1. Catron County** is a very rural county located in western New Mexico. Catron County is the largest county by area, with 6,928 square miles. More than half of Catron County's land comprises parts of three national forests (Gila, Cibola, and Apache). Government is the largest employing sector, with local schools and the U.S. Forest Service providing many opportunities. Agriculture is also important to the local economy, particularly cattle ranching and the timber industry. The Village of Reserve in western Catron County is situated in the Gila National Forest about 15 miles east of the Arizona border. Reserve is the largest community in Catron County with two grocery stores, a hardware store, a few restaurants, bar, fairgrounds, and a health clinic covering just over half a square mile.

The 2020 Census data for Catron County, New Mexico, provides essential insights that will inform the initiatives the SAWDB drives in its Local Plan and the implementation of the WIOA. Below is an overview of key data points from the 2020 Census and their relevance to the SAWDB's strategic priorities.

---

**Catron County, New Mexico - 2020 Census Data:*****Population:***

- **Total Population:** Approximately 3,579
- **Population Change:** The population has remained relatively stable, with some fluctuations typical of rural areas.

***Age Distribution:***

- **Median Age:** 59.9 years, one of the highest in the state, indicating a significantly aging population.
- **Youth (Under 18):** About 13% of the population.
- **Seniors (65 and over):** Nearly 40%, reflecting a large senior population.

***Racial and Ethnic Composition:***

- **White (Non-Hispanic):** 82%
- **Hispanic or Latino:** 16%
- **Native American:** 1%
- **Other Races:** 1%

***Economic Indicators:***

- **Median Household Income:** \$32,674, below both state and national averages.
- **Poverty Rate:** Approximately 20%, higher than the national average.
- **Educational Attainment:** About 23% of the population has a bachelor's degree or higher, slightly above some rural counties but still below state averages.

***Employment and Industry:***

- **Primary Industries:** Agriculture, ranching, and forestry are dominant, along with small-scale tourism related to the Gila National Forest.
- **Unemployment Rate:** Historically low but largely due to a lack of a formal job market, with many residents engaged in self-employment or informal work.

**Key Insights for Workforce Development*****Support for an Aging Population and Workforce:***

- **Initiative:** With nearly 40% of the population aged 65 or older, the SAWDB will focus on supporting the aging workforce. This includes initiatives to help seniors transition into part-time work, remote work, or volunteering roles that keep them engaged and financially stable.

- **Monitoring:** The SAWDB will track participation rates in programs for older workers, job retention rates for seniors, and the success of initiatives designed to engage this demographic in the workforce.

***Youth Retention and Engagement:***

- **Initiative:** The relatively low percentage of youth (13%) suggests a need to focus on retaining young people in the county. The SAWDB will implement initiatives that provide career pathways in local industries, apprenticeships, and educational opportunities that encourage youth to stay and contribute to the local economy.
- **Monitoring:** Success in this area will be measured by youth participation in workforce development programs, the number of apprenticeships created, and the retention rate of young people in the county.

***Economic Diversification and Small Business Support:***

- **Initiative:** Given the county's reliance on agriculture, ranching, and tourism, there will be a focus on diversifying the economy. The SAWDB will promote small business development, particularly in areas like eco-tourism, sustainable agriculture, and remote work opportunities. Encouraging entrepreneurship in these sectors will be key.
- **Monitoring:** The SAWDB will track the number of new businesses started, the growth of existing businesses, job creation in diversified industries, and the effectiveness of entrepreneurship support programs.

***Educational Attainment and Workforce Training:***

- **Initiative:** To address the gap in higher education and workforce readiness, the SAWDB will likely focus on increasing access to post-secondary education and vocational training. Partnerships with community colleges, online education providers, and local organizations will provide more educational opportunities tailored to the needs of the county.
- **Monitoring:** Success will be evaluated by tracking increases in educational attainment, certification completions, and the translation of these credentials into local job placements.

***Addressing Poverty and Economic Mobility:***

- **Initiative:** The relatively high poverty rate indicates a need for targeted interventions to improve economic mobility. Workforce development efforts will include financial literacy programs, support for low-income individuals in accessing training and education, and assistance in overcoming barriers to employment such as transportation and childcare.

- **Monitoring:** The SAWDB will monitor changes in poverty rates, income growth among participants in workforce programs, and the overall economic impact of these initiatives on low-income populations.

### ***Cultural and Community Engagement:***

- **Initiative:** While Catron County has a less diverse population, it's important that workforce development programs are inclusive and culturally sensitive. The SAWDB will ensure that initiatives are accessible to all residents, including the small Hispanic or Latino population.
- **Monitoring:** The SAWDB will track participation and outcomes across different demographic groups to ensure equity in access and success in workforce development programs.

The 2020 Census data for Catron County highlights several key areas where the SAWDB can focus its efforts under its Local Plan and WIOA. By addressing the needs of an aging population, engaging youth, promoting economic diversification, improving educational attainment, and supporting low-income residents, the SAWDB can drive initiatives that foster a more resilient and sustainable economy in Catron County. Monitoring these initiatives through specific metrics will ensure that the SAWDB can adjust strategies as needed to meet the community's evolving needs.

**2. Doña Ana County** – Doña Ana County's economy is supported by its agricultural base, New Mexico State University, and a developing urban area. Las Cruces is the largest city in the county and the second largest in New Mexico, spanning approximately 77 square miles. Located approximately 20 miles north of the Texas state border, Las Cruces sits where I-25 stems from I-10 and is the center of the Mesilla Valley. Bisected by the Rio Grande, the Mesilla Valley boasts fertile-rich land, contributing to the growth of pecans, cotton, chile, onions, corn, and wine-producing grapes. Major employers for Las Cruces residents include Las Cruces Public Schools, City of Las Cruces, Doña County Government, New Mexico State University, two hospitals, and U.S Government jobs at White Sands Missile Range and NASA.

### **Population and Demographics**

***Total Population: Approximately 219,561 residents.***

#### ***Age Distribution:***

- **Under 18 years:** 24.5%
- **18 to 64 years:** 60.7%
- **65 years and over:** 14.8%
- **Gender:** Roughly 49.7% male and 50.3% female.

**Relevance:** A significant percentage of the 18-64 age group population represents a substantial potential workforce. Workforce development programs under WIOA can target these working-age individuals, primarily focusing on youth (under 18 transitioning to work or post-secondary education) and older workers who may need reskilling.

### ***Race and Ethnicity***

- **Hispanic or Latino:** 67.8% of the population.
- **White (Non-Hispanic):** 27.5%
- **Other Races and Ethnicities:** Includes African American (1.5%), Native American (1.4%), Asian (1.1%), and others (2.2%).

**Relevance:** Given the majority Hispanic or Latino population, WIOA initiatives should focus on culturally responsive programs, bilingual training, and support services to better serve this demographic. Outreach and engagement efforts need to be tailored to effectively reach and support these communities.

### ***Housing and Households***

- **Total Housing Units:** Approximately 84,164.
- **Occupied Housing Units:** 89.8% of total housing units.
- **Average Household Size:** 2.68 persons.
- **Homeownership Rate:** About 61.7%.

**Relevance:** Understanding housing stability is vital for workforce initiatives. For instance, programs that increase economic mobility might consider partnerships with housing organizations to address barriers that low homeownership or unstable housing can create.

### ***Economic Indicators***

- **Median Household Income:** Approximately \$42,759.
- **Poverty Rate:** About 21.4% of the population is living below the poverty line.
- **Unemployment Rate:** 6.5% (as of the 2020 Census data).

**Relevance:** The high poverty and unemployment rates highlight a need for targeted WIOA programs focused on job training, upskilling, and career pathways that lead to higher-wage jobs. There is an opportunity to leverage WIOA funds for initiatives that support in-demand sectors and provide pathways out of poverty.

### ***Education***

- **High School Graduate or Higher:** 83.4% of residents aged 25 and older.
- **Bachelor's Degree or Higher:** 24.1% of residents aged 25 and older.



**Relevance:** WIOA programs in Doña Ana County can focus on bridging the education gap by offering GED programs, adult basic education, and post-secondary transition services. Emphasizing partnerships with local educational institutions, such as community colleges, to offer targeted training and certification programs aligned with local labor market needs is critical.

### **Key Insights for Workforce Development**

- **Targeted Programs for Diverse Needs:** With a high percentage of the population being Hispanic or Latino, WIOA programs must include bilingual and culturally competent training materials, leveraging programs like Linguistica for language services.
- **Addressing Economic Barriers:** With a considerable proportion of the population living in poverty, WIOA initiatives should focus on wraparound services—such as transportation assistance, childcare, and career counseling—to address barriers that may prevent individuals from accessing training and employment.
- **Focus on High-Growth Sectors:** The SAWDB will prioritize sectors showing growth potential, such as healthcare, education, logistics, and skilled trades, by aligning training programs to meet employer needs in these fields.
- **Collaboration with Local Entities:** Strengthening partnerships with local economic development agencies, chambers of commerce, community colleges, and social service providers will enhance the effectiveness of workforce initiatives. Braiding funding and resources can support more comprehensive approaches to workforce development.

For Doña Ana County, the 2020 Census data points to a need for targeted, culturally competent, and barrier-removing WIOA initiatives that respond to the region's unique demographic and economic characteristics. By aligning these initiatives with local labor market demands and providing supportive services, the SAWDB can foster a more inclusive and robust workforce development strategy that benefits both residents and employers in the Southwestern region.

**3. Grant County** covers 3,966 square miles. Home to Western New Mexico University, the Town of Silver City is located near the center of Grant County and spans approximately 10 square miles. Located 3 miles east of the Continental Divide, Silver City was founded as a mining town rich in silver, gold, copper, lead, and zinc. Mining opportunities dwindled over the years and Freeport-McMoRan is now the primary employer for mining operations. Gila Regional Medical Center and Hidalgo Medical Services are two major healthcare employers, with Western New Mexico University (WNMU) the major education employer. Local tourist attractions include Silver City, Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monument and City of Rocks State Park.

---

**Grant County, New Mexico - 2020 Census Data:*****Population:***

- **Total Population:** Approximately 27,135.
- **Population Change:** A slight decline from the 2010 Census, reflecting broader trends of rural depopulation.

***Age Distribution:***

- **Median Age:** 47.1 years, significantly higher than the national median age, indicating an aging population.
- **Youth (Under 18):** Around 18% of the population, lower than the national average.
- **Seniors (65 and over):** About 26%, significantly higher than the national average.

***Racial and Ethnic Composition:***

- **White (Non-Hispanic):** 44%
- **Hispanic or Latino:** 51%
- **Native American:** 2%
- **Other Races:** 3%

***Economic Indicators:***

- **Median Household Income:** \$39,213, lower than the state and national averages.
- **Poverty Rate:** Approximately 19%, higher than the national average.
- **Educational Attainment:** About 21% have a bachelor's degree or higher, which is slightly below the state average.

**Key Insights for Workforce Development*****Aging Population and Workforce:***

- The high median age and a large proportion of seniors suggest a shrinking workforce and a growing need for healthcare services and retirement planning.
- Workforce strategies must focus on retraining older workers and supporting industries that cater to the aging population, such as healthcare.

***Youth Engagement:***

- With a lower percentage of youth, engaging with this demographic is necessary to prevent outmigration and build a sustainable local workforce.
- WIOA programs will target youth for training in high-demand sectors, apprenticeships, and career pathways that encourage them to stay and work locally.

***Economic Disparities:***

- The lower median income and higher poverty rate indicate economic challenges requiring targeted workforce development.
- The Local Plan will emphasize creating job opportunities in high-growth sectors, improving access to education and training, and supporting entrepreneurship.

***Educational Attainment:***

- The slightly lower rate of higher education attainment suggests a need for expanding access to post-secondary education and vocational training.
- WIOA can support this through partnerships with local colleges, adult education programs, and career technical education (CTE) initiatives.

***Ethnic Diversity:***

- The high percentage of Hispanic or Latino residents requires culturally responsive workforce programs.
- Bilingual training programs, outreach in Spanish, and support for minority-owned businesses will be key components of the Local Plan.

The 2020 Census data for Grant County highlights demographic and economic trends critical for informing the strategic direction of workforce development initiatives in Southwestern New Mexico. Addressing the challenges of an aging population, engaging youth, and improving economic outcomes through education and targeted support will be essential for the success of the WIOA programs and the broader Local Plan.

**4. Hidalgo County** covers 3,446 square miles. The largest employing industries are public administration, retail, accommodation and food services, and agriculture. The county has a very small population, and many of its residents are employed by city and county government entities. According to the USDA's 2009 Agricultural Statistics Bulletin, Hidalgo County ranked third among all New Mexico counties for chile production, behind Doña Ana and Luna Counties. At approximately 8.4 square miles, the City of Lordsburg is known as a rest stop for travelers. To New Mexicans, Lordsburg is the birthplace of the New Mexico state song. Located in northern Hidalgo County, Lordsburg is situated on I-10 where it intersects with Hwy 70 and is about 20 minutes from the Arizona state border.

**Hidalgo County, New Mexico - 2020 Census Data:*****Population:***

- **Total Population:** Approximately 4,178.
- **Population Change:** The population has been relatively stable but has experienced some decline over the past decade, reflecting broader rural depopulation trends.

***Age Distribution:***

- **Median Age:** 47.6 years, indicating an aging population.
- **Youth (Under 18):** Approximately 21% of the population.
- **Seniors (65 and over):** Around 25%, highlighting a significant senior population.

***Racial and Ethnic Composition:***

- **White (Non-Hispanic):** 39%
- **Hispanic or Latino:** Approximately 57%
- **Native American:** 1%
- **Other Races:** 3%

***Economic Indicators:***

- **Median Household Income:** \$31,563, below the state and national averages.
- **Poverty Rate:** Approximately 24%, significantly higher than the national average.
- **Educational Attainment:** Around 18% of the population has a bachelor's degree or higher, slightly below the state average.

***Employment and Industry:***

- **Primary Industries:** Agriculture, mining, and services dominate the local economy. Hidalgo County is known for its cattle ranching, farming, and mining operations, particularly in copper and other minerals.
- **Unemployment Rate:** Historically fluctuating, often reflecting the economic volatility in primary industries like agriculture and mining.

***Aging Population and Workforce Development:***

- The high median age and significant senior population suggest a shrinking labor force, with challenges in retaining younger workers.
- Workforce strategies will focus on retraining older workers, addressing skills gaps, and creating opportunities for younger residents to remain in the county through education, training, and employment initiatives.

***Youth Engagement:***

- With over 20% of the population under 18, there is an opportunity to engage youth early in workforce development.
- WIOA programs will target youth through career counseling, apprenticeships, and training in high-demand fields to ensure they have viable career paths within the county, reducing the outmigration of young talent.

***Economic Diversification:***

- The county's reliance on agriculture and mining makes it vulnerable to economic fluctuations.
- The Local Plan will include strategies to diversify the local economy by promoting small business development, attracting new industries, and supporting entrepreneurial initiatives. WIOA funding can assist in retraining workers from declining industries into emerging sectors.

***Support for Hispanic and Latino Populations:***

- With a majority Hispanic or Latino population, workforce development programs must be culturally sensitive and accessible.
- Bilingual training programs, outreach, and services tailored to this community can enhance participation and success rates in WIOA initiatives.

***Addressing Poverty and Low-Income Levels:***

- The high poverty rate and low median household income require targeted interventions to improve economic outcomes.
- Workforce development efforts will focus on increasing access to education and training for higher-paying jobs, improving financial literacy, and offering support for individuals seeking to start or expand businesses in the county.

***Educational Attainment and Workforce Readiness:***

- The relatively low educational attainment levels highlight the need for programs that enhance access to higher education and vocational training.
- The Local Plan will emphasize partnerships with local educational institutions to provide training in critical skills that align with the county's economic needs, including agriculture technology, mining safety, and renewable energy.

The 2020 Census data for Hidalgo County underscores the importance of tailored workforce development strategies to meet the community's specific needs. The SAWDB's Local Plan should prioritize economic diversification, support for aging workers, engagement with youth, and targeted programs for the Hispanic and Latino population. Through the effective use of WIOA programs, the SAWDB can address the

challenges of poverty, unemployment, and low educational attainment, fostering a more resilient and sustainable local economy.

**5. Luna County** – Economic drivers include agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism with alfalfa, chile, cotton, corn, and pecans representing the bulk of its agricultural production. Food manufacturing employs many workers to process agricultural output. Luna County is home to an international port of entry located three miles south of the village of Columbus. Tourist attractions include Pancho Villa State Park, Rockhound State Park, the Deming Luna Mimbres Museum, and several ghost towns. At just under 17 square miles, the City of Deming sits on I-10 at quite the intersection. Deming is one hour east of Lordsburg, one hour west of Las Cruces, 1 hour south of Silver City, and approximately 35 minutes north of Mexico. Among a variety of businesses, Deming has a municipal airport, hospital, and golf course. The City of Deming, Deming Public Schools, and the U.S. Border Patrol are among the largest employers.

#### **Luna County, New Mexico - 2020 Census Data:**

##### ***Population:***

- **Total Population:** Approximately 23,709.
- **Population Change:** The county has seen fluctuations, with some population decline reflective of broader rural trends.

##### ***Age Distribution:***

- **Median Age:** 38.6 years, slightly lower than the national average, indicating a relatively younger population compared to some other rural areas.
- **Youth (Under 18):** Around 25% of the population, indicating a significant proportion of young people.
- **Seniors (65 and over):** About 20%, showing a substantial aging population as well.

##### ***Racial and Ethnic Composition:***

- **White (Non-Hispanic):** 23%
- **Hispanic or Latino:** Approximately 67%
- **Native American:** 1%
- **Other Races:** 9%

##### ***Economic Indicators:***

- **Median Household Income:** \$28,929, significantly lower than state and national averages.
- **Poverty Rate:** Approximately 30%, one of the highest in the state.

- Unemployment Rate: Historically high, often exceeding state and national averages.
- **Educational Attainment:** Around 13% of residents have a bachelor's degree or higher, lower than the state average.

***Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Population:***

- Luna County has a significant population of migrant and seasonal farmworkers due to its agricultural economy, particularly in chile peppers, onions, and other crops.
- Many farmworkers are from Hispanic or Latino backgrounds, with a considerable number being immigrants or first-generation residents.

**Key Insights for Workforce Development*****Highest Unemployment Rate in New Mexico:***

- The high unemployment rate, coupled with the low median income, indicates a need for robust job creation strategies.
- The Local Plan should focus on diversifying the local economy, increasing access to training in high-demand sectors, and providing support for job seekers, particularly those transitioning from seasonal work to more stable employment.

***Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Support:***

- WIOA programs should prioritize services for migrant and seasonal farmworkers, who often face unique barriers, such as language barriers, limited access to education, and employment instability.
- Programs will include ESL (English as a Second Language) training, job placement services, and assistance with transitioning into non-seasonal work.

***Youth Engagement and Educational Support:***

- With a significant proportion of the population under 18, it's crucial to develop programs that prevent youth from falling into cycles of poverty and unemployment.
- The Local Plan should include initiatives like apprenticeships, vocational training, and early career counseling targeted at young people.

***Addressing Economic Disparities:***

- The high poverty rate requires targeted interventions to improve economic outcomes. Workforce development programs under WIOA can include financial literacy, small business support, and initiatives promoting entrepreneurship, particularly in underrepresented communities.

***Cultural and Language Accessibility:***

- Given the high percentage of Hispanic or Latino residents, including many migrant farmworkers, workforce programs must be culturally and linguistically accessible.
- Bilingual services, outreach efforts tailored to the Hispanic community, and collaboration with local organizations serving these populations will be essential.

The 2020 Census data for Luna County highlights the region's significant challenges and opportunities for workforce development. Addressing the high unemployment rate, supporting the migrant and seasonal farmworker population, and improving access to education and training will be key elements of a successful Local Plan and WIOA strategy for Southwestern New Mexico. Programs must be tailored to meet the needs of a diverse population, with a focus on economic empowerment, job stability, and reducing poverty.

The SAWDB recently invested in website accessibility software. The Recite Me cloud-based technology toolbar makes the website digitally inclusive. Visitors can listen and learn the content in many forms or languages that work best for them.

**6. Sierra County** covers 4,180 square miles. Sierra County's main economic drivers are agriculture, healthcare, tourism, and aerospace. Spaceport America is located a few miles to the east of Truth or Consequences where the number of jobs is beginning to increase. The agriculture industry consists primarily of cattle ranching. Healthcare industry employers include Sierra Vista Hospital, New Mexico State Veteran's Home, Ben Archer Health Center, and Sierra Health Care Center. Spaceport America continues to grow near Upham. Local tourist attractions include Elephant Butte Lake and State Park, the Gila National Wilderness, Caballo Lake State Park, Percha Dam State Park, several museums and ghost towns, and the mineral baths located in Truth or Consequences. Major communities include the cities of Elephant Butte and Truth or Consequences and the Village of Williamsburg. Major employers include the City of Truth or Consequence, Sierra County, the hospital, and the New Mexico Veterans Center.

**Sierra County, New Mexico - 2020 Census Data Overview:*****Population:***

- **Total Population:** Approximately 10,094.
- **Population Trend:** A decline in population, reflecting rural depopulation trends common in the region.



**Age Distribution:**

- **Median Age:** 59.3 years, indicating a significantly aging population.
- **Youth (Under 18):** Approximately 12% of the population.
- **Seniors (65 and over):** Around 37%, highlighting a large senior population.

**Racial and Ethnic Composition:**

- **White (Non-Hispanic):** 77%
- **Hispanic or Latino:** 20%
- **Native American:** 1%
- **Other Races:** 2%

**Economic Indicators:**

- **Median Household Income:** \$31,128, significantly below state and national averages.
- **Poverty Rate:** Approximately 27%, higher than the national average.
- **Educational Attainment:** Around 19% of the population has a bachelor's degree or higher, slightly below state averages.

**Employment and Industry:**

- **Primary Industries:** Tourism (driven by attractions like Elephant Butte Lake), healthcare, retail, and agriculture.
- **Unemployment Rate:** Fluctuates, often higher than the state average, partly due to the seasonal nature of the tourism industry.

**Key Insights for Workforce Development*****Aging Workforce and Senior Employment:***

- **Initiatives:** With 37% of the population aged 65 or older, the SAWDB will prioritize programs that support senior employment and engagement. This may include part-time job opportunities, remote work options, and volunteering programs that leverage the experience of older residents.
- **WIOA Relevance:** Aligning WIOA programs, including job training and employment services specifically designed for older workers, helping them remain active in the workforce.

***Youth Engagement and Retention:***

- **Initiatives:** With only 12% of the population under 18, there is a critical need to engage and retain young people. Initiatives may include creating career pathways through partnerships with local schools, offering apprenticeships, and

focusing on industries like healthcare and renewable energy that can provide sustainable employment opportunities.

- **WIOA Relevance:** WIOA funds will support youth training programs, internships, and career counseling services, ensuring that young residents have access to local job opportunities and are incentivized to stay in the area.

#### ***Economic Diversification and Small Business Development:***

- **Initiatives:** Sierra County's reliance on tourism suggests the need for economic diversification. The SAWDB will promote small business development in sectors like sustainable agriculture, renewable energy, and niche tourism. Supporting local entrepreneurs through training and financial assistance will be crucial.
- **WIOA Relevance:** WIOA resources will be directed toward entrepreneurial training, apprenticeship, internship, business development workshops, and workforce readiness programs that support the growth of diverse industries, reducing the county's economic dependency on seasonal tourism.

#### ***Poverty Reduction and Economic Mobility:***

- **Initiatives:** Addressing the high poverty rate is a priority. The SAWDB will ensure focus on job training programs that lead to higher-paying employment, financial literacy education, and initiatives that reduce barriers to employment, such as transportation and childcare support.
- **WIOA Relevance:** WIOA partners can fund targeted job training programs, support services for low-income individuals, and initiatives designed to increase economic mobility, directly addressing the high poverty levels in Sierra County.

#### ***Educational Attainment and Workforce Training:***

- **Initiatives:** To improve educational attainment, the SAWDB will expand access to higher education and vocational training tailored to local industry needs. This will involve partnerships with community colleges, online education platforms, and industry-specific training providers.
- **WIOA Relevance:** Braided funds can be used to enhance workforce training programs, increase the availability of certifications, and provide educational opportunities that directly correlate with local job market demands.

#### ***Tourism and Hospitality Workforce Development:***

- **Initiatives:** Given the importance of tourism, initiatives will focus on improving the skills of workers in the hospitality sector, such as customer service training, management development, and digital marketing.

- **WIOA Relevance:** WIOA core partners can support training programs specific to the tourism and hospitality sectors, helping workers develop skills that enhance the quality of services provided, ultimately boosting the local economy.

The 2020 Census data for Sierra County highlights several critical areas where the SAWDB can focus its efforts under WIOA and its Local Plan. Initiatives addressing the aging population, youth engagement, economic diversification, poverty reduction, educational attainment, and tourism workforce development are essential for fostering a resilient and sustainable economy in Sierra County. By aligning these initiatives with WIOA resources, the SAWDB can effectively meet the workforce needs of the community and support long-term economic growth.

**7. Socorro County** covers 6,646 square miles. The New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology is the major employer in the area, and it supports other entities in the professional and technical services sector, including the National Radio Astronomy Observatory. The healthcare industry includes employees at Socorro General Hospital, Socorro Good Samaritan Village, Socorro Community Health Center, Presbyterian Medical Services, and Magdalena Area Health Center. Agriculture in this area consists of small farming communities along the Rio Grande. A major tourist attraction is the Bosque Del Apache National Wildlife Refuge. There are also a variety of museums and outdoor hiking, biking, and wildlife viewing opportunities. The City of Socorro sits right off I-25 and spans more than 14 square square miles.

### **Socorro County, New Mexico - 2020 Census Data Overview:**

#### ***Population:***

- **Total Population:** Approximately 16,595.
- **Population Trend:** Slightly declining, reflecting broader rural depopulation trends in the region.

#### ***Age Distribution:***

- **Median Age:** 37.5 years, younger than many rural counties in New Mexico, indicating a more balanced age distribution.
- **Youth (Under 18):** Around 23% of the population.
- **Seniors (65 and over):** About 18%, reflecting a moderate aging population.

#### ***Racial and Ethnic Composition:***

- **White (Non-Hispanic):** 45%
- **Hispanic or Latino:** 50%
- **Native American:** 4%

- **Other Races:** 1%

***Economic Indicators:***

- **Median Household Income:** \$35,040, below both state and national averages.
- **Poverty Rate:** Approximately 24%, higher than the national average.
- **Educational Attainment:** Around 23% of the population has a bachelor's degree or higher, slightly above some rural counties but still below the state average.

***Employment and Industry:***

- **Primary Industries:** Education (due to New Mexico Tech), government services, retail, agriculture, and mining.
- **Unemployment Rate:** Historically higher than state and national averages, influenced by the economic structure and reliance on a few key sectors.

**Key Insights for Workforce Development*****Youth Engagement and Educational Pathways:***

- **Initiatives:** With 23% of the population under 18 and the presence of New Mexico Tech, a key focus will be on creating educational pathways that retain youth in the county. This might include partnerships with New Mexico Tech for STEM-focused programs, internships, and apprenticeships in emerging fields like technology and engineering.
- **WIOA Relevance:** The WIOA One-Stop system can support these efforts by offering career counseling, workforce training, and job placement services for youth, particularly in high-demand industries that align with local educational resources.

***Support for a Diverse Workforce:***

- **Initiatives:** The county's diverse population, with 50% identifying as Hispanic or Latino, suggests the need for culturally responsive workforce programs. The SAWDB will focus on bilingual education, targeted outreach, and support services that address the unique barriers faced by Hispanic and Native American communities.
- **WIOA Relevance:** The One-Stop system can ensure that services are accessible to all residents, offering language support, culturally relevant training programs, and resources that promote inclusivity in the workforce.

***Economic Diversification and Small Business Support:***

- **Initiatives:** Socorro County's economy relies heavily on education, government services, and agriculture, necessitating a push for diversification. The SAWDB

will support small business development in sectors like renewable energy, technology (leveraging New Mexico Tech), and value-added agriculture.

- **WIOA Relevance:** WIOA funds can be directed toward entrepreneurial training, small business development programs, and workforce training in emerging industries, helping to create a more resilient local economy.

#### ***Poverty Reduction and Economic Mobility:***

- **Initiatives:** With a poverty rate of 24%, the SAWDB will focus on initiatives aimed at lifting residents out of poverty. This will involve job training programs that lead to higher-paying jobs, financial literacy education, and support for low-income families to access education and employment opportunities.
- **WIOA Relevance:** The One-Stop system can provide comprehensive services that address barriers to employment, such as transportation, childcare, and access to education, ensuring that all residents have the tools they need to achieve economic mobility.

#### ***Educational Attainment and Workforce Training:***

- **Initiatives:** The SAWDB will focus on increasing access to higher education and vocational training, particularly in industries critical to the county's economy, such as education, technology, and agriculture. Collaboration with New Mexico Tech and other educational institutions will be key.
- **WIOA Relevance:** WIOA can fund training programs that align with local industry needs, providing certifications and credentials that lead to direct employment. The One-Stop system can also offer continuous education and upskilling opportunities for the existing workforce.

#### ***Support for Agriculture and Mining Industries:***

- **Initiatives:** Given the importance of agriculture and mining, the SAWDB will develop specialized training programs focusing on modernizing these industries, introducing sustainable practices, and improving safety and efficiency.
- **WIOA Relevance:** WIOA resources can offer training that enhances workers' skills in these sectors, ensuring that they are equipped to meet modern industry demands and improving job security in these traditional industries.

#### ***Leveraging New Mexico Tech for Workforce Development:***

- **Initiatives:** New Mexico Tech is a significant asset, and the SAWDB will focus on leveraging this institution for workforce development. Initiatives might include partnerships for research and development projects, workforce training programs aligned with technological advancements, and internships that prepare students for local employment.

- **WIOA Relevance:** The One-Stop system can play a key role in connecting students and graduates with local employers, ensuring that the skills developed at New Mexico Tech are utilized within the county, contributing to local economic growth.

The 2020 Census data for Socorro County underscores several strategic areas where the SAWDB can focus its efforts. By engaging youth, supporting a diverse workforce, promoting economic diversification, reducing poverty, enhancing educational attainment, and supporting key industries, the SAWDB can drive initiatives that align with the WIOA One-Stop system. These efforts will be critical in fostering a resilient and sustainable economy in Socorro County, ensuring all residents have access to the resources and opportunities needed to thrive.

### **Workforce**

Southwestern New Mexico's workforce, spanning Catron, Sierra, Socorro, Doña Ana, Luna, Grant, and Hidalgo Counties, is characterized by diverse industries and unique regional challenges. Doña Ana County, the largest in the region, benefits from the presence of New Mexico State University (NMSU) and key employers like White Sands Missile Range and major healthcare providers. The county's workforce development efforts focus on aligning educational programs with local industry needs, particularly in healthcare, technology, and agriculture, leveraging NMSU's resources for training and upskilling.

In Luna and Hidalgo Counties, agriculture is a dominant industry, with significant employment in farming and related sectors. These counties also face challenges like high unemployment rates and a large migrant and seasonal farmworker population. Workforce development initiatives in these areas focus on supporting the agricultural workforce through targeted training, language services, and efforts to diversify the economy to reduce reliance on seasonal employment.

Grant and Socorro Counties have economies shaped by mining, education, and government services. Grant County's workforce is heavily influenced by Freeport-McMoRan Copper & Gold and Western New Mexico University (WNMU), while Socorro County benefits from the presence of New Mexico Tech. Workforce development strategies in these counties emphasize industry-specific training, particularly in mining and technology, and leveraging educational institutions for workforce development.

Smaller counties like Sierra and Catron face challenges related to aging populations and limited economic diversity. Sierra County's economy is driven by tourism and healthcare, while Catron County relies on ranching and small-scale farming. Workforce development efforts in these areas focus on supporting traditional industries, promoting

small business development, and addressing the needs of an aging workforce through reskilling and flexible work options. Across all counties, the SAWDB's initiatives aim to build a more resilient and sustainable workforce that meets the needs of both employers and workers.

### Major Employers

The following is a list of some of the largest employers in the Southwestern region.

#### ***Large Employers in the Southwestern Region***

Ambercare	Ben Archer Health Center
City of Las Cruces	Deming Schools
Doña Ana County	Doña Ana Community College
Federal Government	Freeport McMoRan
Gila Regional Medical Center	Keystone Industries
La Clinica de Familia	Las Cruces Public Schools
Memorial Regional Medical Center	Mizkan
New Mexico State University	Peak Behavioral Health
State of New Mexico	Tresco
Walmart	Western New Mexico University

Source: *Source: <https://nmpartnership.com/incentives-data/new-mexico-largest-employers/>*

**Employers By Job Openings**

Southwestern Region, New Mexico

	<b>RANK</b>	<b>EMPLOYER</b>	<b>JOB OPENINGS</b>
<b>Employers with Highest # of Job Openings Advertised Online</b>	1	Addus HomeCare, Inc.	240
	2	LifePoint Health, Inc.	213
	3	MCI	189
	4	Community Health Systems	158
	5	Suppressed	116
	6	Aya Healthcare, Inc.	72
	7	City of Las Cruces, NM	72
	8	New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology	63
	9	New Mexico State University	59
	10	Gila Regional Medical Center	57

Source: Online advertised jobs data. Downloaded: 09/1/2024 3:48 PM

**Training and Educational Institutions**

The SAWDB plans to continue to use the State's web-based eligible training provider lists. Prospective and current providers will access the applications to become eligible providers via the State website (<https://www.jobs.state.nm.us/>). Applications for training provider programs are also accessed using the same procedure. Eligible training providers will enter course information and performance information onto the state's website. All programs will be reviewed to make sure they have been identified as an occupation in demand for the Southwestern area.



The following is a current list of Eligible Training Providers

### 1. Eligible Training Providers

Provider Name
CES Leap – Teacher Certificate
Coding Clarified – Medical Coding
DACC – CDL, Pharmacy Tech, Respiratory Therapist, Radiologic Tech
Mountain View Vocational Institute – CDL
New Mexico Dental Institute – Dental Assistant
NMSU – BA Psychology
Pinnacle Institute – Phlebotomy, Dental Assistant, Medical Coding
San Juan College – AS Information Technology
UNM – Medical Coding and Billing
WNMU – BC in Nursing and Psychology

Source: NMWCOS

### Major Educational Institutions

The largest educational institutions in the Southwestern region include the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, New Mexico State University, Western New Mexico University, and Doña Ana Community College.

New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology (NM Tech) in Socorro was established in 1889 with the main campus spanning 320 acres. NM Tech is a research university focusing on STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics), and offers 30 majors. With small class sizes at a 12-to-1 student-to-faculty ratio, nearly 57% of classes have less than 20 students, which results in increased attention from instructors. In 2020, CollegeChoice.net ranked NM Tech the Best College in New Mexico. On USNews.com, NM Tech tied with others at #18 for Best Colleges in Regional Universities West.

[www.nmt.edu/aboutnmt/](http://www.nmt.edu/aboutnmt/)

[www.collegechoice.net/rankings/best-colleges-in-new-mexico/](http://www.collegechoice.net/rankings/best-colleges-in-new-mexico/)

[www.usnews.com/best-colleges/nmt-2654](http://www.usnews.com/best-colleges/nmt-2654)

New Mexico State University (NMSU) has a 900-acre campus and enrolls more than 14,000 students from 49 states and 89 foreign countries. NMSU is a NASA Space-Grant College and home to the very first Honors College in New Mexico. NMSU serves a multi-cultural population of students and community members across the state at five campuses, a satellite learning center in Albuquerque, cooperative extension offices located in each of New Mexico's 33 counties, and 12 agriculture research and science centers. NMSU offers 90 majors for over 12,500 undergraduate students. With their 16-to-1 student-to-faculty ratio, nearly 47% of classes have less than 20 students. The most popular majors include Business, Management, Marketing, and Engineering. NMSU ranked #3 on CollegeChoice.net's Best Colleges in New Mexico for 2020.

[https://nmsu.edu/about\\_nmsu/index.html](https://nmsu.edu/about_nmsu/index.html)

<https://www.collegechoice.net/rankings/best-colleges-in-new-mexico/>



Western New Mexico University (WNMU) in Silver City was established in 1893 and spans 83 acres. They offer more than 70 fields of study, from accounting to zoology. WNMU has fully online master's and bachelor's degree programs. More than 3,500 students attend their campuses and are enrolled online. WNMU awards 500 degrees each year.

[www.wnmu.edu/about/](http://www.wnmu.edu/about/)



**WESTERN**  
NEW MEXICO UNIVERSITY

Doña Ana Community College (DACC) has a total of 6 campuses in Anthony, Chaparral, Las Cruces, and Sunland Park in southern Doña Ana County. Originating as a trade school in 1973, DACC is now a higher education institution graduating highly skilled professionals ready for today's workforce. They have 44 associate degrees and 55 certificate programs and produced 1,055 graduates in the 2020 school year.

<https://dacc.nmsu.edu/>

<https://dacc.nmsu.edu/programs-alpha/>



Doña Ana Community College

**Population**

The workforce region had an estimated population of 309,101 in 2020, per the US Census Bureau. Below is a table of the population by county, with Doña Ana County having the highest population of over 219,500.

**Population**

County	2020 Estimated Population	Largest Community
Catron County	3,579	Village of Reserve
Doña Ana	219,561	City of Las Cruces
Grant County	28,185	Town of Silver City
Hidalgo County	4,178	City of Lordsburg
Luna County	25,427	City of Deming
Sierra County	11,576	Truth or Consequences
Socorro County	16,595	City of Socorro

Source: US Census Bureau



### **Relevant Growth Trends**

New Mexico is experiencing significant growth in several key industries, particularly in agriculture, cannabis cultivation, and the booming film industry, which has seen rapid expansion due to favorable tax incentives.

The agriculture sector, long a staple of the state's economy, continues to grow, particularly in regions known for farming onions, chile, apples, and pecans. With new technology and sustainable farming practices being introduced, agriculture remains a steady provider of jobs in rural areas. This growth is further supplemented by the rise of cannabis agriculture, which has emerged as a dynamic new field since the legalization of recreational cannabis in New Mexico. Cannabis farming has created opportunities not just in cultivation but also in processing, distribution, and retail, bringing significant job creation to rural and urban areas.

Meanwhile, the film industry has experienced a substantial boom in New Mexico due to state-backed tax incentives that make the region an attractive location for production companies. The construction of a new film studio in Las Cruces, paired with these incentives, has drawn significant productions to the area. The film industry's growth multiplies various trades, with high demand for skilled workers in carpentry, plumbing, set design, and other technical jobs supporting film production. These developments position the film industry as a major future employer in New Mexico, further diversifying the state's economy and offering various career pathways.

As these industries expand, the workforce system and its partners strategically align their resources to ensure training and career pathway opportunities are available to meet the growing demand for skilled workers in agriculture, cannabis cultivation, and the film industry. Through programs supported by the one-stop system, job seekers can access training and certifications that prepare them for in-demand roles, ensuring that New Mexico's workforce remains competitive in these fast-evolving industries.

The Las Cruces area is projected to see growth in construction. Industries expected to shrink in the region include manufacturing, utilities, information, and wholesale and retail trade. The educational services industry is projected to see high growth in nearly all counties.

The following chart reflects the industries with the highest projected annual employment in the workforce region for the next eight years.

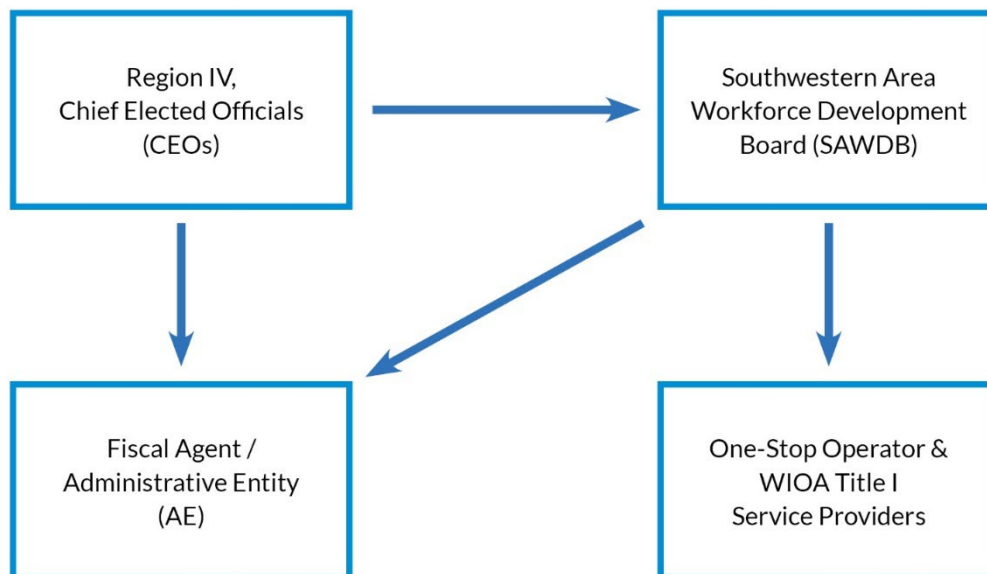
**Industries with Highest Projected Annual Employment**

Time Period	Industry	Industry Code	Estimated Employment	Projected Employment	Total Employment Change	Annual Percent Change	Total Percent Change
2022-2032	Health Care and Social Assistance	62	20,743	28,606	7,863	3.27%	37.91%
2022-2032	Accommodation and Food Services	72	10,342	12,511	2,169	1.92%	20.97%
2022-2032	Retail Trade	44-45	11,054	12,049	995	0.87%	9.00%
2022-2032	Educational Services	61	14,214	15,061	847	0.58%	5.96%
2022-2032	Manufacturing	31-33	4,429	5,176	747	1.57%	16.87%
2022-2032	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	56	4,101	4,609	508	1.17%	12.39%
2022-2032	Construction	23	4,692	5,189	497	1.01%	10.59%
2022-2032	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	71	815	1,272	457	4.55%	56.07%
2022-2032	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	54	4,044	4,479	435	1.03%	10.76%
2022-2032	Transportation and Warehousing	48-49	2,435	2,792	357	1.38%	14.66%

**§679.550(c) Local Board Structure.** Provide a full roster of local board membership, including the group each member represents, in Attachment B. Include a list of all standing committees, along with a description of the purpose of each committee.

The following chart shows the relationship between the CEOs, the SAWDB, and its relationship with its contractors. The CEOs are the grant recipients of the funds and appoint members to the SAWDB. The CEOs contract with SAWDB, the Fiscal Agent, and the Administrative Entity. The SAWDB also approves policies for the Southwestern region and contracts with WIOA Title IB service providers: One-Stop Operator, Adult and Dislocated Worker program, and Youth program.

**Local Workforce Development Board Structure**



View Attachment B for a full roster of local board members and the sector each member represents. Attachment B also contains a list of all standing committees, along with a description of the purpose of each committee.

---

§679.560(b)(1)(i) Provide a description of the workforce development system in the local area that identifies the programs that are included in the system; demonstrating alignment with regional economic, workforce and workforce development analysis. (In addition, please provide a list in Attachment C of the one-stop centers in your local area, including address and phone numbers. Indicate the one-stop operator for each site and whether it is a comprehensive or satellite center. Include a list of the one-stop partners physically located at each of the one-stop centers in the local board area, and the services provided by these partners.)

---

### **Workforce System Programs**

The Combined State Plan calls for a customer-driven, one-stop system with multiple partners to match skilled individuals to employers. The workforce system is aligned with a common federal brand and service requirements across federal, state, and local levels.

The SAWDB administers six America's Job Center offices for the seven-county region. These sites offer the WIOA adult, dislocated worker, and youth services and offer referrals to services that may not be staffed at each site. These sites provide staff-assisted and self-directed services to meet the needs of the participants for job training, unemployment application, and access to computers for job searches, as well as other services listed in Attachment C of this plan.

Access to services in the SAWDB partner network is provided through America's Job Center or referrals to various programs and organizations. Co-located partners in America's Job Center offices across the seven counties include the following:

- WIOA Title I.B Adult & Dislocated Worker (Equus Workforce Solutions)
- WIOA Title I.B Youth (Equus Workforce Solutions)
- WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Program (NMDWS)
- Veterans' Services Program (NMDWS)

### **Alignment of Regional Economic & Workforce Development**

Program development is informed by data analysis of programs, service design strategies, and opportunities that will align with the best interests of job seekers and employers. The local workforce system is designed to increase access to and opportunities for the employment, education, training, and support services that

individuals need to succeed in the labor market, including target populations, particularly those with barriers to employment.

The collection of data allows the SAWDB to prioritize and target underserved populations. This data is shared with workforce partners to provide service levels within specific target populations for continual service improvement by increasing outreach. Our service providers also collect data to inform the SAWDB and staff how they are meeting the most recent service demands. Certain corrections are made to allow funding between workforce programs to be transferred, making training dollars available to the programs most in need.

The SAWDB plans to strengthen its relationships with economic development offices, school districts, chambers of commerce, and other trade and labor organizations within the seven-county area. This goal will be accomplished by increasing communication through active participation in regional meetings of each group and by developing a monthly regional economic analysis publication of each county that will include all relevant workforce-related data such as employment/unemployment, labor participation rates, workforce demographics, and other pertinent information.

A complete list of the Southwestern Area America's Job Center locations and the partners located in each center can be found in Attachment C.

---

[§679.560\(b\)\(1\)\(ii\) Describe how the LWDB will support the strategies identified in the State Plan and work with the entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs, including programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 \(20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.\) to support service alignment.](#)

---

The SAWDB recognizes and supports the State's strategic goals and objectives in the Combined State Plan through the alignment of its policies, career pathways, sector strategies, and career and training services.

### **Strategic Support**

The SAWDB will actively support the strategies identified in the state plan by fostering alignment and collaboration with entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development initiatives, including those under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006. This will involve several key approaches:

The SAWDB will ensure that workforce development activities align with the Perkins programs' educational objectives. This will be achieved by continuing to work closely with secondary and postsecondary institutions to ensure that career and technical

education (CTE) pathways are tailored to meet the evolving needs of the local labor market, with an emphasis on in-demand sectors such as healthcare, manufacturing, agriculture, and the growing film industry. The SAWDB will continue coordinating with these educational partners to align CTE curricula with industry-recognized certifications and credentials, ensuring that students gain the skills employers seek.

The SAWDB will promote greater integration of services by establishing strong partnerships between the one-stop system and CTE programs. This will involve the One-Stop Operator and WIOA partner, developing cross-referral systems, sharing labor market data, and collaborating on career exploration activities and work-based learning opportunities, such as internships and apprenticeships. The goal is to create seamless transitions for students from education into the workforce while also providing pathways for adult learners and displaced workers to re-skill or up-skill in high-demand fields.

The SAWDB will also work with entities carrying out core WIOA programs, such as adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs, as well as Title II Adult Education and Literacy, Title III Wagner-Peyser Employment Services, and Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation, to ensure that all efforts are aligned toward increasing access to training, career pathways, and credentialing opportunities. By facilitating regular communication and data-sharing between these entities, the SAWDB will enhance the ability of the one-stop system to address skill gaps and support workforce needs across the region.

The SAWDB will encourage the development of sector partnerships to support targeted industries. The State Plan emphasizes a coordinated Sector Strategy outreach led by NMDWS. This strategy is centered around developing comprehensive roadmaps that outline specific activities, timelines, and responsibilities for each partner program within the workforce system. The aim is to ensure that all partners, including the one-stop system and other workforce development entities, are aligned in their efforts to meet the needs of high-demand industries.

These sector roadmaps will serve as a strategic guide for partners to collaborate effectively, share resources, and target services where they are most needed. By designating clear ownership of tasks among core partners, such as Programs Title I, Title II, Title III, Title IV, and industry associations, the outreach is streamlined and more effective in driving workforce development outcomes. This collaborative approach enhances service delivery and ensures that each sector is fully supported by an integrated workforce system, benefiting job seekers and employers across New Mexico, particularly in growing industries like healthcare, manufacturing, agriculture, and the film industry.



---

**B. Local Workforce Development System Alignment**

---

§679.560(b)(2)(i) Describe how the local board will work with entities carrying out core programs to expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment.

---

The SAWDB will work collaboratively with entities carrying out core programs to expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, especially those with barriers to employment. A key strategy will be co-enrollment, where eligible individuals are enrolled in multiple programs, such as WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs, as well as TANF, SNAP E&T, and Vocational Rehabilitation services. This will maximize resources, allowing for a comprehensive approach that addresses individuals' immediate needs and long-term career goals. Co-enrollment will enable individuals to access a broader range of services, including employment counseling, job search assistance, and training opportunities.

To further expand access, the SAWDB will prioritize partnerships with educational institutions to offer coordinated outreach efforts targeting middle and high school students. These outreach activities will provide early exposure to career pathways, apprenticeships, and industry-recognized certifications, encouraging students to pursue high-demand fields. In collaboration with core program partners, the SAWDB will implement robust education and training programs tailored to the needs of the regional labor market while working closely with the state's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) to increase the number of available training programs and providers. The SAWDB will also increase outreach and educate and inform training providers within the region who may meet the ETPL requirements.

Supportive services such as childcare, transportation, and housing assistance will also be critical in expanding access for eligible individuals. The SAWDB, in partnership with community-based organizations, will ensure that individuals with barriers to employment have access to these essential services, helping them to participate in education and training programs without financial strain. Additionally, implementing a common assessment tool across all partners will streamline identifying individuals' needs, allowing for a more efficient referral to appropriate services and reducing the likelihood of duplication.

Regular workforce partner meetings will facilitate coordination among all entities carrying out core programs, ensuring that partners align their approach to service delivery and that best practices are shared. The SAWDB will work to increase job

placements by fostering strong relationships with employers across sectors and promoting apprenticeships as a key strategy for building sustainable careers. These apprenticeships will offer individuals an earn-while-you-learn model that combines on-the-job training with classroom instruction, leading to industry-recognized credentials and long-term employment opportunities.

Through these strategies, the SAWDB will work with core program partners to create a more inclusive and supportive workforce development system that addresses the unique needs of individuals with barriers to employment while driving regional economic growth.

### **SAWDB's Objective**

The SAWDB's objective for the core program partners is to expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services to individuals with barriers to employment through planning, partner and training provider collaboration, cross-training, implementation, and reporting through the One-Stop Operator and Administrative Entity.

### **Monthly Planning**

Monthly workforce core partner meetings, facilitated by the One-Stop Operator, will periodically measure:

- leveraging of partner resources
- coordination of outreach and recruitment
- re-alignment of service delivery strategies
- review of performance measure indicators
- funding opportunities with the Administrative Entity

Specific examples include the planning and leveraging of staff for job fairs. In PY19, the partners coordinated job fairs with the City of Las Cruces. The City's economic development department provided the Las Cruces Convention Center, and the partners recruited the employers, informed the job seekers, and staffed the job fair. The SAWDB is committed to partnering with other entities in applications for additional funding, such as the Rural Healthcare Initiative, to develop healthcare apprenticeship programs to meet the needs of the healthcare industry through a discretionary U.S. Department of Labor funding opportunity. This will be accomplished by maintaining a healthy system for referring individuals to workforce partners that specialize in helping those with barriers overcome or navigate their challenges.

As different partners assist individuals in the workforce system, cohesiveness and collaboration among the partners play a critical role in their success. WIOA establishes

regulations and guidance that allow the SAWDB to create partnerships among the required workforce partners in the system.

### **One-Team Approach**

The SAWDB will nurture its existing organizational structure by promoting the “One Team” approach with its partners who provide core program services. This organizational structure will ensure that open lines of communication, collaboration, and strategic development focus on leveraging resources and developing methods to expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services to individuals and those with barriers to employment.

The SAWDB will focus on providing access and flexibility for work-based training options like OJT’s, Customized Training, and Incumbent Worker Training programs that develop a career pathway, co-enrollments for job seekers, and a job-driven strategy for employers and industries. Improved access to training programs and partnerships with businesses and educational organizations will benefit job seekers who have barriers to career pathways and employers. The Board will deploy additional measures to enhance access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment.

### **Enhancing Coordination with Core and other Workforce Partners**

The SAWDB, through its Administrative Entity and One-Stop Operator, will facilitate this process with its partners to determine how the co-location and leveraging of partners, program goal mapping, cross-training, and new outreach strategies and materials will play a role in expanding access to the services. Beyond the planning phase, the partners will also work on their plan and timeline for implementation. A memorandum of understanding to support their plan is the blueprint for how the workforce system functions. It establishes a working relationship that promotes cooperative outreach and leverages efforts for capacity building to expand services. Under WIOA, the SAWDB’s focus and priority of service are serving those with barriers to employment.

### **SAWDB Representation**

The SAWDB has representation from various partners who engage in strategic planning, policy development, monitoring, and oversight of the WIOA program. This model helps the Board understand the strengths and weaknesses of a partnering program. It helps shape how to manage and deliver resources.

## **Funding**

The SAWDB will seek to maintain at least 50% of its service providers' funding allocation for employment, training, education, and supportive services. This will help broaden the pathway for individuals and employers to access providers and services throughout the network.

## **Incremental Capacity Building**

As the SAWDB and workforce partners implement the strategies outlined in this plan during the first year, improvements will be made to the system that will incrementally build capacity in the system.

The America's Job Centers have established a strong and effective system of coordinated services with their partners and will continue to do so in the future. Numerous educational institutions, known as eligible training providers, service providers, partners, and employers, have been the foundation of the workforce system. Under WIOA, the system adds improvements and alignment to serve those with barriers to employment better.

Supportive services may only be provided to individuals who are: (a) participating in career or training services, including training in any WIOA program (Title I, II, III, and IV), and other trainings that are not within the WIOA programs (b) unable to obtain supportive services through other programs providing such services. Additionally, supportive services may only be provided when they are necessary to enable individuals to participate in Title I activities.

The SAWDB has a supportive services policy that supports the needs of participants at <https://www.employnm.com/policies-regulations>. It provides details on eligibility and the types of services available, such as transportation consisting of mileage reimbursement, bus passes, and vehicle repair are provided to eligible individuals. Paying for background checks, clothing and footwear, tools, rental and utility assistance, vehicle insurance and registration fees, laptops, software, and internet access.

---

[§679.560\(b\)\(2\)\(ii\) Describe how the local board will work with entities carrying out core programs to facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs.](#)

---

The success of the SAWDB's goals hinges on robust accountability mechanisms across all partners in the workforce development system. The One-Stop Operator plays a pivotal role in implementing the SAWDB's vision and ensuring that all core partners,

including WIOA-funded programs, educational institutions, and community organizations, are aligned and meeting performance standards. Here's a more detailed look at how accountability is structured and the critical role of the One-Stop Operator:

### **1. Structured Collaboration and Alignment**

The workforce development system includes multiple partners that provide employment and training services, including WIOA core programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs), Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and more. Each partner is held accountable for contributing to the overall performance of the local workforce system.

The success of the SAWDB's goals are highly dependent on establishing clear accountability mechanisms across all partners within the workforce development system. Ensuring strong partnerships with WIOA core programs and other community organizations is essential to achieving high levels of performance and meeting the needs of the local economy. The One-Stop Operator plays a pivotal role in implementing the SAWDB's vision and helping all partners meet performance goals through coordinated efforts, continuous improvement, and strategic support.

### **2. Accountability with Partners**

The workforce development system in the region includes a variety of partners offering employment and training services. These include WIOA-funded Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs, as well as Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and others. Holding these partners accountable ensures the successful achievement of SAWDB goals such as job placement rates, credential attainment, and participant retention in employment.

#### ***Key Accountability Strategies:***

**Shared Performance Metrics:** All partners are required to meet common performance indicators as outlined by WIOA. These include job placement, credential attainment, measurable skill gains, and employment retention. The One-Stop Operator ensures that partners understand these expectations and actively work toward meeting them.

**Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs):** The roles and responsibilities of each partner are formalized through MOUs, which are regularly reviewed to ensure all parties remain aligned with the SAWDB's objectives and hold themselves accountable for delivering high-quality services.

### **3. Monitoring and Reporting:**

The One-Stop Operator is responsible for monitoring the progress of each partner against these shared goals. The Operator ensures that each partner contributes effectively through regular performance reviews and data analysis.

**Quarterly Reviews:** Partners undergo quarterly performance reviews where results are analyzed, and adjustments are made to improve service delivery. These reviews help identify areas where partners may be struggling to meet their goals.

**Data-Driven Accountability:** The One-Stop Operator uses data from all partners to generate performance reports, which are shared with the SAWDB and the state to ensure transparency and accountability.

**Corrective Action Plans:** If a partner is not meeting its performance goals, the One-Stop Operator works with them to develop and implement corrective action plans, ensuring they have the support and resources needed to improve.

### **Role of the One-Stop Operator in Facilitating Career Pathways and Co-Enrollment**

A core responsibility of the One-Stop Operator is to facilitate the development of career pathways and ensure participants can co-enroll in multiple programs to maximize their access to services and improve their career outcomes.

#### ***Career Pathways:***

The One-Stop Operator collaborates with educational institutions and training providers to create career pathways in high-demand industries such as healthcare, advanced manufacturing, and technology. These pathways are designed to offer clear progression routes with stackable credentials, allowing participants to advance their careers over time.

#### ***Sector Partnerships:***

The Operator brings together employers, training providers, and community organizations to create training programs aligned with industry needs. These partnerships help ensure that participants gain the skills needed to fill regional labor market demands.

#### ***Co-Enrollment:***

**Streamlined Service Delivery:** Co-enrollment is promoted by integrating services across WIOA programs and partners, allowing participants to access multiple services simultaneously. For example, individuals can be enrolled in the WIOA Adult programs and Vocational Rehabilitation, ensuring they receive comprehensive support.

**Unified Case Management:** The One-Stop Operator oversees a unified case management system to streamline co-enrollment, ensuring participants receive coordinated services across programs and avoid service duplication.

***High Support and Continuous Improvement***

While accountability is crucial, the One-Stop Operator also provides high levels of support to partners to ensure they can meet their goals and continuously improve service delivery.

***Capacity Building and Training:***

The One-Stop Operator provides partners with ongoing training on WIOA requirements, performance standards, and best practices for service delivery, helping them stay informed and improve the quality of their services.

**Resource Sharing:** Partners benefit from the Operator's coordination of shared resources, such as labor market data and training curricula, ensuring alignment with regional economic needs.

***Continuous Improvement:***

**Feedback Mechanisms:** Regular surveys of participants and employers provide feedback on the quality of services received. This allows the One-Stop Operator and partners to make data-driven adjustments and continuously refine their offerings.

**Technical Assistance:** For partners facing performance challenges, the One-Stop Operator offers tailored technical assistance to help them address barriers and improve outcomes.

***Implementing SAWDB's Vision***

The One-Stop Operator serves as the key implementer of SAWDB's vision for an integrated workforce development system. This role involves ensuring all partners are aligned with the SAWDB's strategic goals and contributing to the long-term success of the region's workforce.

***Strategic Coordination:***

The One-Stop Operator coordinates efforts between partners to ensure their services align with regional priorities, such as meeting the needs of high-demand industries, enhancing career pathways, and addressing labor market gaps.

**Performance Improvement Initiatives:** The Operator leads system-wide improvement initiatives, ensuring the local workforce development system remains responsive to changing economic conditions and employer needs.

The One-Stop Operator is integral to achieving the Board's goals, ensuring that all partners in the workforce development system are accountable for meeting performance metrics while receiving the support they need. Through data-driven monitoring, collaborative efforts, and a commitment to continuous improvement, the Operator ensures that career pathways are effectively implemented and participants benefit from seamless co-enrollment in services that lead to meaningful employment outcomes. This coordination, accountability, and high support ensure that the workforce development system remains aligned with the Board's vision and responsive to the needs of employers and job seekers in Southwestern New Mexico. The SAWDB actively engages in collaborative planning with core program partners to enhance the community's access to workforce services. The community workforce, education, training partners, and employers will have the opportunity to leverage their respective resources, braid funding, and provide better outcomes for the region's participants.

### **Career Pathways**

Career pathways are developed through the collaboration of partners and industry that gather and analyze information to help customers make informed career choices. A key goal is to engage workforce partners, businesses, and education to form a team that works together to meet the industry's workforce needs through workforce development.

The Career Pathways Plan contains six Phases and Key Element Components that guide the development of career pathways.

#### ***Phase I: Building Cross-Agency Partnerships and Clarifying Roles***

##### *Key Element Components:*

- Engage cross-agency partners and employers
- Establish a shared vision, mission, and set of goals
- Define the roles and responsibilities of all partners
- Develop a work plan and/or Memorandum of Understanding for the partnership

#### ***Phase II: Identifying Industry Sectors & Engaging Employers***

##### *Key Element Components:*

- Conduct labor market analysis to target high-demand and growing industries
- Survey and engage key industry leaders from targeted industries and sector partnerships
- Clarify the role of employers in the development and operation of programs
- Identify existing training systems within the industry



**Phase III: Designing Education & Training Programs***Key Element Components:*

- Identify and engage education and training partners
- Identify target populations, entry points, and recruitment strategies. Review, develop, or modify competency models with employers and develop and validate career ladders/lattices.
- Analyze the State's and region's education and training resources and response capability
- Research and promote work-based learning opportunities within business and industry
- Develop integrated, accelerated, contextualized learning strategies
- Provide flexible delivery methods
- Provide career services, case management, and comprehensive support services. Provide employment assistance and retention services.
- Phase IV: Identifying Funding Needs and Sources Key Element Components:
- Identify the costs associated with the system and program development and operations
- Identify sources of funding available from partner agencies and related public and private resources and secure funding
- Develop a long-term sustainability plan with state or local partners

**Phase V: Aligning Policies and Programs***Key Element Components:*

- Identify state and local policies necessary to implement career pathways systems
- Identify and pursue needed reforms in state and local policy
- Implement statutory and administrative procedures to facilitate cross-agency collaboration

**Phase VI: Measuring System Change and Performance***Key Element Components:*

- Define desired system program and participant outcomes
- Identify the data needed to measure system, program, and participant outcomes
- Implement a process to collect, store, track, share and analyze data
- Design and implement a plan for reporting system and program outcomes

**Organizing the Partners and Clarifying their Roles**

In this phase of the process, the focus is to set up the Leadership Team, which will include the WIOA Project Manager [Lead], the SAWDB Chair [or his/her appointed representative], WIOA Administrator, and the One-Stop Operator.

The partners will provide input based on their individual experiences as part of developing a career pathways process. This input is essential to understanding each other's roles and how they can better serve customers with the SAWDB's priority industries. The Act requires that each local workforce board, like the SAWDB, has a set of core programs and other required partners who bring their unique skills and resources to the table to better serve the needs of each individual or employer. The role of the partners is to develop a pipeline for skilled workers through training opportunities that meet the workforce needs of businesses.

The SAWDB's Administrative Entity and One-Stop Operator will lead in the initial phase of forming the leadership team.

### **WIOA Core Program Partners**

The core program partners collaborate in various areas of the public workforce system. Working together as part of the career pathways process provides the system with a variety of perspectives that enhance the quality of services to employers, job seekers, and youth:

- WIOA Title I – Adult Program
- WIOA Title I – Dislocated Worker Program
- WIOA Title I – Youth Program
- WIOA Title II – Adult Education Services
- WIOA Title III – Wagner-Peyser Employment Program
- WIOA Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation Program

### WIOA Additional Partners

The Code of Federal Register, 20 CFR § 678.400, as listed below, identifies the additional partners who have a role in the public workforce system. Like the core programs under the Act, these partners specialize in providing employment or education to specific populations within our communities. Their roles are essential to addressing the unique and diverse needs of those within our workforce system.

- The Senior Community Service Employment Program authorized under title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056et seq.);
- Career and technical education programs at the postsecondary level authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301et seq.);
- Trade Adjustment Assistance activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271et seq.);
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants programs authorized under chapter 41 of title 38, U.S.C.;

- Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (42 U.S.C. 9901et seq.);
- Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development;
- Programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws (in accordance with applicable Federal law);
- Programs authorized under sec. 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17532); and
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) authorized under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601et seq.), unless exempted by the Governor under § 678.405(b).

### Education Providers

In addition to the core and additional partners under WIOA, K-12 education providers are additional partners that have an essential role in the process. The region has over 20 public school districts and numerous private schools that will be invited to convene and participate in both the sector partnership strategy process and industry roundtable discussions. Having K-12 education providers provides a sound balance and adds value to the workforce system.

Community-based organizations and government agencies, not WIOA or K-12 partners, will be invited based on their value to the workforce system. Such partners are valuable as they can potentially fill gaps in delivering wrap-around services for individuals or their families.

---

§679.560(b)(2)(iii) Describe how the local board will work with entities carrying out core programs to improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable).

---

The SAWDB actively collaborates with entities carrying out core programs to enhance access to activities that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials, including industry-recognized certificates or portable and stackable certifications. The SAWDB strongly emphasizes maintaining and strengthening relationships with Eligible Training Providers (ETPs), many of which are postsecondary institutions such as New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, New Mexico State University, Western New Mexico University, and Doña Ana Community College. These institutions and other ETPs on the state's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) play a critical role in offering classroom training through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), enabling individuals to obtain industry-recognized credentials.

---

The SAWDB utilizes formal agreements such as Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with core system partners and training institutions to expand customer access. These agreements establish clear pathways for participants to enroll in training programs that lead to high-demand credentials, ensuring that participants not only gain the skills needed for immediate employment but also have access to stackable credentials that provide opportunities for long-term career advancement.

Additionally, the SAWDB is committed to deepening connections with postsecondary schools, employers, and school districts through its partnerships within the one-stop system. By engaging employers in the design and delivery of training programs, the SAWDB ensures that credentials offered by training providers align with industry needs, portable across regions, and stackable for continuous learning and career progression. The focus on enhancing communication and collaboration between the workforce system and educational institutions nurtures a pipeline of qualified workers equipped with the skills required by employers in the region, driving long-term economic growth and workforce development.

The One-Stop Operator will facilitate workforce partner meetings that will lead to greater accessibility to assessment tools, partner co-enrollments, enrollments in education, supportive service, and credential attainment rates. The One-Stop Operator will also coordinate cross-training among the partner programs. Sharing this knowledge with workforce partners will open the door to improving communications, increasing referrals, and enhancing public workforce system relationships.

### **Assessment Tools**

The local workforce service providers use multiple assessment tools to guide participants into long-term career pathways. These tools use a system of assessments and curriculum that build and measure essential workplace skills that can affect a participant's job performance and increase opportunities for lifelong learning, career changes, and job advancement. After an assessment, the participants can access available training opportunities online, in a classroom, or at a job site.

### **Workforce Partner Meetings**

Representatives of higher education, economic development, postsecondary training providers, and other workforce partner agencies attend monthly partner meetings hosted by the local workforce region. This workgroup addresses the current training needs of the participants by leveraging resources to meet the current employment needs of the region's employers, as identified in our industry sector partnership programs.

## Co-Enrollment

The state's public school system allows students to enroll in a dual college credit program that will enable them to graduate high school with enough college credits to obtain a community college associate degree. In this program, high school students can take courses in areas not available at their high school. If they plan to continue their education at the local university, these students will have already completed most of their general education requirements. Finally, most of these credits are transferrable to other universities.

## Supportive Services

The SAWDB also works with workforce partners to develop policies to align supportive services with job training and basic education in the framework of occupational training. This is to move educationally underprepared students more successfully to certificate or degree completion. These policies can provide tuition assistance to working students enrolled part-time or in non-credit occupationally-focused programs.

## C. Local Strategy Implementation

---

[§679.560\(b\)\(3\)\(i\) Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to facilitate engagement of employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.](#)

---

The SAWDB's goal is to meet the workforce needs of regional employers through the delivery of services offered at America's Job Centers and through its partners. Since the inception of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), the Board's strategy has been to work toward developing a business-driven model. This model will encourage job seekers to earn credentials that lead to self-sufficiency and meet the workforce needs of regional businesses so that individuals may not need to leave their communities to find jobs that can support a family.

The local area will implement a range of targeted strategies and services to facilitate the engagement of employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and those in in-demand industry sectors and occupations. Targeted strategies and services include:

1. **Industry Sector Partnerships:** The SAWDB will strengthen and develop new sector-specific partnerships by working closely with employers from key industries. This has involved forming industry councils and advisory boards that include representatives from major employers in high-growth sectors. These partnerships have helped us identify workforce needs in Southwestern New Mexico, shape training programs,

and have helped to ensure that the skills being taught are aligned with industry demands.

2. **Customized Training Solutions:** We have tailored training programs used in collaboration with employers to address skill gaps within their organizations. This includes on-the-job training (OJT), customized training, and incumbent worker training programs. By engaging employers in the design of these programs, the SAWDB ensures that training directly addresses the skills needed for current and future job openings.
3. **Employer Outreach and Recruitment Events:** The local area will continue to host job fairs, recruitment events, and industry-specific expos to connect employers with job seekers. These events are organized in partnership with economic development agencies, chambers of commerce, and other stakeholders to attract a diverse range of employers, including small businesses.
4. **Business Services and Support:** Equipped with training and a menu of WIOA program services, dedicated business services teams will provide support to employers by offering services such as job matching, recruitment assistance, and workforce planning. This support will also extend to helping small employers access resources and funding for employee training and development.
5. **Employer Incentives and Recognition:** Incentive programs for employers actively participating in workforce development initiatives. This could include subsidies for training costs, tax incentives, and public recognition for companies that demonstrate a commitment to workforce development.
6. **Sector-Based Workforce Development Initiatives:** For industries with high demand, the local area will launch sector-specific initiatives that include developing career pathways, providing industry certifications, and aligning training programs with industry standards. These initiatives will be designed to meet the needs of both large and small employers within the sector.
7. **Support for Small Employers:** The SAWDB will focus on driving service providers to support small businesses that would greatly benefit from OJT, Internship and Apprenticeship opportunities.
8. **Collaborative Workforce Planning:** The SAWDB encourages providers within the workforce system to engage employers in collaborative workforce planning efforts, including sector-specific strategy sessions and planning workshops. These efforts

will ensure that the workforce development strategies align with the long-term needs of employers and help anticipate future skill requirements.

By implementing these strategies, the local area aims to create a robust and responsive workforce development system that meets the needs of employers across various industries, supports small businesses, and aligns training programs with regional economic priorities.

Currently, the Southwestern region has chosen the following priority industries.

### **Priority Industries**

- Aerospace
- Agricultural
- Education
- Healthcare
- Hospitality and tourism
- Information Technology
- Logistic and warehousing
- Manufacturing
- Mining

### **Career Pathways**

According to the Southwestern region's Career Pathways Plan, the first step for the industry's Core Team will be to do Phase I of the Career Pathways Plan: Build Cross-Agency Partnerships and Clarify Roles.

When Phase I is completed, Phase II, Identifying Industry Sectors & Engaging Employers' calls for the following:

- Conducting labor market analysis to target high-demand and growing industries
- Surveying and engaging key industry leaders from targeted industries and sector partnerships.
- Clarifying the role of employers in the development and operation of programs.
- Identifying existing training systems within the industry as well as the natural progression and/or mobility (career ladders/lattices)
- Identifying the skill competencies and associated training needs
- Sustaining and expanding business partnerships.

By completing the first two phases of the Career Pathways Plan, the career pathways leadership team will be able to move on to Phase III, Designing Education & Training Programs that meet the needs of local employers.

### **Small Employers**

Many employers in the rural parts of the region have fewer than 25 employees. The business services team from each workforce office will work with the career pathways leadership team to develop methods for engaging and servicing small employers, as they do for larger employers. The teams may incorporate NMWCOS, which delivers information to employers via email. Through the Board's social and web-based media, social media is another effective method for customizing messages to employers at a minimal cost.

The workforce partners may engage with economic development offices and chambers of commerce to establish and cultivate relationships with smaller employers. Other methods for reaching employers are the traditional use of radio, newspaper, and billboards.

### **In-Demand Industries**

Labor market information and the dominant industries in a community easily lend themselves to identifying in-demand industry sectors and occupations. Per SAWDB's policies, this community-centered work will establish criteria for in-demand industries and occupations that are in-demand through its labor market analysis. Labor market information is obtained from NMDWS's Economic and Research Analysis Bureau. It identifies occupation information, wage information, unemployment rates, advertised job posting statistics, demographic information, and more, for a specific region, county, or metropolitan area.

---

[§679.560\(b\)\(3\)\(ii\) Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area.](#)

---

To support a local workforce development system that effectively met the needs of businesses in the area, the SAWDB will implement several key strategies and services designed to align workforce training with business demands, enhance employer engagement, and drive economic growth.

1. **Business Engagement and Consultation:** The SAWDB will support DWS to establish dedicated business services teams to act as the primary point of contact for Sector Industry employers. These teams will provide personalized consultation to understand specific business needs, assist with workforce planning, and recommend tailored workforce solutions. This approach ensures that businesses receive the support they need to address skill gaps and improve productivity.



2. **Customized Training and Development Programs:** In collaboration with employers, the SAWDB has created policies for Adult/DW and Youth WIOA programs to deliver customized training programs that target the specific skill requirements of local businesses. This includes On-the-Job Training (OJT), Customized Training, and Incumbent Worker Training programs tailored to individual companies and sectors' needs.
3. **Sector-Based Workforce Initiatives:** The SAWDB will focus on sector-specific workforce development initiatives, targeting industries with high growth potential or significant local presence. These initiatives will involve creating industry partnerships, developing career pathways, and aligning training programs with the needs of key sectors such as manufacturing, healthcare, and technology.
4. **Job Matching and Placement Services:** To connect businesses with qualified candidates, the SAWDB will provide job matching and placement services. This includes creating a robust job board, facilitating job fairs and recruitment events, and offering targeted outreach to potential candidates based on the specific needs of employers.
5. **Workforce Planning and Development:** The SAWDB will work with businesses to develop long-term workforce strategies that align with their growth plans. This includes providing labor market analysis, identifying emerging trends, and forecasting future skill requirements to help businesses prepare for changes in their workforce needs.
6. **Incentives for Employer Participation:** The SAWDB will implement incentive programs to encourage employer involvement in workforce development. This could include financial subsidies for training programs, tax credits, or recognition programs for companies that actively engage in workforce initiatives and contribute to the development of the local talent pool.
7. **Collaboration with Economic Development Agencies:** By partnering with local economic development organizations, the SAWDB will align workforce development efforts with broader economic goals. This collaboration will help attract new businesses to the area, support existing businesses in expanding, and ensure that workforce development aligns with regional economic priorities.
8. **Support for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs):** Recognizing the critical role of SMEs in the local economy, the SAWDB will offer targeted support to small and medium-sized businesses. This includes providing access to training resources, offering consulting services to address specific workforce challenges, and facilitating connections with industry networks and resources.
9. **Continuous Feedback and Improvement:** The SAWDB will implement a feedback mechanism to regularly gather input from businesses about the effectiveness of workforce development programs and services. This feedback will be used to

make continuous improvements, ensuring that the local workforce development system remains responsive to the evolving needs of businesses.

By leveraging these strategies and services, the local workforce development system will be well-positioned to support businesses, enhance the local labor market, and contribute to the overall economic vitality of the region.

### **Future Innovations:**

1. **Virtual Reality (VR) Training Programs:** Looking ahead, the SAWDB plans to use of virtual reality to create immersive training experiences for businesses, especially in sectors like manufacturing and healthcare. VR can simulate real-world scenarios and provide hands-on practice without the need for physical equipment.
2. **AI-Powered Job Matching Platforms:** The SAWDB will investigate the implementation of AI-powered job matching platforms to enhance the efficiency and accuracy of connecting job seekers with employers. These platforms can analyze skills, experience, and preferences to better match candidates with job openings.

By leveraging these strategies and embracing innovative approaches, the local workforce development system aimed to support businesses, enhance the local labor market, and contribute to the overall economic vitality of the region.

---

[§679.560\(b\)\(3\)\(iii\) Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development.](#)

---

### **Workforce Presentations to Economic Development Entities**

#### Workforce Presentations to Economic Development Entities

To better understand the WIOA system, the SAWDB's One-Stop Operator and/or Administrative Entity will share information about career services and training services through the in-service training programs offered to economic development entities throughout the region.

Presentations to various economic development entities will include the types of services available to businesses. This training consists of an orientation on career services, on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, customized worker training, employee training programs, and tuition assistance services. Some of these services complement the Job Training Incentive Program offered by the Economic Development Department, which reimburses companies for training expenses when they create new jobs.

In addition to sharing this information, the SAWDB will offer labor market information to economic development offices in the areas of economic activity, researching employers by industry, industry profiles, regional reviews, industry spotlights, occupations bulletins, and other reports that assist with their economic strategies and services..

### **One-Stop Operator**

Through the One-Stop Operator and workforce partners, the SAWDB will market the workforce services to businesses as an economic development approach. This approach will attract additional businesses to use and take advantage of the services offered. The expectation is to help businesses become more competitive in the market by narrowing the skills gap in the region.

The SAWDB contracts with the South Central Council of Governments for its Administrative Entity services. It assists local governments and political subdivisions with local planning and economic development. The organization also develops the Comprehensive Economic Development Plan that describes the regional economy, establishes regional goals and objectives, develops a regional plan of action, and identifies investment priorities for Socorro, Sierra, and Doña Ana Counties. This partnership will enhance our outreach services by offering technical assistance for economic recovery and employee training services related to the current economic recession caused by this pandemic.

Other economic development plans are listed under §679.560(b)(1)(i).

### **Economic and Workforce Organizations in the Southwestern Region**

The SAWDB plans to strengthen its relationships with economic development offices, school districts, chambers of commerce, and other trade and labor organizations within the seven-county area. Enhanced communications and more collaboration with these partners will bring to light an array of regional analyses leading the way to new workforce goals for the entire Southwestern region.

The SAWDB will work with the Grant County Workforce and Economic Development Alliance (GCWEDA) to align strategies between GCWEDA's plan and the Board's Local Plan. The SAWDB will invite the GCWEDA to be part of the sector partnership strategies process to identify the workforce needs of industries. Numerous regional economic, workforce, and workforce development programs exist across the region that are essential partners in supporting the region's economy through workforce development. The largest programs are listed below.

Economic and Workforce Organizations in the SW Region
Doña Ana County Border Area Economic Development Strategy (BAEDS) <a href="#">For more information - CLICK HERE</a>
Mesilla Valley Economic Development Alliance (MVEDA) <a href="#">For more information - CLICK HERE</a>
Grant County Workforce and Economic Development Alliance (GCWEDA) <a href="#">For more information - CLICK HERE</a>
Middle Rio Grande Economic Development Department <a href="#">For more information - CLICK HERE</a>
County and City organized economic development organizations in Las Cruces, Sunland Park, Truth or Consequences, and Luna, Grant, Catron, and Hidalgo counties.

---

[§679.560\(b\)\(3\)\(iv\) Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs.](#)

---

Individuals who become unemployed may submit a claim for unemployment benefits through NMDWS at America’s Job Center, online, or by phone. The partners within the public workforce system also assist those who are unemployed through various workforce services to assist individuals with re-employment.

### **Key Strategies for Strengthening Linkages**

- Coordinating services and processes with workforce partners and the unemployment insurance partner at workforce partner meetings
- Providing key re-employment services for those entering or contacting America’s Job Center
- Providing key re-employment services for Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) workshops
- Conducting periodic re-assessment of strategies and services with partners

### **Key Re-Employment Services**

- Conducting initial triage of the individual’s employment status
- Assisting with the initial unemployment claims
- Registering individuals in NMWCOS
- Helping individuals develop résumés

- Providing help to navigate the resources room and NMWCOS
- Determining the need and desire for training
- Assessing barriers to education or employment/need for supportive services
- Providing job search assistance

The SAWDB's primary objective is to ensure that the unemployment insurance (UI) program, provided through NMDWS, is offered office space at each of the comprehensive and affiliate America's Job Centers for individuals to certify and recertify for benefits via telephone or computer. The unemployment insurance program is a lifeline for individuals who are dislocated from their employment (through no fault of their own) and are eligible to receive monetary benefits while they search for and acquire their next job.

As unemployed individuals enter America's Job Center to certify for UI benefits, they will be registered in NMWCOS, offered employment services to develop or update their résumés, taught how to do online job searches, and determine their need for job training or education on the available jobs in the region, along with education/training/experience required and other services as deemed necessary. During the assessment phase, individuals will also be referred to other workforce partners to address any barriers to training, education, and employment. This guarantees that the one-stop system is available and ready to meet the needs of the unemployment insurance system's objectives.

There is a need to support dislocated workers with employment services under Wagner-Peyser, training services under Title IB, and other services offered by the core and additional partners.

1. **Job Search Assistance:** Workforce partners provide guidance and resources to help individuals actively search for jobs, including access to job listings, job fairs, and employer connections.
2. **Career Counseling:** Personalized career counseling is available to help individuals assess their skills, interests, and career goals, leading to tailored job search strategies or training opportunities.
3. **Résumé Writing and Interview Preparation:** Partners offer workshops and one-on-one sessions to help individuals create effective résumés and prepare for job interviews, enhancing their chances of securing employment.
4. **Skills Assessments:** America's Job Center provides assessments to identify existing skills and any gaps that may need to be addressed through further training or education.

5. **Training and Education Programs:** Eligible individuals may receive support to enroll in training programs, certifications, or educational courses to enhance their skills and employability.
6. **On-the-Job Training (OJT) Programs:** These programs allow individuals to gain hands-on experience in a new occupation while earning wages, with the possibility of long-term employment after the training period.
7. **Apprenticeship Opportunities:** Workforce partners connect individuals with apprenticeship programs, combining paid work experience with classroom instruction in a specific trade or profession.
8. **Networking Events:** America's Job Center hosts networking events, including job fairs and industry-specific meetups, to facilitate connections between job seekers and potential employers.
9. **Supportive Services:** In certain cases, individuals may be eligible for supportive services such as transportation assistance, childcare, or work-related tools and clothing to help them secure and maintain employment.
10. **Veteran Services:** Specialized services are available to veterans, including priority access to job listings, veteran-specific job fairs, and assistance with translating military skills to civilian careers.
11. **Workshops and Seminars:** A variety of workshops are offered on topics such as financial literacy, digital literacy, and job readiness, aimed at equipping individuals with the skills needed to succeed in today's job market.
12. **Referrals to Community Resources:** Workforce partners can provide referrals to other community resources and programs, such as housing assistance, healthcare, and legal aid, to support individuals in overcoming barriers to employment.

These services are designed to help individuals receiving unemployment benefits transition back into the workforce as quickly and effectively as possible.

---

**§679.560(b)(4) Describe how the local board will coordinate local workforce investment activities with regional economic development activities that are carried out in the local area and how the local board will promote entrepreneurial skills training and small business services.**

---

The SAWDB actively coordinates local workforce investment activities with regional economic development efforts throughout the area, focusing on rural communities. The Board fosters a collaborative environment that drives job creation and economic growth in rural areas by partnering with regional economic development agencies, chambers of commerce, and local businesses.

The SAWDB prioritizes promoting entrepreneurial skills training and small business services in rural communities by working with small business development centers (SBDCs) and economic development organizations. Workshops, mentorship programs, and access to capital opportunities are provided to help individuals start and grow small businesses, which are often critical to the economy in rural areas.

Additionally, the SAWDB leverages partnerships with community colleges and training providers to deliver targeted education and training programs that align with the needs of local economies. By incorporating online and hybrid training methods, the SAWDB ensures that rural residents have access to these programs despite geographical challenges. The focus on entrepreneurship and small business support stimulates job creation and strengthens local economies, making them more resilient and self-sustaining.

---

[§679.550\(c\) Describe how the local board will develop and implement training across systems for all core partners to ensure a unified approach to service delivery, including vocational rehabilitation.](#)

---

The SAWDB is committed to continuing the cross-system training for all core partners to ensure a unified approach to service delivery, including vocational rehabilitation. This aligns with the strategic goals outlined in the New Mexico Combined State Plan 2024-2027, which emphasizes the importance of collaboration, shared training, and continuous improvement across all workforce development partners.

To achieve this unified approach, the SAWDB will leverage ongoing training initiatives in the Southwestern region, ensuring that all core partners, including Vocational Rehabilitation, have the knowledge and skills necessary to provide integrated and seamless services to job seekers and employers. The SAWDB will continue focusing on enhancing the capacity of workforce staff and partners. The Board will continue to support these efforts, ensuring that all training is aligned with the broader goals of the New Mexico Combined State Plan and addresses the specific needs of the region.

The SAWDB has initiated cross-training efforts designed to enhance understanding among partner staff of each program's services, eligibility requirements, and unique areas of expertise. This approach enables staff from different programs to effectively communicate and coordinate when working with shared customers, improving access to services and streamlining the customer experience. By leveraging technology platforms, like shared case management systems, staff across the workforce system can better co-enroll individuals in multiple programs and manage joint case management.

Additionally, ongoing professional development opportunities and workshops are scheduled to facilitate continuous learning. These sessions are focused on critical areas such as disability awareness, career pathway development, and supportive services to ensure that all staff have the knowledge and skills necessary to serve individuals, particularly those with disabilities.

Vocational Rehabilitation staff play an integral role in these efforts, ensuring that services are inclusive and fully accessible. Collaboration with VR staff during these training sessions helps ensure the workforce system is prepared to address the needs of individuals with disabilities through joint case management, effective use of accommodations, and a holistic service strategy that includes all core partners. As these systems continue to evolve, the local SAWDB remains focused on unifying the service delivery system better to meet the diverse needs of the region's workforce.

Key strategies for developing and implementing training include:

1. **Joint Training Sessions:** The SAWDB will coordinate and facilitate joint training sessions that involve all core partners. These sessions will focus on aligning service delivery strategies, understanding the unique roles of each partner, and fostering a collaborative environment. Specific topics may include customer-centered service delivery, effective use of NMWCOS, and understanding the vocational rehabilitation process.
2. **Continuous Learning Opportunities:** The SAWDB will establish a continuous learning framework that includes regular training updates, refresher courses, and access to online training modules. This will ensure that all partners remain current on best practices, policy changes, and new tools or technologies that support integrated service delivery.
3. **Cross-Partner Workshops:** Workshops will be designed to address specific challenges or areas of improvement identified by core partners. These may include workshops on effective referral processes, collaborative case management, and leveraging shared resources to meet the needs of job seekers, particularly those with disabilities.
4. **Utilization of Subject Matter Experts:** The SAWDB will engage subject matter experts from vocational rehabilitation and other core programs to lead training sessions. This will ensure that all partners have a deep understanding of each program's capabilities, leading to more effective coordination and service delivery.
5. **Feedback and Evaluation:** The SAWDB, through the One-Stop Operator, will implement a feedback and evaluation system to assess the effectiveness of training programs. This will include gathering participant input, tracking



performance outcomes, and making adjustments to improve future training sessions.

By implementing these strategies, the SAWDB aims to create a cohesive and collaborative service delivery system that effectively meets the needs of all customers, including those requiring vocational rehabilitation services. This unified approach will enhance the overall effectiveness of the workforce development system in the Southwestern region.

#### **D. One-Stop Delivery System**

---

§679.560(b)(5)(i) Describe how the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers through the system and how such providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and job seekers.

---

The SAWDB engages with many partners in the Southwestern region, including economic development entities, adult education services, higher education, and community-based organizations. The Board actively supports and coordinates with these partner agencies to carry out workforce development programs, including core programs and secondary/post-secondary institutions with career and education programs, to strengthen alignment with education and industry.

#### **Collaborative Planning**

The One-Stop system is engaged in collaborative planning to enhance the region's access to workforce services. The regional workforce program, as well as education and training partners and employers, have a history of operating on a collective impact model that leverages partner resources and braids funding to provide better outcomes for the communities we serve. A key strategy is for workforce partners and stakeholders to address Title II Adult Education and Literacy, Vocational Rehabilitation Services, and other targeted populations for the alignment of services and favorable outcomes. The Administrative Entity with the One-Stop Operator will hold partner meetings tied to collaborative planning, such as building trust, identifying opportunities, delivering services, and identifying partner strengths.

#### **Continuous Improvement**

The SAWDB continues to ensure the continuous improvement of eligible training providers (ETPs) within the workforce system to effectively meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and job seekers. This ongoing commitment involves:

1. **Continuous Feedback Mechanisms:** We keep open lines of communication with ETPs and local employers through regular meetings, surveys, and industry advisory groups. This ongoing feedback informs adjustments to program curricula and the development of new training initiatives to align with job market demands.
2. **Collaborative Partnerships:** We foster partnerships between ETPs, employers, and other workforce system partners, but we intend to fortify these partnerships by developing new outreach strategies for industry sectors. These collaborations ensure that training programs are designed to meet specific industry needs through sector-focused initiatives, where providers and employers work together to address skills gaps and job requirements.
3. **Adaptation to Market Needs:** We will support ETPs in adapting to market changes by promoting curriculum updates to reflect new industry standards, incorporating new technologies, and expanding training options to cover emerging sectors and occupations.

Looking to the future, we plan to implement the following innovations:

1. **Integrated Training Platforms:** We aim to develop and implement integrated training platforms that combine virtual and in-person learning experiences. This approach will enhance accessibility and flexibility for learners, allowing them to engage in training that is both convenient and aligned with industry needs.
2. **Industry-Specific Boot Camps:** We plan to explore the idea of industry-specific boot camps designed to upskill individuals in high-demand sectors rapidly. These boot camps would focus on critical skills needed by local employers and will be developed in collaboration with industry leaders to ensure relevance and effectiveness.

By continuing these strategies and incorporating these future innovations, the Board will further enhance the quality and relevance of training programs, ensuring they meet the evolving needs of employers, workers, and job seekers in the region.

### **Eligible Training Providers and Programs**

The selection of quality providers and training services programs is vital to achieving the core principles. As required by WIOA Sec. 122, states, the Local Boards, must identify eligible training providers (ETPs) and programs that are qualified to receive WIOA Title I-B funds to train adults, dislocated workers, and out-of-school youth ages 16 through 24, including those with disabilities.

The approved state list of eligible training providers and programs serves as an important tool for participants seeking training to identify appropriate providers and

programs, and relevant information, such as cost and program outcomes. WIOA Sec. 122 (c) specifies that states must establish an application procedure for training providers and programs to maintain their eligibility and the eligibility of their programs. The State has centralized the administrative responsibility for certifying ETP applications.

As the State Administrative Entity (SAE), NMDWS partners with the SAWDB to provide oversight and administration for the Eligible Training Provider (ETP) certification system. The SAWDB works with NMDWS to identify eligible training providers and programs qualified to receive WIOA title I-B funds to train adults and dislocated workers, and out-of-school youth ages 16 through 24, including those with disabilities.

---

[§679.560\(b\)\(5\)\(ii\) Describe how the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and other means.](#)

---

The SAWDB facilitates access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system by leveraging technology and other innovative means to reach job seekers, particularly in remote and rural areas. Since the pandemic, the workforce system has seen significant changes, adopting more flexible and accessible approaches to service delivery. One of the most impactful changes has been the integration of video conferencing, texting, and e-signature forms into regular service offerings.

These technological advancements have provided easier access to workforce services, training, and job placement support for individuals in rural and remote areas. Video conferencing has become vital for conducting virtual workshops, one-on-one career counseling sessions, and even employer interviews. This has allowed job seekers to participate without traveling long distances to one-stop centers, a particularly critical benefit in regions with limited transportation options.

To facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, the Board recognizes the unique challenges remote areas like Reserve, Magdalena, Columbus, and Hatch face. While technology and virtual platforms are pivotal in bridging these gaps, especially in areas with limited broadband access, the Board also emphasizes the importance of direct community engagement.

In addition to leveraging mobile units and virtual tools, the Board will deploy staff to these remote locations to create and host events specifically designed to connect residents with workforce development programs. These events will be tailored to each

community's unique needs, ensuring that individuals can learn about available services, enroll in programs, and receive one-on-one support from knowledgeable staff.

This hands-on approach allows for a more personalized service delivery model, where staff can directly address individuals' concerns and barriers in these areas. By combining technology with in-person outreach and events, the Board aims to ensure that all residents, regardless of location, have equitable access to the resources and support necessary for their career development.

### **Utilization of VR Technology for Work Experience in Rural Areas**

Another very impactful innovation in rural areas where traditional work experience opportunities may be limited or inaccessible is Virtual Reality (VR) technology, which presents a transformative solution for enhancing workforce development. The WIOA Youth Program can bridge the gap between geographic isolation and essential job training by leveraging VR technology. The Board will drive WIOA providers to utilize this technology for individuals in rural areas, providing services to communities that would not otherwise have access.

The SAWDB will drive WIOA youth providers to effectively use VR technology by closely monitoring and measuring service delivery in rural areas. By setting clear performance metrics and regularly evaluating VR-based training outcomes, the Board ensures that youth in remote locations receive high-quality, impactful work experience. This includes tracking participant engagement, skill development, and job placement success rates. Through ongoing oversight and data-driven adjustments, the Board will ensure that VR technology effectively bridges gaps in service delivery, providing equitable opportunities for all youth, regardless of geographic barriers.

1. **Virtual Work Experience:** VR technology provides a viable alternative to physical work experience by simulating real-world job environments. For youth in rural areas, VR can offer virtual internships, apprenticeships, and job simulations across various industries. This immersive experience allows participants to engage in meaningful work-related activities, regardless of their location.
2. **Access to Diverse Career Paths:** Rural areas often lack the variety of job opportunities found in urban centers. VR can address this limitation by providing virtual exposure to diverse career paths and industries. Participants can explore different job roles, gain hands-on experience, and develop skills relevant to careers that may not be locally available.
3. **Skill Development and Training:** VR technology facilitates skill development in key areas such as technical skills, customer service, and problem-solving. By using VR simulations, youth in rural areas can practice and refine these skills in a

controlled environment, preparing them for future employment opportunities both locally and beyond.

4. **Remote Learning and Training:** VR offers a flexible solution for remote learning for areas with limited access to training facilities or instructors. Participants can access high-quality training modules and interactive exercises from their homes, ensuring that they receive comprehensive job preparation despite geographic constraints.
5. **Interactive and Engaging Learning:** VR enhances the learning experience by providing interactive and engaging scenarios. This technology helps maintain participant interest and motivation, making the process of acquiring job skills more appealing and effective compared to traditional methods.
6. **Reduction of Travel Barriers:** Traveling to distant job sites or training centers can be a significant barrier for youth in rural areas. VR eliminates the need for physical travel by bringing training directly to the participant's location. This reduces logistical challenges and increases accessibility to essential work experience opportunities.

By incorporating VR technology, the WIOA Youth Program can ensure that youth in rural areas can access valuable work experience and training. This approach supports skill development and helps bridge the gap between rural and urban job markets, fostering more significant employment opportunities for young people in underserved regions.

### **Software and Data Tools**

The SAWDB will increase the utilization of all software services and data collection processes available to the network to increase data-based decisions, improve communications with partner agencies, and continually improve services for all participants. The following is a list of some of the tools used in the One-Stop system:

1. **Career Pathways Explorer** – Career Matching Software
2. **FutureWorks** – Labor Market Data and Access
3. **LASER** – State and Local Labor Market Information
4. **Jobs EQ** – Labor Market Data Tool
5. **Money Essentials** – Financial Literacy
6. **TABE Academy** – Testing Preparation
7. **The Academy** – Online Training Platform
8. **Virtual Orientation** – Job Readiness Workshops
9. **NMWCOS** – New Mexico Workforce Connection Online System

§679.560(b)(5)(iii) Describe how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA sec. 188 (Nondiscrimination), if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.

---

### **Periodic Reviews**

The SAWDB performs periodic reviews of America's Job Centers to determine compliance with provisions of WIOA section 188 for both physical access and programmatic functions. The One-Stop Operator partner meeting reviews compliance with accessibility to buildings and services.

### **Training**

The SAWDB, through its One-Stop Operator and workforce partners, will conduct training for their respective regional staff. The training may be facilitated by the NMDWS's training team, who encourages local workforce areas to request training that is beneficial to the staff within the workforce system. The training programs will cover Non-Discrimination (Sec. 188), as well as ADA requirements.

### **Non-Discrimination, Sec. 188**

This segment of section 188 prohibits discrimination against individuals in any program or activity that receives financial assistance under Title I of WIOA, as well as by the one-stop partners listed in WIOA Section 121(b) that offer programs or activities through the one-stop/American Job Center system. Section 188 prohibits discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, or, for beneficiaries, applicants, and participants only, citizenship status, or because of an individual's participation in a program or activity that receives financial assistance under Title I of WIOA. As it pertains to new employees, the partners should receive training on WIOA Sec. 188 as part of their employee orientation or onboarding. The Department of Workforce Solutions (DWS) provides a language line access program called Linguistica to serve all individuals who come through the center.

As tenants of the buildings, it is the SAWDB's responsibility, along with the owners, to ensure that the buildings meet the requirements of state and federal laws. In addition to building compliance, the workforce partners must also be involved in ensuring that they understand the requirements for equipment and materials that are necessary for individuals with disabilities and ensure they are provided.

### **Facility and Equipment Compliance**

Regarding facility and equipment compliance, the SAWDB's partners provide services from three State of New Mexico-owned America's Job Center buildings. These offices are in Deming, Las Cruces, and Silver City. There is one America's Job Center inside a county-owned building in Socorro. Under state and federal regulations, all five facilities must comply with the Disabilities Act of 1990 and have programs and services, technology, materials, and staff training to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities and barriers to language.

As tenants of the buildings, it is the SAWDB's responsibility, along with the owners, to ensure that the buildings meet the requirements of state and federal laws. In addition to building compliance, the workforce partners must also be involved in ensuring that they understand the requirements for equipment and materials that are necessary for individuals with disabilities and ensure they are provided.

### **One-Stop Operator**

The SAWDB's One-Stop Operator will present the ADA requirements to the America's Job Center co-located partners. The Board will also coordinate with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Commission for the Blind to develop the process for inspections and staff training. The One-Stop Operator will coordinate annual inspections of the centers and promptly correct any deficiencies identified by the building owners and workforce partners. Additionally, the SAWDB will explore the requirements of having staff who can communicate using American Sign Language and provide written materials in English and Spanish.

---

[§679.560\(b\)\(5\)\(iv\) Describe the specific roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners, to date. Please include your process for updating any cooperative agreements, resource sharing agreements, and memoranda of understanding relevant to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. \(If any of these documents have already been updated or are even still in draft form, please provide copies as a part of Attachment D.\)](#)

---

Each partner organization is integrated into the workforce system. America's Job Centers allow specialized reviews of the system to identify and improve services to participants including the disabled and those with significant barriers to employment.

### **Memorandum of Understanding**

The Board, Administrative Entity, and One-Stop Operator implemented its Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with workforce partners. The MOU outlines the purpose, vision, mission, workforce system structure, employment and training services,

One-Stop Operator role, roles and responsibilities of partners, and mandatory laws and rules of operations.

### **Infrastructure Funding Agreement**

The workforce partners' Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) is in place, and the IFAs are an attachment to the MOU. The IFAs define the allocated costs for each co-located partner. The AE negotiates the required funding for the non-co-located partners.

The IFA is a crucial component of the WIOA's One-Stop system. This agreement is vital for ensuring that all partners contribute to the operational costs of the one-stop centers through financial or non-financial means.

For partners without direct financial resources, there are still meaningful ways they can contribute to the success of the workforce system. These non-financial contributions can include:

1. **In-Kind Services:** Partners can offer staffing support, such as job coaches, case managers, or administrative assistance, to contribute to the operation of the one-stop centers. This helps reduce labor costs and ensures adequate support for participants.
2. **Space and Facilities:** Some partners may have access to facilities, such as meeting rooms, training spaces, or technology resources, which can be used for workshops, job fairs, or training sessions, reducing the need for additional spending on venue rentals.
3. **Program Integration:** Partners can also contribute by facilitating access to their programs and services within the one-stop system. By aligning their service delivery with the one-stop center, they can enhance the range of services available to job seekers without requiring additional funding.
4. **Volunteer Efforts:** Some partners may offer volunteer personnel who can provide assistance with résumé writing, career counseling, or other job readiness activities. These contributions, while non-financial, significantly enhance service delivery and support the SAWDB's goals.

These contributions will help ensure that all partners remain actively engaged in supporting the region's workforce development goals even without direct funding. As the IFA is further developed, these partnerships will become increasingly important for the successful operation of the workforce system.

### **Updating Documents**

The SAWDB will update the documents every two years or when needed. It will entail working in collaboration with the workforce partners to identify any changes that reflect current or future priorities and initiatives, presenting the proposed changes to the One-



Stop Committee with their recommendations, then presenting to the SAWDB and CEOs for their approval.

---

§679.560(c) Describe how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will provide for the Accessibility for English Language Learners (ELL).

---

### **Language Barriers**

An extensive network of partner organizations operating across the region in offices and through various other access points makes it easier for the One-Stop Operator to engage individuals in every county of the Southwestern region efficiently. Integration with a range of partners enhances service offerings to meet a variety of needs and address all kinds of barriers. The SAWDB works with regional partners to analyze who is currently using services in each location, their demographics, and their English language challenges, and other information about the current job seeker base will help develop plans to address any gaps due to language barriers adequately.

Linguistica is a language access program shared by NMDWS with all partners within the workforce system. The program is designed to bridge communication gaps between service providers and individuals who have limited English proficiency (LEP). It offers on-demand interpretation and translation services in multiple languages, enabling workforce staff to communicate with non-English-speaking job seekers and employers effectively.

#### ***Key Benefits of Linguistica:***

1. **Enhanced Accessibility:** Linguistica ensures that all individuals, regardless of their primary language, can access critical workforce services. This is particularly beneficial in New Mexico, where a significant portion of the population speaks Spanish or other languages.
2. **Immediate Support:** The program provides real-time interpretation services, allowing for immediate and effective communication during in-person meetings, phone calls, or virtual sessions. This instant support is crucial for delivering timely assistance to LEP individuals.
3. **Diverse Language Coverage:** Linguistica supports a wide range of languages, accommodating the diverse linguistic needs of the community. This diversity ensures that no one is excluded from receiving services due to language barriers.
4. **Consistency Across Partners:** By sharing Linguistica across all partners in the workforce system, DWS ensures a standardized approach to language access. This consistency helps maintain a high quality of service and ensures that LEP

individuals receive the same level of support, regardless of the partner organization they engage with.

5. **Improved Service Delivery:** With access to professional interpreters and translators, workforce staff can provide more accurate information and better guidance, leading to improved outcomes for job seekers and employers alike.
6. **Support for Compliance:** Linguistica helps partners comply with federal and state language access laws, ensuring that all services are delivered equitably and that language barriers do not prevent individuals from accessing opportunities.

By incorporating Linguistica into the workforce system, DWS and its partners can better serve the linguistically diverse population of New Mexico, contributing to more inclusive and effective workforce development.

### **One-Stop Center**

The One-Stop centers provide accessibility for English language learners through its partners. Each office has a staff member who can read, write, and speak Spanish. NMWCOS offers English and Spanish language functions. The New Mexico Unemployment Insurance services system provides access in Spanish. Promotional materials are also made available in Spanish. Individuals expressing interest in English as a Second Language (ESL) will be referred to the Title II Adult Education provider in their area. NMWCOS will be used to document the referral and monitor its status.

In the future, the One-Stop Operator will work with the one-stop partners to evaluate their processes and examine best practices. Best practices are provided in the Training and Employment Notice (TEN) 28-16. As stated in the notice, it provides workforce system examples, best practices, partnership models, and information on aligning resources available under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) to increase services to English Language Learners (ELL) with substantial cultural and language barriers to employment. It further provides information to the workforce system, including partner programs and entities that are jointly responsible for workforce and economic development, educational, and other human resource programs, about how to align their efforts to provide basic career services, individualized career services, and training services.

## **E. Service Implementation for Indicated Populations**

### **Youth**

---

§679.560(b)(8) Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local area including activities for youth with disabilities, and other barriers, such as homeless youth, foster and former foster youth, and/or expecting and parenting youth.

---

The SAWDB is dedicated to enhancing youth workforce investment activities across our seven-county region, with a focus on delivering meaningful and impactful services using Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds. Our goal is to support all youth, including those facing significant barriers such as disabilities, homelessness, and those in foster care, by providing targeted programs and resources that foster career development and opportunities.

The Board will expand our youth workforce programs to address the diverse needs of young people. This includes partnering with local educational institutions like the Gadsden School District to create and enhance career pathways that align with local job markets. Our services will include career exploration, internships, apprenticeships, and connections to post-secondary education opportunities to help youth build a strong foundation for their future careers.

Industry forums will take place at schools within our region in PY24. This initiative consists of industry-specific panels presenting to a group of students to provide insight into careers by industry professionals telling their stories. It allows youth to have conversations with industry experts to help formulate decisions in career exploration.

Special emphasis will be placed on providing support for youth with disabilities, homeless youth, foster and former foster youth, and expecting or parenting youth. Tailored programs will be designed to address the unique challenges these groups face. This includes accessible career counseling, job readiness training, and supportive services such as transportation and childcare. We will work closely with local organizations and agencies to ensure that these vulnerable populations receive the targeted assistance they need to overcome barriers and achieve employment success.

In rural and underserved areas, we will employ innovative outreach and service delivery methods to ensure all youth have access to our programs. This may include mobile units, virtual services, and community partnerships to reach youth in remote locations. Our goal is to ensure equitable access to career development resources and support across the entire region.

---

By leveraging WIOA funds strategically and focusing on comprehensive, inclusive services, the SAWDB aims to build a robust youth workforce system that provides meaningful opportunities and supports positive outcomes for all young people in Southwestern New Mexico. Through these efforts, we will work to prepare our youth for successful careers and contribute to the overall economic vitality of the region

### **1. Youth Services**

The SAWDB, through local policy and federal regulations, addresses the 14 youth service elements and their requirements through its youth service providers.

The SAWDB's Youth and Young Adult Committee meets to discuss recommendations on how the 14 service elements are to be delivered in specific geographic areas of the regions. The youth service provider is monitored under their contracted scope of work related to the delivery of the 14 required service elements and results are provided to the SAWDB's Monitoring and Performance Committee. The service providers ensure that periodic partner meetings are held to manage and enhance the program's deliverables through the term of its contract agreement with the SAWDB.

The SAWDB recognizes that Supportive Services are key to minimizing or eliminating barriers that impede the success of youth participants in a workforce activity. The Board recognizes that with more out-of-school youth being served, there is a higher propensity for transportation, childcare, dependent care, housing, and needs-related payments. The SAWDB will allocate funds within its service providers' contracts to make supportive services available, per the local board policy, to those who qualify and are in need.

### **2. Tutoring/Study Skills Training**

Tutoring and study skills training includes instruction and evidence-based dropout prevention as well as recovery strategies that lead to the completion of a high school diploma or equivalent (including a recognized certificate of attendance or similar document for youth with disabilities) or preparation for postsecondary credentials. Tutoring is provided online through ACT Curriculum or other educational remediation programs or through referrals to school or community-based tutoring programs to assist in increasing grade levels for school retention.

### **3. Alternative Secondary School Services**

Alternative secondary school services include referral to formal alternative education programs or formal dropout recovery services, as appropriate. Strong partnerships are developed with Adult Education Services providers to co-enroll participants who need to complete their secondary education.

#### **4. Occupational Skills**

The SAWDB evaluates trends in the region to determine the needs of the employers and works with our partner educational institutions to develop relevant training courses. Through careful evaluation of each participant, our workforce partner will determine a strategy to assist the clients in obtaining access to such training with supportive services, including tuition assistance.

#### **5. Work Experience**

Participants are placed in paid work experience opportunities aligned with their career interests. Placements are made to learn a trade and gain the valuable experience required for long-term employment. Participants who have barriers such as a disability or access to childcare are supported through the program's supportive services or by partner organizations through a referral process to receive additional assistance. Participants complete employability skills training before placement to increase their knowledge of work. Training programs will be guided by utilizing NMDWS's Career Solutions and "Why I Work" online tool, which will provide the ability to search occupations, schools, scholarships, and jobs, in addition to completing a career exploration worksheet and work interest assessment. This comprehensive tool will help participants determine their career interests and work with youth program staff to develop a career pathway for training and employment placement. Work experience is monitored by the youth program case managers to ensure a meaningful experience that will lead to employment opportunities. Collaborations are made with additional community programs that provide an opportunity for further work experience for youth such as summer employment, pre-apprenticeships, internships, and on-the-job training.

Education offered concurrently with and in the same context refers to the integrated education and training model in which required education and training occur concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training. Such a program element must describe how workforce preparation activities, basic academic skills, and hands-on occupational skills are to be taught within the same time frame and connected to training in a specific occupation, occupational cluster, or career pathway. Partnerships with programs such as YouthBuild, Job Corps Centers, or Apprenticeship programs can provide this opportunity for concurrent education and workforce preparation.

## **6. Leadership Development Opportunities**

Leadership development programs are opportunities that encourage responsibility, confidence, employability, self-determination, and other positive social behaviors such as:

- Exposure to postsecondary educational possibilities and distance learning to include supporting Tribally Controlled Colleges such as Navajo Technical University
- Community and service-learning projects including with the Alamo Navajo Chapter Government
- Peer-centered activities, including peer mentoring or peer tutoring
- Organizational and teamwork training, including team leadership training programs
- Training programs in decision-making, including prioritization and problem-solving skills
- Citizenship training programs, including life skills such as parenting and work behavior training
- Civic engagement activities that promote the quality of life in a community,
- Activities that place the youth in a leadership role such as serving on a youth leadership committee or a standing youth committee

Collaborations are developed with community partners who have opportunities to provide the leadership development opportunities listed above.

## **7. Supportive Services**

Supportive services are designed to enable youth to participate in WIOA activities and may include linkage to community services, referrals to healthcare, and cost assistance with transportation, childcare, housing, uniforms, work attire, work-related tools, protective gear, educational testing, and reasonable accommodations for youth with disabilities. Supportive services are provided throughout the program as needed by the participant to be successful in the completion of any of the 14 youth elements.

## **8. Adult Mentoring**

Adult mentoring is a formal, in-person, relationship between a youth participant and an adult mentor for at least 12 months that includes structured activities where the mentor offers guidance, support, and encouragement to assist in the development of the competence and character of the mentee. Adult mentoring also includes workplace mentoring matching a youth participant with an employer or employee of a company who acts as a mentor. Mentoring is integrated into the work experience activity utilizing work placement as an opportunity for employers to step into a different role and provide career awareness and exploration to the youth participant. Referrals are also made to

community organizations such as Big Brothers Big Sisters and school-based mentoring programs that provide Adult Mentoring activities.

### **9. Follow-Up Services**

Follow-up services are designed to help ensure the youth participant is successful in employment or postsecondary education/training post-program. Follow-up is provided for at least 12 months following the youth's exit from the program. Participants are contacted once per quarter to offer support services and obtain performance outcome information. A guidance counselor works directly with the youth case manager to track postsecondary participants and helps monitor performance.

### **10. Comprehensive Guidance & Counseling**

Guidance and counseling services may include career and academic counseling, drug and alcohol abuse counseling, and mental health counseling, and are often individualized for the youth participant. Collaborations are developed with partner agencies to initiate referrals for these services.

### **11. Financial Literacy**

Financial literacy is education or activities that assist youth to initiate checking and savings accounts at banks and making informed financial decisions; support youth learning how to manage spending, credit, and debt, including student loans, consumer credit, and credit cards. It also supports a participant's ability to understand, evaluate, and compare financial products and services; informs participants about identity theft, their rights regarding it, and ways they can protect themselves from it; and supports the financial literacy needs of non-English speakers using multilingual financial literacy and educational materials. Financial Literacy is provided through online training programs, partnerships with local bank institutions, or referrals to other community organizations.

### **12. Entrepreneurial Skills Training**

Entrepreneurial Skills Training provides the basics of starting and operating a small business, taking initiative, creatively seeking out and identifying business opportunities, developing budgets, and forecasting resource needs; understanding various options for acquiring capital and the trade-offs associated with each option; and how to communicate effectively to market oneself and one's ideas. Entrepreneurial skills are provided through online training programs or referrals to other community organizations.

### **13. Labor Market & Career Awareness Information**

Labor market information is used to tailor program services and guide youth participants into in-demand and emerging industry sectors with greater employment opportunities. Participants are provided with career awareness, exploration activities, and career

counseling to make an informed decision towards further training and development of a career pathway.

#### **14. Transition to Postsecondary Education**

Services to transition to postsecondary education include information about, and preparation for, college entrance. Youth participants are assisted or educated on applying to colleges, financial aid, entrance testing, student life, pre-requisite courses, and more. Collaborations with post-secondary institutions and training programs will assist in a coordinated transition to post-secondary education, eliminating any barriers to enrollment. Most of the Native American youth are first-generation college students. They are encouraged to attend a two-year college before transitioning to a larger University. The transition from high school to postsecondary education can be difficult for some families to accept due to cultural values and traditions about family members staying home. Depending on the financial need, leveraging funds from other grants could financially assist the youth to stay in college and become successful.

The SAWDB Youth providers build strong partnerships with regional programs that serve persons with barriers that would prevent or limit their access to the workforce. Special attention is provided to youth who are most in need, i.e., youth with disabilities, homeless youth, and foster or former foster care youth. A focus on these populations is addressed through partnerships with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, juvenile justice, foster care system, schools, and other community organizations.

Additional activities that support the 14 WIOA youth elements include but are not limited to the following:

- Comprehensive work readiness training improving employability skills
- Development of quality work experience sites to provide meaningful work experiences and skill development
- Co-enrollment with adult WIOA program for OJT and further training opportunities
- Online training to enhance occupational and employability skills



---

§679.560(c) Describe how the local board is planning or working to fulfill specific Youth requirements, as laid out in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, including:

---

- a) how the local board is providing for the 14 required Youth service elements;
  - b) approach towards meeting the 20% work experience, including the use of Registered Apprenticeship as a service strategy;
  - c) approaches toward meeting the 75% OSY minimum expenditure;
  - d) a description of changes in the youth provider's service delivery models;
  - e) a description of any changes in outreach activities around Youth; and
  - f) any changes in Youth case management approach, including the use of supportive services.
- 

The SAWDB, through the Administrator, will ensure that WIOA youth providers meet their enrollment, obligation, expenditure, and outcome targets through a robust monitoring and evaluation process. This includes regular performance reviews, data analysis, and site visits to assess compliance with contractual obligations. The Board will also implement a continuous feedback loop, where providers receive timely guidance and support to address any challenges.

To address challenges in serving out-of-school youth, the SAWDB will collaborate with providers to develop targeted outreach strategies, including partnerships with local schools, community organizations, and businesses to identify and engage eligible youth. The Board will also explore innovative solutions, such as leveraging technology for virtual engagement and offering flexible program structures that cater to the unique needs of this population. Additionally, the Board will provide technical assistance and professional development opportunities to help providers enhance their service delivery and improve outcomes.

1. The SAWDB requires all youth providers to implement the necessary elements in accordance with WIOA. The 14 elements are available to youth through direct service by the youth provider or through referrals to partners and other community resources. Collaborations and coordinated referral processes are put in place to ensure effective delivery and tracking of services.
  2. All youth providers are monitored closely, and often, to confirm that the required 20% of formulated funds are spent on work experience activities. These activities are necessary to achieve long-term goals established with the participants to gain skills and experience that would bolster their career prospects. The SAWDB will strengthen its relationship with the State Apprenticeship Program and work closely with regional employers to develop ongoing apprentice programs.
  3. The key approach to meeting the 75% OSY requirement will be for workforce partners to develop a concentration of outreach and recruitment efforts of OSY
-

and network with partners that historically serve this target population including city and county community centers, Title II Adult Education providers, juvenile justice facilities, and community-based organizations for recruitment. Individuals will be recruited by searching the employment services online database, as well as screening those who walk into the America's Job Center for services. The SAWDB is developing a new marketing campaign to target communities and inform them of the advantages of our services to garner peer referrals and linkages with employers that need more skilled employees. The youth case managers will continue to enter activities for supportive service when it is provided. There is a broad range of activities to assist in academic and occupational learning (through the 14 elements), developing leadership skills, and preparing for further education and training that leads to employment.

4. A new youth service provider has brought a different method of serving youth in the area that employs a comprehensive, cost-effective, and flexible strategy. This strategy utilizes a human-centered design to best identify participant needs and employs a positive youth development framework to effectively develop a service plan to meet participant needs. A comprehensive Objective Assessment is conducted at intake to develop an Individualized Education Plan that will work through barriers and establish education and employment goals. Customized recruitment efforts with partners that also serve in-school youth and out-of-school youth are the key to the effective delivery of services. Enhancing and developing a streamlined process between the new service provider and Title II Adult Education service providers will lead to co-enrollments that will help individuals complete the objective in their individual employment plans.
5. The SAWDB has a Communications Manager who will work with the One-Stop Operator when coordinating outreach activities in the seven-county region. Outreach materials are disseminated in our schools and throughout the communities. The Board continues to increase social media presence to reach our priority participants in outlying rural communities. Social media posts may consist of enrollment opportunities, promotional videos, success stories, and other recruitment efforts. The Board has several members that participate in community groups (boards, councils, and committees) that work with youth issues and they often share our programs with an audience that may not be familiar with all the services offered in our region.

The SAWDB has contracted with the youth service provider to perform the following outreach and recruitment activities:

- meet with school principal/counselor/school staff
- presentations at school staff meetings

- presentations in school classes/clubs/events
  - presentations at youth community centers
  - staff meetings with entities that work with out-of-school youth
  - connect with alternative sentencing programs (JCC, JJD, Drug Court)
  - connect with other youth-serving organizations
  - collaborate with Title II Adult Education programs
6. All outreach activities are applied in conjunction with the adult programs to strengthen a co-enrollment activity. The youth provider integrates effective case management methods utilizing the Data Assessment and Plan (DAP) method to all youth participants by providing access to support services identified through the Individual Education Plan. DAP is a clinical model that includes both subjective and objective data as well as observations and all contact and progress notes. The youth case managers will continue to enter activities for supportive service when it is provided. There is a broad range of activities to assist in academic and occupational learning (through the 14 elements), developing leadership skills, and preparing for further education and training that leads to employment.

In the WIOA Youth Program, the integration of Virtual Reality (VR) technology is revolutionizing the way work experience is delivered and experienced by young participants. VR technology offers a dynamic and immersive approach to workforce training and job readiness, enhancing traditional work experience methods by providing realistic and engaging simulations.

### **Utilization of Virtual Reality Technology in the WIOA Youth Program**

1. **Simulated Work Environments:** VR technology enables the creation of virtual work environments that replicate real-world job settings. This immersive experience allows youth participants to engage in job-specific tasks and scenarios without the need for physical presence at a workplace. For instance, a VR simulation could replicate a retail environment where participants practice customer service skills, inventory management, and point-of-sale operations.
2. **Skill Development and Training:** Through VR, participants can engage in targeted skill development exercises that are essential for various careers. For example, VR can simulate technical tasks in fields like manufacturing, healthcare, or IT, allowing participants to practice and hone their skills in a controlled, risk-free environment. This hands-on practice helps bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application.
3. **Career Exploration:** VR technology facilitates immersive career exploration by allowing youth to virtually experience different occupations and industries. Participants can explore various career paths, understand job roles, and gain insights into daily responsibilities without committing to an actual position. This exploration aids in informed decision-making regarding future career choices.

4. **Soft Skills Training:** VR is also effective in developing essential soft skills, such as communication, problem-solving, and teamwork. Interactive scenarios can simulate interpersonal interactions and workplace dynamics, helping participants build confidence and proficiency in these critical areas.
5. **Accessibility and Flexibility:** For youth in remote or underserved areas, VR provides access to high-quality training and work experience without the need for travel. This technology ensures that all participants have equal access to valuable learning experiences regardless of their geographical location.
6. **Assessment and Feedback:** VR systems can track participant performance and provide real-time feedback. This data-driven approach allows for personalized assessments and targeted interventions, helping participants identify strengths and areas for improvement.

Overall, the use of VR technology in the WIOA Youth Program enhances work experience opportunities by providing immersive, interactive, and flexible training solutions. This approach prepares youth for real-world job challenges and equips them with the skills and confidence needed to succeed in their future careers.

To effectively serve out-of-school youth, the SAWDB can adopt and adapt national innovations that have proven successful in other regions. Here's an expanded approach incorporating national best practices:

### **1. Data-Driven Targeting and Outreach**

- **National Innovation:** Many successful programs use data analytics to identify and target out-of-school youth who are at risk of not re-engaging. Programs such as the YouthBuild and AmeriCorps initiatives use data to understand where out-of-school youth are concentrated and tailor outreach strategies accordingly.
- **Local Adaptation:** The SAWDB will implement a data-driven approach to map out areas with high concentrations of out-of-school youth. The SAWDB can design targeted outreach campaigns and partnerships with local schools, community organizations, and businesses to effectively reach and engage this population by analyzing local data and trends.

### **2. Comprehensive Support Services**

- **National Innovation:** Programs like the Youth Opportunity Movement provide a holistic approach to youth services, integrating education, career training, and social services. They offer wraparound services, including mentoring, counseling, and career guidance, to address barriers that out-of-school youth face.
- **Local Adaptation:** The SAWDB will ensure that WIOA youth providers offer comprehensive support services. This includes partnerships with local mental health services, housing assistance programs, and career counseling to address the multifaceted needs of out-of-school youth. The SAWDB will facilitate collaborations to integrate these services into the WIOA youth programs.

### **3. Flexible Program Models**

- **National Innovation:** Programs such as the National Youth Employment Coalition’s (NYEC) “YouthBuild” and the “Jobs for the Future” (JFF) initiatives use flexible program models that adapt to the varying needs of out-of-school youth. These models include options for part-time involvement, virtual learning, and work-based learning opportunities.
- **Local Adaptation:** The SAWDB will encourage providers to implement flexible program structures that accommodate the unique needs of out-of-school youth. This includes offering online or hybrid learning options, flexible scheduling for work experience, and providing multiple pathways to education and career training.

### **4. Employer and Community Engagement**

- **National Innovation:** Successful national programs often collaborate closely with employers and community organizations to create job placements and apprenticeships. The “California Workforce Development Board’s” initiatives, for example, engage local businesses to provide real-world work experience and job opportunities for out-of-school youth.
- **Local Adaptation:** The SAWDB will facilitate strong connections between WIOA youth providers and local employers. This includes creating internships, apprenticeships, and job placement opportunities specifically designed for out-of-school youth. Engaging local businesses in program design and implementation will ensure that training aligns with job market needs.

### **5. Innovative Funding and Resource Leveraging**

- **National Innovation:** Programs like the “Youth CareerConnect” initiative use braided funding strategies to combine resources from various sources, including federal, state, and private funds. This approach helps to maximize available resources and support a range of services.
- **Local Adaptation:** The SAWDB will explore innovative funding mechanisms to support WIOA youth programs. By leveraging braided funding strategies, the SAWDB can combine resources from different funding streams to expand services and enhance program offerings. This approach will ensure sustainability and increase the capacity to serve out-of-school youth effectively.

### **6. Performance Metrics and Continuous Improvement**

- **National Innovation:** Successful programs use detailed performance metrics to track progress and outcomes. For example, the “YouthBuild” programs regularly assess performance against key indicators and make adjustments based on findings.
- **Local Adaptation:** The SAWDB will continue to establish clear performance metrics for WIOA youth providers and implement a continuous improvement process. Regular performance reviews, outcome tracking, and feedback

mechanisms will help identify areas for improvement and ensure that programs are meeting their goals effectively.

By adopting these national innovations and tailoring them to the local context, the Board can enhance its efforts to serve out-of-school youth and achieve positive outcomes.

## **Adults & Dislocated Workers**

---

§679.560(b)(6) and §679.560(c) Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area, including any services targeted toward adult populations with barriers, such as displaced homemakers, homeless adults, ex-offenders, single parents and pregnant women, and/or long-term unemployed.

---

### **Career Services**

There are three types of “career services”: Basic career services, Individualized career services, and Follow-up services. These services can be provided in any order; there is no sequence requirement for these services. Career services, under this approach, provide local areas and service providers with the flexibility to target services to the needs of the customer.

The three categories of career services are defined as follows:

#### **1. Basic Career Services**

Basic career services must be made available to all individuals seeking services in the One-Stop delivery system, and include the following:

- Determinations of whether the individual is eligible to receive assistance from the Adult, Dislocated Worker, or Youth programs
- Outreach, intake (including identification through the State’s Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services) system of unemployment insurance (UI) claimants likely to exhaust benefits, and orientation to information and other services available through the One-Stop delivery system
- Initial assessment of skill levels including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency, as well as aptitudes, abilities (including skills gaps), and supportive service needs
- Labor exchange services, including Job search and placement assistance and, (when needed by an individual) career counseling, including the provision of information on in-demand industry sectors and occupations (as defined in sec. 3(23) of WIOA)

- Provision of information on non-traditional employment (as defined in sec.3(37) of WIOA)
- Provision of referrals to, and coordination of, activities with other programs and services, including those within the One-Stop delivery system and, when appropriate, other workforce development programs
- Provision of workforce and labor market employment statistics information, including the provision of accurate information relating to local, regional, and national labor market areas, including job vacancy listings in labor market areas
- Information on job skills necessary to obtain the vacant jobs listed
- Information relating to local occupations-in-demand and the earnings, skill requirements, and opportunities for advancement for those jobs
- Provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of training services by program and type of providers
- Provision of information about how the local area is performing on local performance accountability measures, as well as any additional performance information relating to the area's One-Stop delivery system
- Provision of information relating to the availability of supportive services or assistance, and appropriate referrals to those services and assistance, including: childcare, child support; medical or child health assistance available through the State's Medicaid program and Children's Health Insurance Program; benefits under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Assistance through the earned income tax credit, housing counseling and assistance services sponsored through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)<sup>1</sup>, and assistance under a State program for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and other supportive services and transportation provided through that program
- Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs not provided under WIOA
- Provision of information and assistance regarding filing claims under Unemployment Insurance (UI) programs, including meaningful assistance to individuals seeking assistance in filing a claim, using staff (on-site) who are properly trained in UI claims, filing, and/or the acceptance of information necessary to file a claim, or by phone or via other technology, as long as the assistance is provided by trained and available staff and within a reasonable time
- The costs associated with providing meaningful assistance may be paid for by the State's UI program, the WIOA Adult or Dislocated Worker programs, the Wagner-Peyser Employment Service, or some combination of these funding sources

## **2. Individualized Career Services**

If One-Stop center staff determines that individualized career services are appropriate for an individual to obtain or retain employment, these services must be made available to the individual. These services must be available in all One-Stop centers. One-Stop center staff may use recent or previous assessments by partner programs to determine if individualized career services would be appropriate. These services include comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, which may include the following:

- Diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools
- In-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and
- Appropriate employment goals
- Development of an individual employment plan to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve his or her employment goals, including the list of, and information about, eligible training providers
- Group and/or individual counseling and mentoring
- Career planning (e.g. case management)
- Short-term pre-vocational services, including the development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training. In some instances, pre-apprenticeship programs may be considered short-term pre-vocational services
- Internships and work experiences that are linked to careers
- Workforce preparation activities that help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills, including competencies in utilizing resources, using information, working with others, understanding systems, and obtaining skills necessary for a successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education, or training, or employment
- Financial literacy services
- Out-of-area job search assistance and relocation assistance
- English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs

## **3. Follow-Up Services**

Follow-up services must be provided as appropriate for participants who are placed in unsubsidized employment, for up to 12 months after the first day of employment. Counseling in the workplace is an appropriate type of follow-up service. Follow-up services do not extend beyond the date of exit in performance reporting.



The Adult and Dislocated Worker Program, under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, is designed to provide quality employment and training services to assist eligible individuals in finding and qualifying for meaningful employment and to help employers find the skilled workers they need to compete and succeed in business. WIOA increases individuals with disabilities access to high-quality workforce services, preparing them for competitive integrated employment, and preparing vulnerable youth, and other job seekers, for successful employment through increasing the use of proven service model services.

## **Employment and Training Services**

### **1. IEP - Individual Employment Plan**

An IEP provides a tangible strategy that incorporates specific steps designed to accomplish the individual participant's employment goals through a comprehensive assessment.

### **2. ITA - Individual Training Account**

The intent of an ITA is to augment the quality of skills training to meet the needs of both employers and job seekers alike. This is done by identifying training providers whose performance qualifies them to receive WIOA funds to be used to train adults and dislocated workers.

### **3. On-the-Job Training (OJT)**

OJTs provide financial assistance to employers who agree to train WIOA-eligible and suitable individuals. The purpose of an OJT is the placement of individuals into appropriately skilled employment.

### **4. Customized Training**

This training is designed to meet the needs of a specific employer or group of employers. The employer pays for not less than 50% of the cost of training and must commit to employ, or continue to employ, the worker(s) upon successful completion of any form of customized training.

Services that target individuals with barriers, such as displaced homemakers, homeless adults, ex-offenders, single parents, and pregnant women will be addressed by contacting State Agencies, Criminal Justice, etc. Partners will be cross-trained and case management that meets their needs will be identified.

## **5. Leadership Development Opportunities**

Leadership development includes opportunities that encourage responsibility, confidence, employability, self-determination, and other positive social behaviors such as the following:

- Exposure to postsecondary educational possibilities
- Community and service-learning projects
- Peer-centered activities, including peer mentoring or peer tutoring
- Organizational and teamwork training, including team leadership training
- Training in decision-making, including prioritization and problem solving
- Citizenship training, including life skills such as parenting and work behavior training
- Civic engagement activities that promote the quality of life in a community
- Activities that place the youth in a leadership role include serving on a youth leadership committee or a standing youth committee. The SAWDB's Youth and Young Adult committee has voted to develop a Youth Subcommittee consisting of youth within our region to provide insight and recommendations to the Board.

## **6. Supportive Services**

Supportive services are designed to ensure adults and dislocated workers' successful participation in appropriate WIOA Title I employment or training activities. WIOA activities may include linkage to community services, referrals to healthcare, and cost assistance with transportation, childcare, housing, work or education-related uniforms or attire, work or education-related tools, protective gear, and educational testing.

## **7. Follow-Up Services**

Follow-up services are available for a period of up to 12 months following exit from the program. The goal of follow-up services is to ensure job retention, wage gains, and career progress for participants who have entered employment.

## **8. Comprehensive Guidance & Counseling**

Comprehensive guidance and counseling are tailored for each participant. This may include career and academic counseling, drug and alcohol abuse counseling, mental health counseling, and referral to partner programs for which the counselor has coordinated the referral with the partner agency on behalf of the individual.

## **9. Financial Literacy**

Financial literacy is provided through education or activities that assist participants to initiate checking and savings accounts at banks and making informed financial decisions; to support a participant with learning how to manage spending, credit, and debt, including student loans, consumer credit, and credit cards. This training also

supports a participant's ability to understand, evaluate, and compare financial products and services; informs participants about identity theft, their rights regarding it, and ways they can protect themselves from it; and supports the financial literacy needs of non-English speakers using multilingual financial literacy and educational materials.

### **10. Entrepreneurial Skills Training**

This training provides the basics of starting and operating a small business, taking initiative, creatively seeking out and identifying business opportunities, developing budgets, forecasting resource needs, understanding various options for acquiring capital and the trade-offs associated with each option, and how communicating effectively to market oneself and one's ideas.

### **11. Labor Market & Career Awareness Information**

Services that impart information to the participants about jobs that are in demand in the local labor market may include career awareness, exploration activities, and career counseling.

### **12. Transition to Postsecondary Education**

Includes information about, and preparation for, college entrance. Also includes information about applying to colleges, financial aid, entrance testing, student life, pre-requisite courses, and more.

### **13. Transitional Jobs**

Transitional jobs provide time-limited, paid work experience to individuals in southern New Mexico who have been chronically unemployed or have an inconsistent work history. Those jobs focus on training and employment for justice-involved individuals and emphasize transitioning youth co-enrollments to the Adult and Dislocated Worker program. Transitional jobs also establish an effective communication system with Youth and Adult service providers to inform youth participants of the occupations in demand, along with the opportunities available to enroll in adult training programs. This goal aligns the youth and adult service programs, builds relationships that promote long-term success, and connects youth to the workforce system.

---

## Individuals with Disabilities

---

§679.560(b)(13) and §679.560(c) Describe how individuals with disabilities will be served through the one-stop center system in the local area, including copies of executed cooperative agreements which define how all local service providers, including additional providers, will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the local one-stop delivery system. This includes cooperative agreements (as defined in WIOA sec. 107(d)(11)) between the LWDB or other local entities described in WIOA sec. 101(a)(11)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 721(a)(11)(B)) and the local office of a designated State agency or designated State unit administering programs carried out under title I of the Rehabilitation Act(29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.) (The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation within the NM Public Education Department and the Commission for the Blind) (other than sec. 112 or part C of that title (29 U.S.C. 732, 741) and subject to sec. 121(f)) in accordance with sec. 101(a)(11) of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. 721(a)(11)) with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information and resources, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination, such as improving or creating referral processes, joint enrollment and case management.

---

WIOA, as well as other federal programs, requires that persons with disabilities have access to services. The One-Stop Operator meets with workforce partners monthly to discuss strategies to enhance the delivery of services to individuals with disabilities and establish a cross-training program.

The one-stop center system design ensures comprehensive and integrated services for individuals with disabilities. This system achieves this goal through executed cooperative agreements between the SAWDB, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), the New Mexico Public Education Department, and the New Mexico Commission for the Blind, in accordance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. These agreements outline how local service providers will fulfill the integration and access requirements under WIOA sec. 107(d)(11).

To enhance service delivery, the cooperative agreements include the following components:

1. **Cross-training of Staff:** All staff across partner agencies are cross-trained to ensure they are knowledgeable about the full range of services available to individuals with disabilities. This fosters a more inclusive approach, allowing staff

to provide seamless support, regardless of which agency an individual first interacts with.

2. **Technical Assistance:** Agencies collaborate to offer technical assistance to one-stop center staff. This ensures that best practices are consistently applied and that the staff can effectively accommodate individuals with various disabilities.
3. **Resource Sharing:** There is a focus on sharing resources, including assistive technologies and accessible spaces, ensuring that individuals with disabilities have equal access to training programs, job placement services, and supportive resources.
4. **Employer Engagement:** Cooperative efforts with employers include outreach and education on the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities, job accommodations, and providing equal employment opportunities. This is designed to create stronger employer partnerships, which, in turn, can lead to increased job placements for individuals with disabilities.
5. **Joint Enrollment and Case Management:** The one-stop centers prioritize joint enrollment and case management for individuals with disabilities. This coordinated approach allows for better tracking of progress, such as measurable skill gains, credential attainment, and job placements. By working together, the agencies ensure that individuals receive wraparound services tailored to their needs.
6. **Referral Process Improvement:** The referral process among agencies is functioning effectively, ensuring individuals are connected to the appropriate services. However, there is room for improvement in follow-through and communication between agencies to ensure better outcomes. The SAWDB is committed to driving more meaningful coordination between programs, which will enhance shared results, including measurable skill gains, credential attainment, and job placements.

Efforts to continually improve coordination, communication, and collaboration are key to creating a seamless and effective service delivery system for individuals with disabilities.

The SAWDB recognizes that this statistic directly affects how the services at America's Job Centers should be structured and delivered to ensure that the workforce partners address the needs of those with disabilities and the barriers to training, education, and employment. The One-Stop Operator will work with workforce partners to explore and implement strategies that will increase the number of individuals with disabilities in the labor force.

### Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Performance Matrix

Over the past two years, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) has utilized a performance matrix to assess its negotiated performance against federal common measures and actual outcomes. This matrix has been instrumental in evaluating how well DVR is meeting its targets in key areas such as employment retention, earnings, and skill attainment for individuals with disabilities.

By regularly reviewing these metrics, DVR has been able to identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement, allowing for timely adjustments to better serve its clients. The data gathered from this performance matrix has also played a crucial role in informing the Board's broader strategies. It ensures that DVR's efforts are effectively integrated with other workforce programs, fostering a cohesive approach to delivering high-quality, coordinated services across the one-stop system.

## Performance Negotiation

NMDVR Strategic Goals we must meet to maintain funding

Performance Indicator	PY2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2022 Actual Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level	PY 2023* Actual Level	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY2024 FINAL Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 FINAL Negotiated Level
Employment (2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit)	40%	41.3%	42%	47%	43%	43%	44%	44%
Employment (4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter After Exit)	35%	40.8%	38%	42.8%	42%	41.5%	43%	42.5%
Median Earnings (2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit)	\$4,500	\$5,033	\$4,600	\$5,255	\$4,900	\$5,080	\$5,000	\$5,120
Credential Attainment Rate	26%	37.6%	28%	28%	38%	39.1%	42%	40%
Measurable Skills Gains	32.5%	52.9%	35%	36.7%	54%	53.4%	55%	53.9%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

\*PY23Q3

Southwestern New Mexico has been steadily high-performing when it comes to federal measures. An innovative strategy to get partners to recognize the value of a coordinated partnership where they share participants and results is to create a performance-based incentive model that rewards collaborative efforts and shared outcomes. Here's how this could work:

1. **Shared Success Metrics and Funding Pools:** Established shared success metrics, such as measurable skill gains, job placements, and credential attainment, that all partners must meet. This increases the level of successful outcomes as co-enrolled individuals receive high levels of wrap-around services.
2. **Cross-Agency Leadership Circles:** Form cross-agency leadership circles where senior leaders from all partners meet regularly to share insights, challenges, and successes. These circles can act as think tanks to solve common problems, create new initiatives, and ensure buy-in from top management for collaborative efforts. Allow these leadership circles to rotate hosting duties among partners, fostering a sense of ownership, accountability and commitment to the partnership.
3. **Collective Impact Demonstration Projects:** Develop pilot projects that specifically focus on coordinated services and shared participants, showcasing the power of collective impact. For instance, select a target population (e.g., individuals with disabilities or veterans) and have all partners work together using the IRT model to provide a seamless service experience from start to finish. Track the outcomes and present the findings as a case study for the value of collaboration.
4. **Partner Value Propositions:** Articulate clear partner value propositions that go beyond just funding. For example, emphasize that coordinated efforts can lead to more efficient use of resources, better participant outcomes (which reflect positively on all involved), access to shared data and insights, and the potential for larger collective funding from state or federal grants.

By linking tangible incentives to collaboration, partners will see the value in a coordinated partnership, not just in terms of participant outcomes but also in terms of the resources, funding, and recognition they can gain by working together effectively.

DVR Program Manager, Erik Padilla, contributed valuable input to this plan, highlighting the success of the IRT model in other areas and expressing confidence that it would be a viable solution for achieving success in the Southwestern region of the state.

The SAWDB and WIOA Administrator are committed to ensuring that the DVR Integrated Resource Team (IRT) model is effectively implemented throughout the one-stop system. Working through the One-Stop Operator (OSO), the SAWDB and WIOA Administrator will enforce the adoption of this model to enhance services for individuals with disabilities, ensuring they receive comprehensive and coordinated support tailored to their unique needs.

### ***Understanding the IRT Model***

The DVR IRT model is designed to bring together multiple service providers and partners to coordinate and streamline services for individuals with disabilities. By assembling a team that includes vocational rehabilitation counselors, workforce development professionals, educators, and other relevant stakeholders, the IRT model creates a holistic approach to service delivery. This ensures that all aspects of an individual's needs—ranging from employment and training to education and support services—are addressed collaboratively.

### ***SAWDB and WIOA Administrator's Role in Enforcing the IRT Model***

The SAWDB will work closely with the OSO to ensure that the IRT model is fully integrated into the operations of the one-stop system. Key actions they will take include:

1. **Establishing Clear Expectations:** The SAWDB and WIOA Administrator will set clear guidelines for the OSO, outlining the expectation that the DVR IRT model will be used as a standard practice when serving individuals with disabilities. These guidelines will emphasize the importance of coordinated service delivery and the need for active collaboration among all relevant partners.
2. **Training and Cross-Training:** To enforce the DVR IRT model, the SAWDB and WIOA Administrator will ensure that the OSO organizes regular training sessions for one-stop staff, including those from mandated partner programs. This training will focus on the principles of the IRT model, the roles and responsibilities of team members, and best practices for effective collaboration. Cross-training will also be emphasized to ensure all staff understand the resources available across the system and how to leverage them for the benefit of individuals with disabilities.
3. **Monitoring and Accountability:** The SAWDB and WIOA Administrator will implement monitoring processes to track the utilization of the IRT model within the one-stop system. The OSO will be responsible for reporting on the number of IRTs formed, the outcomes achieved for individuals with disabilities, and any barriers encountered. This data will allow the SAWDB and WIOA Administrator to assess the effectiveness of the model and make necessary adjustments to ensure its success.
4. **Facilitating Partnerships:** The SAWDB and WIOA Administrator will direct the OSO to actively foster and maintain strong partnerships between DVR and other one-stop partners. This includes ensuring that communication channels are open and that there is a shared commitment to the goals of the IRT model. The SAWDB and WIOA Administrator will also encourage the OSO to engage community-based organizations, employers, and other stakeholders who can contribute to the success of the IRT model.



5. **Resource Allocation:** The SAWDB and WIOA Administrator will ensure that adequate resources are allocated to support the implementation of the DVR IRT model. This includes dedicating staff time, funding for necessary accommodations, and other resources that enable the IRTs to function effectively. The OSO will be responsible for managing these resources and ensuring they are used efficiently to support individuals with disabilities.
6. **Continuous Improvement:** The SAWDB and WIOA Administrator will promote a culture of continuous improvement by requiring the OSO to regularly review and refine the implementation of the IRT model. Feedback from individuals served, as well as from the IRT members, will be used to identify areas for improvement and to make necessary adjustments to the model's implementation.

### ***Impact of the IRT Model***

By enforcing the DVR IRT model through the OSO, the SAWDB and WIOA Administrator ensure that individuals with disabilities receive personalized and coordinated support that addresses their specific needs. This approach not only enhances the quality of services but also improves employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities, helping them achieve meaningful and sustainable employment. The commitment of the SAWDB and WIOA Administrator to this model reflects a broader dedication to creating an inclusive workforce system where all individuals have the opportunity to succeed.

NM DVR and other workforce partners that serve people with disabilities are considered specialized programs under the ADA and the ADAAG, which means that a person with a disability does not have to be served by workforce programs specifically for people with disabilities if they choose not to, by law. It also means that people with disabilities have the right to access any program that they wish as long as they meet the eligibility requirements for that program with the understanding that policies, procedures, and eligibility requirements cannot directly or indirectly discriminate or weed out people with disabilities from being able to participate in federally funded programs.

This concept also identifies the spirit of WIOA in leading to the conclusion that instead of each workforce partner operating independently in serving their participants and referring participants based on their specific classification, that workforce partner staff and organizations should and must work together, regardless if they are co-located, to maximize efficiency and service to the people they serve and to include people with disabilities in that endeavor. In other words, a person with a disability essentially can be eligible for and a participant of multiple workforce programs simultaneously, and the workforce representatives serving that participant should work together in coordinating services necessary to assist that individual or employer with reaching their goals, which

is to also ensure that there is not any duplication of services and that all needs are being met in a timely manner to increase the chances of success of people with disabilities.

This concept is directly related to one of the goals of the Local Plan which is to increase the number of participants co-enrolled in multiple workforce programs for which they are eligible and to include people with disabilities. This strategy is also in line with exceeding the goals of the workforce partner organizations' performance measures which the federal government holds us accountable.

Based on the statements above, the key focus has been training due to workforce partner organizations mentioning that they are not trained to serve people with disabilities as to the reason why they refer people with disabilities to specialized employment assistance programs, instead of attempting to work together in having an individual participate and apply for all workforce programs for which they are eligible and can receive services. I would like to note here that there is nowhere in WIOA, Section 188, the ADA, or the ADAAA that states that a participant may not have access to programs for which they are eligible due to a lack of trained staff. These acts state the contrary in that no one can be discriminated against due to their status in a protected class.

The key next steps and future endeavors to build on the progress that has already been made are as follows:

- Identifying existing ADA Coordinators for each workforce partner (By law an organization with 50 or more employees must have at least one ADA Coordinator and follow the roles of the ADA Coordinator's rules and regulations)
- If necessary, select a staff member to complete the ADA Coordinator training program (ACTCP) through the Governor's Commission on Disability
- Once, ADA Coordinators are identified or established, a transition plan, ADA grievance procedure, and self-evaluation will need to be developed for each agency. Part of this process will include the initial review and evaluation of all workforce programs to ensure ADA compliance. Note: Non-compliance with the ADA can have significant implications on the SW Workforce system and the state in general.
- To continue to provide regular trainings and support to workforce partner staff on working with people with disabilities.
- To continue to increase the number of participants co-enrolled in workforce programs by utilizing the IRT model and developing strong relationships among the staff of the SW workforce system and its partners.

- To conduct more outreach and support to employers in providing awareness and education in employing people with disabilities. Overall, there are many employers that are disability friendly, however; the rural areas need some work in understanding the benefits of considering this population for their employment pool.
- The public school system is one of the most critical workforce partners. Increasing the number of referrals from the public school systems will help the region provide pre-employment transition services to students and youth with disabilities. There has been much collaboration conducted with the schools; however, there are many students and youth within our area that the public schools are not connecting to workforce programs. In particular, all students and youth with disabilities who plan on working after graduation should be referred to NM DVR and the Youth Services program at America's Job Center to support the public schools and the students.

By increasing accessibility and removing policies, procedures, organizational cultures, and mentalities that are barriers to employment, programs, and resources, we can truly improve the quality of the lives of the citizens we serve, our communities, and our economy.

## **Veterans**

---

[§679.560\(c\) and §680, Subpart E Describe the board's strategic approach to serving Veterans to improve employment outcomes for this population, including priority of service efforts.](#)

---

The SAWDB places veterans and eligible spouses in a priority of service for job training programs, in accordance with Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 10-09.

WIOA services are available to veterans at America's Job Centers. At the Las Cruces and Silver City centers, full-time veteran representatives assist veterans with various services leading to either an educational track, employment track, or both. Veteran representatives are available by appointment at the Deming and Socorro offices.

The New Mexico WIOA Combined State Plan states that it will also include a partnership with the Jobs for Veterans State Grants program (JVSG). To support and align this effort, the SAWDB will work through its One-Stop Operator to coordinate with JVSG to assist veterans through this program.

**Community awareness**

Community awareness is important for reaching veterans and their eligible spouses who are unaware of the employment services available to them. As part of the SAWDB's outreach and promotional campaign, veteran re-entry to employment will be promoted in each county of the region.

**Partnership and coordination with veteran programs**

As part of the ongoing process to enhance the services to veterans in the workforce system, workforce partners, the New Mexico Department of Veteran Affairs, and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs will be invited to periodic workforce partner meetings.

**Cross-training of workforce staff**

Cross-training among workforce staff is a priority to ensure that veterans and their eligible spouses are properly served. Workforce staff will be trained on the priority of services and how under the Title I Adult program, veterans and eligible spouses will receive the highest priority of service, followed by persons receiving public assistance, low-income individuals, or those who are basic skills deficient. The Code of Federal Regulation, Section 680.650 states that veterans receive priority of service under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. As defined under WIOA sec. 3(63)(A) and 38 U.S.C. 101, receive. S.C. 4215 and described in 20 CFR part 1010. A veteran still must meet each program's eligibility criteria to receive services under the respective employment and training program. For income-based eligibility determinations, amounts paid while on active duty or paid by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for vocational rehabilitation, disability payments, or related VA-funded programs are not to be considered as income, in accordance with 38 U.S.C. 4213 and § 683.230 of this chapter.

Pursuant to § 680.660, when a separating service member is separating from the Armed Forces with a discharge that is anything other than dishonorable, the separating service member qualifies for dislocated worker activities based on the following criteria:

- The separating service member has received a notice of separation, a DD-214 from the Department of Defense, or other documentation showing a separation or imminent separation from the Armed Forces to satisfy the termination or layoff part of the dislocated worker eligibility criteria in WIOA sec. 3(15)(A)(i);
- The separating service member qualifies for the dislocated worker eligibility criteria on eligibility for or exhaustion of unemployment compensation in WIOA sec. 3(15)(A)(ii)(I) or (II); and,

- As a separating service member, the individual meets the dislocated worker eligibility criteria that the individual is unlikely to return to a previous industry or occupation in WIOA sec. 3(15)(A)(iii).

### **Use of America's Job Center services**

A job seeker's employment attainment depends on using the available online resources at America's Job Center. Building a good résumé, posting it in NMWCOS, learning and practicing good interview skills, and following the staff's advice are all important in obtaining employment.

### **Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers**

---

[§679.560\(c\), Parts 653 and 685 Describe, as appropriate, the board's approach to serving migrant seasonal farmworkers within its respective area to increase education and employment outcomes for this population.](#)

---

New Mexico's designation as a Significant State for Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFW) by the U.S. Department of Labor underscores the importance of effectively serving this population, which faces distinct challenges such as language barriers, limited access to transportation, and a general lack of awareness about available resources. Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach, and one of the most effective strategies is the use of braided funding, which involves combining resources from various funding streams to create comprehensive and innovative solutions.

In a conversation with Kerena Levario, Area Manager for Luna and Grant County, she highlighted the substantial opportunities to serve MSFWs and their families by leveraging WIOA funds in conjunction with resources from core partners in the workforce system. By braiding these funds, the SAWDB can develop and implement services that are more comprehensive and tailored to the unique needs of MSFWs. This includes offering bilingual training materials, developing mobile service units to reach remote communities, and partnering with local organizations to enhance outreach efforts.

The impact of braided funding on rural communities, particularly those with high MSFW populations, cannot be overstated. For instance, combining WIOA funds with other federal, state, and local resources allows the development of tailored programs that address the specific needs of MSFWs, such as providing access to English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, job training, and supportive services. By coordinating these resources, the Board can implement innovative solutions that directly bring

education and job training to farmworkers in the fields or community hubs, eliminating the barriers to transportation and accessibility.

Moreover, braided funding can support the creation of apprenticeship programs and career pathways specifically designed for the children of farmworkers, particularly those who are out-of-school youth. These programs can provide critical skills training that aligns with local economic needs, offering these young individuals a viable path to sustainable employment in the agriculture, manufacturing, and healthcare sectors, which are vital to the region's economy.

The long-term impact of these efforts on rural communities is profound. By investing in the education and training of MSFWs and their families, the SAWDB is enhancing their immediate employment prospects and contributing to the overall economic development of these rural areas. This approach fosters a more skilled workforce, reduces unemployment, and strengthens the local economy, creating a ripple effect that benefits the entire community.

Using braided funding to support innovative solutions in serving MSFWs in rural New Mexico can potentially transform these communities. By addressing the unique challenges faced by this population and providing them with the resources and opportunities they need to succeed, the SAWDB can create lasting change that will benefit both the individuals served and the broader community.

To address the monitoring findings regarding the lack of WIOA Title I and other services provided to Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs), the SAWDB, through the One-Stop Operator, can take decisive actions in partnership with the State Monitor Advocate. Here's how they can drive and commit to this initiative:

### **1. Strategic Partnership with the State Monitor Advocate**

- **Formal Collaboration:** Establish a formal partnership with the State Monitor Advocate to create a coordinated approach to addressing the gaps in services for MSFWs. This partnership should include regular meetings, shared goals, and a clear action plan to ensure compliance with WIOA Title I requirements.
- **Leverage Expertise:** The State Monitor Advocate can provide valuable insights into the unique challenges faced by MSFWs and help tailor services to meet their needs. The SAWDB should utilize this expertise to refine strategies and ensure that programs are culturally and linguistically appropriate.

## **2. Immediate Corrective Action Plan**

- **Develop and Implement a Corrective Action Plan:** In response to the monitoring findings, the SAWDB, in collaboration with the One-Stop Operator and State Monitor Advocate, should develop a corrective action plan that outlines specific steps to address the identified deficiencies. This plan should include timelines, responsible parties, and measurable outcomes to ensure accountability.
- **Focus on Compliance:** The corrective action plan should prioritize compliance with WIOA Title I and ensure that MSFWs and their families have access to all required services, including job training, career counseling, and supportive services. The SAWDB should commit to regular progress reviews and adjustments as needed.

## **3. Enhanced Outreach and Service Delivery**

- **Targeted Outreach Campaigns:** The SAWDB, through the One-Stop Operator, can work with the State Monitor Advocate to design and implement targeted outreach campaigns to inform MSFWs about the available WIOA services. This may involve bilingual outreach materials, community events, and partnerships with local organizations that already have strong connections with the MSFW community.

## **4. Capacity Building and Training**

- **Staff Training:** The SAWDB should ensure that all staff within the one-stop system receive specialized training on serving MSFWs, which can be developed in collaboration with the State Monitor Advocate. This training should cover cultural competency, understanding the unique barriers MSFWs face, and effective outreach strategies.

## **5. Continuous Monitoring and Improvement**

- **Regular Monitoring:** The SAWDB, with the support of the One-Stop Operator and in partnership with the State Monitor Advocate, should establish a system of continuous monitoring to ensure that services for MSFWs are being provided as required. This includes tracking participation, service delivery, and outcomes to identify and address any ongoing issues promptly.
- **Feedback Mechanisms:** Implement mechanisms to collect feedback directly from MSFWs and other stakeholders to ensure that the services provided are meeting their needs. Use this feedback to make data-driven adjustments to programs and strategies.

By taking these steps, the SAWDB, through the One-Stop Operator and in partnership with the State Monitor Advocate, can drive meaningful change in how services are delivered to MSFWs in Southwestern New Mexico. This approach addresses the immediate compliance issues identified in the monitoring findings and creates a sustainable framework for serving this important population in the long term.

The SAWDB has established a priority to meet the needs of farmworkers and seeks to provide the services offered by the workforce system. Seasonal farmworkers do not need to visit an America's Job Center when their seasonal employment ends to file for unemployment because they can use a toll-free number or computer. This reduces the opportunity to make contact and offer workforce services for re-employment. Therefore, outreach to farmworkers is necessary to provide them with the services available at America's Job Center, including the benefit of having a trained and skilled workforce and how WIOA can help with training reimbursements. It is also a priority to develop strategies with the National Farmworker Jobs Program and other workforce partners working with migrant and seasonal farmworkers.

In addition to the customary outreach services available, service providers should supply information on the benefits of training, which ultimately translates to higher earning potential and increased quality of life.

The SAWDB examines the barriers to training for farmworkers with its workforce partners and determines how the barriers, including transportation needs, may be overcome.

## **Native Americans**

---

[§679.560\(c\) and Part 684](#) Describe, as appropriate, the board's approach to serving Native Americans within its respective area to increase education and employment outcomes for this population.

---

The Alamo Navajo Chapter of the Navajo Nation is in Socorro County. The SAWDB currently contracts with the Alamo Navajo School Board to deliver WIOA Youth services on the Alamo Navajo Reservation. An objective for the next four years is to continue providing community awareness of services to adults and dislocated workers and to expand the work experience opportunities for youth in Magdalena and the City of Socorro. Work opportunities are extremely limited on the Alamo Navajo reservation. Community members need transportation to travel 60 miles one way each day. Partnerships with the public and private sectors will be explored within the communities to expand the academic and employment opportunities for Native Americans.

---



Along with service providers, workforce partners, local governments, and other community-based organizations, the SAWDB will examine the barriers to training, including transportation needs. Based on the examination, the workforce partners and service providers will create and implement a feasible plan.

The Alamo Navajo School Board (ANSB) is a non-profit 501(c) 3 organization. ANSB operates under resolutions from the Alamo Navajo Chapter and the Navajo Tribe. ANSB was organized within the Alamo Navajo Chapter to establish and operate Federal and State programs that serve the people of Alamo under Contracts, Grants, or Cooperative or Joint Powers Agreements.

Poverty and unemployment have been insurmountable obstacles to Alamo Community members who have not been in the mainstream and have little to no experience interacting with mainstream society. Historically, clients who went off-reservation for employment and/or post-secondary education had difficulty completing these programs due to barriers created by lack of transportation, affordable housing, childcare, basic-skill deficiencies, and other barriers. Many clients requesting assistance with postsecondary education or training are single parents with young children or older clients with families. They do not have supportive services to live off-reservation, maintain their program of education, and maintain their family responsibilities. In addition, mainstream institutions usually do not have personal counseling services to assist clients in maintaining their educational program as well as accessing the supportive services necessary for their retention and success.

The isolation, setting, and environment of the Alamo Navajo Reservation all have a major impact on the educational goals and aspirations of the Alamo Community. The Reservation consists of 63,109 acres of arid rocky land in west-central New Mexico. Alamo is one of the most isolated reservation communities in the entire state. A paved road, Highway 169, connects the Reservation with the nearest town, Magdalena. Magdalena (pop. 800) is located 32 miles south of the Alamo Navajo Chapter. Socorro is the county seat, 70 miles away, and the only nearby town of appreciable size. To seek services, clients must travel to Albuquerque or Socorro. Travel time to Albuquerque alone is 5 hours round trip.

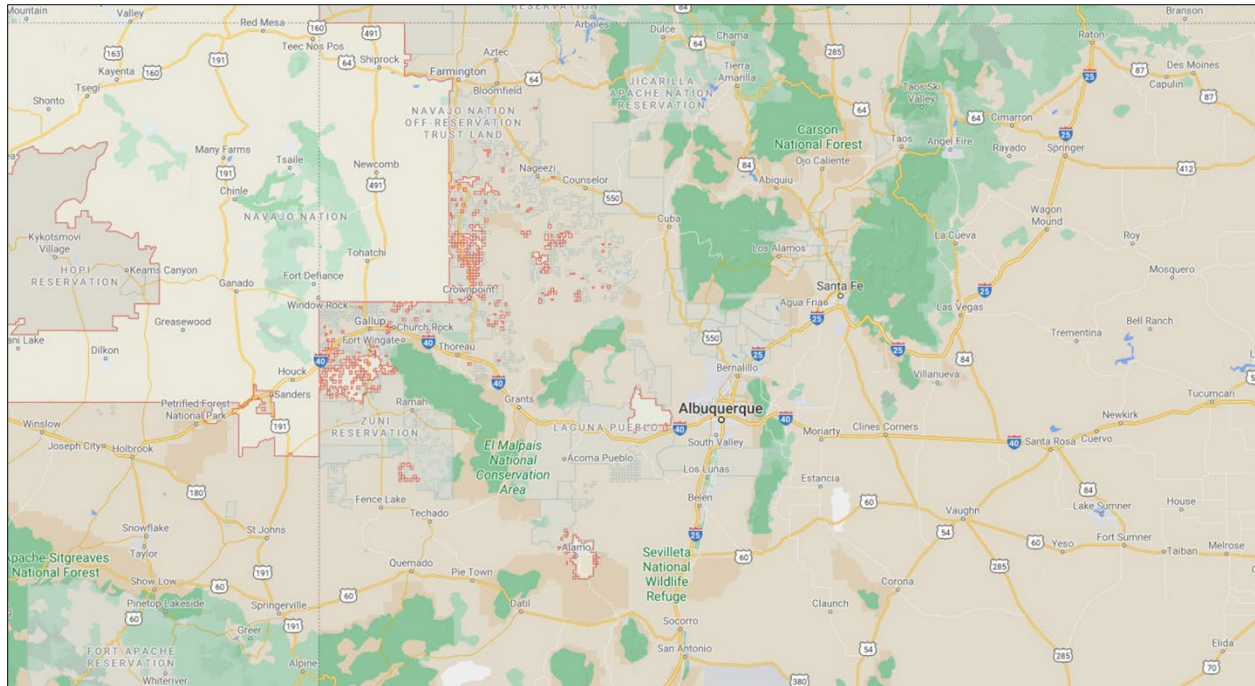
The lack of vehicles or vehicles in good repair and the rising cost of fuel also contribute to this problem. Geographic separation from the mainstream life of the state has caused a communications and services gap for the Alamo Navajo people. The distance to services for postsecondary education, staff development, and curriculum diversity can be financially and physically prohibitive for community members who are already educationally and financially disadvantaged.

As seen in the following table, the population of Alamo represents over 11% of the total Socorro county population and the Native American population in the county primarily resides on the Alamo Navajo Reservation. The data documents the isolation and poverty of the Alamo Community in relation to the rest of the county, the rest of the state, and the rest of the Navajo Nation.

	<b>Native American</b>	<b>Socorro County</b>	<b>New Mexico</b>	<b>Navajo Nation</b>	<b>USA</b>
Population	1,988	15,815	2,115,266	423,412	335,893,238
AVG Household Income	\$24,118	\$57,726	\$49,906	\$33,323	\$77,345
% Unemployed	22.5%	4.5%	4.0%	48.5%	4%
% Not in Labor Force	63.5%	53.2%	28%	56%	37.5%
% Native American	98.43%	3.9%	12.8%	96%	2.09%
% Living in Poverty	70.96%	31.43%	31.96%	40%	11.5%
% < HS Education	33.9%	43.51%	26.03%	40.27%	87%
Some College	12.44%	23.27%	23.27%	30.12%	
Associate Degree	3.58%	17.85%	8.94%	9.6%	
Bachelor's Degree	2.33%	6.36%	15.81%	9.4%	
Master's Degree	2.02%	40.4%	12.72%	4.2%	12.8%
% Limited English	36.04%	34.58%	32.99%	18%	21.7%
Public Assistance	9%	4.1%	50%	19%	12.4%
Food Stamps	41.4%	21%	21%	28.5%	12%
Median Age	22	36.4	37.1	38.7%	39.7

Source: Alamo Navajo School Board

The following map shows the size and location of the Alamo Navajo community in comparison to the Greater Navajo Nation. Socorro is the nearest city and Albuquerque is the nearest major city.



## Individuals with Low Income

[§679.560\(c\)](#) and [§680, Subpart E](#) Describe how the board will identify and work with low-income individuals, including any plans to coordinate locally with the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program to serve this population, as well as to serve TANF exhaustees.

The SAWDB identifies target populations by analyzing labor market data and the local economy weighed against local demographic data to assess program priorities and service limitations. This population includes public assistance recipients and those who are basic skills deficient. The analysis informs the development of programs, service design strategies, and opportunities that will align with the best interest of job seekers and employers. The Board works with service providers to design programs to increase access to, and opportunities for, the employment, education, training, and support services that individuals need to succeed in the labor market, particularly those with barriers to employment.

This work is accomplished by increasing the service providers' and workforce partners' capabilities to serve youth and adults with limited skills, limited or no work experience,

and barriers to employment and/or training. The SAWDB seeks to expand access to education and training opportunities for those in the TANF program and other low-income individuals. This goal will be accomplished through the Board's One-Stop Operator, who will coordinate services and develop methods with the TANF service provider to better serve low-income individuals at the America's Job Center. Cross-training for staff among various workforce partners will be conducted to better understand and employ effective employment-based activities for serving low-income individuals.

Working with the TANF program, the Board will seek to improve its strategy and process to improve its service alignment across the workforce system.

The SAWDB's key functions are to ensure that the workforce system aligns its planning and policies that can support low-income individuals to have better access to its Core programs through a unified process of serving low-income populations.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requires a priority of service to low-income individuals. The policy has been established and partnerships with human services are in place to provide accessibility to the workforce system for those who are low-income. During the next several months, through the SAWDB's service provider, methods for better access to low-income individuals will be explored.

## **Older Individuals**

---

§679.560(c) Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate WIOA title I workforce investment activities with the Senior Community Service Employment Program (Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965) to serve the employment needs of older individuals.

---

Numerous factors may influence why older individuals are continuing to work into later years. These factors may include changes in personal, social, and economic circumstances, or merely a desire to remain socially engaged in their community. Medical advances have also resulted in a rise in life expectancy, potentially resulting in the need for individuals to return to the workforce if retirement funds run out and no longer cover living expenses.

Older individuals with low skills encounter barriers to education and employment and require work experience training that will lead to higher-skilled and higher-paying employment opportunities. The SAWDB will coordinate with the Senior Community

Service Employment Program (SCSEP) to develop strategies to provide effective employment-based activities for older individuals within the workforce system.

The Board will also align its actions with the Combined State Plan and those of the Aging and Long-Term Services Department and its goals: (1) to assist income-eligible persons, age 55 or older, to obtain employment (2) to provide community service through paid, part-time, training positions. Currently, SCSEP participants are located at the America's Job Center and assist in the welcome function to help job seekers enroll and access job opportunities through NMWCOS.

Workforce partners will be trained to understand the barriers that older individuals encounter and how to address them. Title II Adult Education, Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation, and other partners are essential to the delivery of services for older individuals as they work together to assist individuals to address barriers to education and employment. The partners will also research and analyze the literacy and numeracy data by county to develop actional steps. SCSEP, along with the SAWDB's One-Stop Operator, will provide cross-training to the workforce partners. Through this joint planning and system design with SCSEP, Workforce partners will be trained to understand the barriers older individuals encounter older individuals will have better access to training and be more competitive in the workplace.

The New Mexico Department of Aging and Long-Term Services is an important partner within the workforce system. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act seeks partnerships that can address the workforce needs of all adults.

As part of the ongoing process to enhance the workforce system through the collaboration of partners, systems will be studied, and protocols will be written to address the needs of older adults.

The Board has supported the SCSEP program by establishing work sites for participants and serving as a program work site. SCSEP participants have received On-the-Job Training (OJT) in technical and administrative support. Partner representatives attend partner meetings and are invited to collaborate on job fairs to align participants with potential employers. With America's Job Centers as a work site, SCSEP participants' roles include greeting and checking in customers at the front desk, managing the resource room, assisting with account creation, and shadowing career consultants. The goal is to expand this initiative.

---

## Individuals with Low Literacy Levels

---

§679.560(b)(12) Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate WIOA title I workforce investment activities with adult education and literacy activities under WIOA title II. Describe the joint planning processes planned or underway that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with receiving adult education services, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, sharing resources, sharing of information, cooperative efforts to improve or create referral processes, joint enrollment and case management. This description must also include how the LWDB will carry out the review of local applications submitted under title II consistent with WIOA Secs. 107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and WIOA sec. 232.

---

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requires a priority of service to basic-skills deficient individuals. In collaboration with K-12 programs, Adult Education Service (AES) partners, and the private sector, strategies will be developed to address the low literacy levels in the Southwestern area. Research on best practices in and outside of New Mexico will be explored and examined for implementation in the workforce system.

The SAWDB is actively engaged in collaborative planning with partners to expand the region's access to workforce services. The Board acts as the convener for the region to ensure consistency with the Local Plan and to advise on the alignment of resources with additional adult education and literacy providers.

The SAWDB has developed agreements with partner agencies and providers to carry out this requirement within the one-stop delivery system. The agreements are made to offer system-wide development and training as well as the development of applicable policies and procedures.

Activities with Adult Education and Literacy under WIOA Title II are available in the metropolitan areas of the state but are limited in most rural counties. The SAWDB and Core partners have created leveraged resources amongst its programs to offer adult education services for the participants.

In addition to programs offered by the Adult Literacy partners, a range of career and training services will be available to individuals with low literacy levels who have been established as a priority for receiving services because they are basic-skills deficient. The delivery of AES services is determined by current occupations in demand as well as economic conditions in our region.

By utilizing systems such as WorkKeys, Key Train, and online training resources, the Board can access data on the current needs of the clients related to education. This

---

information is shared with the SAWDB AES partners to determine if the availability and types of training offered are appropriate and meet the demands of the employers.

## **F. Coordination of Services Across Programs**

### **Coordination with Wagner-Peyser Services**

---

§679.560(b)(11) Provide a description of plans, assurances, and strategies for maximizing coordination, improving service delivery, and avoiding duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) services and other services provided through the one-stop delivery system;

---

The SAWDB plans to improve the alignment of services with the Core and additional workforce partners by working with Wagner-Peyser and other partners to enhance methods for the delivery of services. Traditionally, the services offered to individuals have been delivered under the Wagner-Peyser program and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act program, which include unemployment insurance services via telephone and the internet.

The SAWDB, through the One-Stop Operator, has developed a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), which establishes the customer flow process to minimize service duplication and enhance service quality. The SOP identifies the processes for workforce staff to follow and outlines the procedures for initial greeting and the customer triage and referral process. Each team has its functions and mission statement, as shown below.

A Unified Business Team was created to facilitate skill/career development and assist motivated customers in becoming self-sufficient. Customers will explore new and enhanced existing career skills that are in demand by area employers. Customers will be able to sustain employment through successfully marketing their skills. The Team provides job readiness and skill-development services that develop qualified job seekers to meet area employers' needs.

All Southwestern region America's Job Centers have a customer flow plan in which all partners share in these functions. The functions are in place to eliminate duplication of services and improve the services delivered.

---

## Coordination with Rapid Response Activities

---

§679.560(b)(7) A description of how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities;

---

The SAWDB will work closely with the Statewide Rapid Response team when there is a mass layoff in the Southwestern Area to help affected employees get training, whether in the form of tuition assistance or job training.

In coordination with the State (DWS) Rapid Response team, and as stated in Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 19-16, “the local board will assist to promote economic recovery and vitality by developing ongoing, comprehensive approaches to identifying, planning for, or responding to layoffs and dislocations, and preventing or minimizing their impacts on workers, businesses, and communities.” A successful Rapid Response system must include:

- Informational and direct reemployment services for workers, including but not limited to: information and support for filing unemployment insurance claims; information about the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program; information on the impacts of layoff on health coverage or other benefits; information on and referral to career services; reemployment-focused workshops and services; and training.
- Delivery of solutions to address the needs of businesses in transition, provided across the business lifecycle (expansion and contraction), including comprehensive business engagement and layoff aversion strategies and activities designed to prevent or minimize the duration of unemployment.
- Convening, brokering, and facilitating the connections, networks, and partners to ensure the ability to provide assistance to dislocated workers and their families such as home heating assistance, legal aid, and financial advice.
- Strategic planning, data gathering, and analysis designed to anticipate, prepare for, and manage economic change.



---

## Coordination with Secondary and Postsecondary Education System

---

§679.560(b)(9) Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services;

---

The SAWDB coordinates closely with secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to create a streamlined, unified approach that enhances services for job seekers and students while avoiding duplication of efforts. This coordination is fundamental to fostering strong educational and workforce pathways that serve the needs of local employers and regional workers.

The SAWDB works with high schools, community colleges, universities, and other educational institutions to ensure that education programs align with the current and emerging demands of the labor market. These efforts include creating linkages between secondary education programs—such as career and technical education (CTE) programs—and postsecondary opportunities to help students transition smoothly from high school to college or directly into the workforce. The Board promotes career pathways that guide students from education into high-wage, high-demand jobs within the region's growing industries, ensuring that they are equipped with the skills employers require.

In collaboration with its core partners and educational institutions, the SAWDB also uses Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) to help fund postsecondary education programs, including bachelor's degree programs, associate degrees, certificates, and other industry-recognized credentials. This financial support allows individuals to gain the education and skills necessary to thrive in their chosen fields. ITAs provide crucial funding for a wide range of programs that cater to both traditional students and adult learners, covering programs that prepare participants for in-demand occupations across sectors like healthcare, manufacturing, education, and information technology.

By promoting co-enrollment in education and workforce programs, the Board works to ensure that participants are receiving comprehensive support as they pursue their educational and career goals. Through regular collaboration with educational institutions and workforce partners, the SAWDB identifies strategies to avoid duplicating services and resources, thus maximizing the effectiveness of each program.

Additionally, the SAWDB integrates industry feedback into program development to ensure that training programs are not only aligned with current industry needs but are

also adaptable to emerging trends such as automation and remote work. As the region continues to experience growth in industries like healthcare, film, manufacturing, and agriculture, these coordinated efforts allow the workforce system to respond dynamically to changing conditions and ensure that educational and workforce investment activities remain relevant and effective in meeting the needs of students and employers.

### **Coordination with Core Programs**

---

§679.560(b)(2)(iii) Describe how the local board will work with entities carrying out core programs to improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable).

---

The SAWDB works collaboratively with entities carrying out core programs to improve access to activities that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials, including industry-recognized certificates and certifications that are both portable and stackable. This collaborative approach is central to ensuring that individuals in the region, particularly those with barriers to employment, are equipped with the skills needed to enter and advance in high-demand industries.

To facilitate this access, the SAWDB emphasizes partnerships with educational institutions and training providers, including community colleges, universities, and technical schools that are on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). These institutions offer a variety of programs designed to provide students with credentials that align with industry standards and employer demands. By working closely with these institutions, the Board ensures that the training programs available are directly connected to the needs of the local economy and provide pathways to meaningful employment.

One of the key methods employed by the SAWDB to improve access to these credentials is through the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs). ITAs are leveraged to provide financial assistance for individuals pursuing postsecondary education and training, helping them to enroll in programs that lead to recognized credentials. These credentials include bachelor's degrees, associate degrees, certificates, and industry-recognized certifications that are designed to be portable and stackable. This means that individuals can build on their credentials over time, increasing their qualifications and enhancing their employability in a range of industries.

For example, a participant may begin by earning a certificate in a specialized trade, such as welding, and later stack additional certifications or pursue an associate or bachelor's degree to advance their career in manufacturing or construction management. The portability of these credentials ensures that workers can move between employers or industries with the assurance that their qualifications will be recognized and valued.

To enhance access further, the SAWDB works with core partners, including workforce, adult education, vocational rehabilitation, and other support programs, to provide wraparound services that help individuals overcome barriers to education and training. These services include career counseling, financial aid assistance, job placement support, and referrals to supportive services such as childcare and transportation assistance. The goal is to remove any obstacles that might prevent participants from enrolling in and completing credential programs.

The SAWDB also promotes co-enrollment in core programs to ensure that participants benefit from a holistic approach to their education and career advancement. By co-enrolling individuals in programs such as WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth programs, and Title II Adult Education programs, participants receive coordinated support and resources, maximizing their chances of success.

The SAWDB also invests in the development of apprenticeship programs, which combine on-the-job training with classroom instruction, leading to industry-recognized credentials. These apprenticeships provide a direct pathway to employment while allowing participants to earn credentials that are portable and stackable, further supporting career advancement opportunities.

Ultimately, the SAWDB is committed to continuously strengthening relationships with education and training providers and ensuring that participants have access to the resources they need to achieve recognized postsecondary credentials that open doors to high-demand, high-wage careers in Southwestern New Mexico.

### **Coordination of Supportive Services**

---

[§679.560\(b\)\(10\) Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate WIOA title I workforce investment activities with the provision of transportation and other appropriate supportive services in the local area.](#)

---

The policy issued by the SAWDB outlines guidelines for supportive services provided to participants enrolled in WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs. These

---

services are designed to assist participants in successfully completing their employment or training activities. Supportive services are offered only when they are necessary for a participant's participation in career or training activities, and when other resources are unavailable. Participants must meet eligibility requirements and follow procedures for requesting and receiving these services.

### **Examples of Supportive Services:**

#### ***Transportation Assistance:***

- **Mileage reimbursement:** Participants who live 25 miles or more from a training site can receive \$0.25 per mile for travel.
- **Bus passes:** Provided based on training or work schedules, distributed monthly or daily for job searches.
- **Vehicle repairs:** Repair costs may be covered if linked to employment or training, but must meet certain documentation requirements.

#### ***Housing and Utility Assistance:***

- **Rent assistance:** One-time rent assistance per program year, covering overdue payments, with a signed lease required for verification.
- **Utility assistance:** Gas and electric utility assistance, also limited to one-time per program year, with documentation like a shut-off notice required.
- **Short-term housing:** Assistance for individuals attending training more than 60 miles from their home, or emergency shelter for participants in training.

#### ***Childcare Assistance:***

- Childcare payments up to \$35/day per child, provided the participant lacks other available childcare and has custody of children under 13. Childcare must be with a certified or licensed provider.

#### ***Job-Related Assistance:***

- **Clothing, footwear, tools and equipment:** Necessary clothing, footwear, tools or equipment required by an employer or training provider, with documentation verifying the need.

#### ***Background checks:***

- Paid if required for employment or educational purposes.

#### ***Medical Assistance:***

- Minor health services such as physical exams, eye exams, eyeglass prescriptions, or hearing aids may be covered. Services must be necessary for training or employment and not available through other resources.

**Technology Assistance**

- Laptop or computer software

**Other Services:**

- **Driver's license and ID fees:** Support for obtaining or renewing government-issued identification, such as a driver's license or birth certificate.
- **Needs-related payments:** Financial assistance to help cover living expenses while participating in training programs for eligible adults and dislocated workers.

**Expanded List of Services for Youth Participants:**

- Assistance with transportation, housing, childcare, and work-related uniforms or tools.
- Referrals to community services or medical care providers.
- Needs-related payments for youth aged 18-24 who are in training programs.

**Coordination of Follow-up Services**

---

[§679.560\(c\)](#) Provide a description of the board's follow-up policy and procedures for each of the targeted groups in Section G.

---

The SAWDB's follow-up services policy aligns with WIOA's regulations to ensure that America's Job Center staff remain in contact with existing customers after their last activity. Service providers will receive the guidance needed for follow-up services for WIOA Adult, Dislocated Workers, and Youth providers. The policy became effective on July 1, 2017.

**1. Youth**

Follow-up services are critical services that are provided following a youth's exit from the program to help ensure the youth is successful in employment and/or post-secondary education and training. Follow-up services may include regular contact with a youth participant's employer, including assistance in addressing work-related problems that arise.

Follow-up services for youth may also include the following program elements:

- Supportive Services
- Adult mentoring
- Financial literacy education

- Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services
- Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training

Follow-up services must be provided to all participants for a minimum of 12 months unless the participant declines to receive the services. Information from the Youth follow-ups must be entered into NMWCOS, every quarter, following exit. All contacts and attempts to contact an individual for a follow-up must be entered into NMWCOS. Evidence of a minimum of 2 attempts to contact an individual not available must be documented in NMWCOS to constitute a follow-up.

Follow-up services must be provided, as appropriate, including counseling regarding the workplace, for participants in Adult or Dislocated Worker workforce investment activities who are placed in unsubsidized employment, for up to 12 months after the first day of employment. As a requirement for applying for supportive services under WIOA, other related resources in the area (including One-Stop partners) must first be explored. Applicants and participants shall secure documentation of denial from all other available community resources that the applicant was referred to by the case manager. Such efforts shall be documented in the participant's file. To prevent the duplication of costs and efforts, participants must first exhaust related available services before WIOA services will be authorized.

To improve the efficiency of follow-up services, the SAWDB strongly supports the State's initiative of implementing an aligned case management system across people, processes, and technology and improving the delivery of services. New Mexico has joined the Aligned Case Management (ACM) Institute, an initiative facilitated by the USDOL ETA's Office of Workforce Investment and NASWA's Workforce Information Technology Support Center (WITSC). The mission of the ACM Institute is "to enhance service delivery and customer experience within the public workforce system through the creation of a replicable framework and an on-demand toolkit of resources, leveraging interoperable data and modern technology." This initiative is in the New Mexico WIOA Combined State Plan as Alignment Strategy 4.

## Coordination of Service Priorities

---

§679.560(b)(21) Describe the direction given by the Governor (NMDWS) and the LWDB to the one-stop on how the board will coordinate outreach efforts across partner programs for shared customers and target populations.

---

The direction provided by the Governor through NMDWS and the SAWDB for coordinating outreach efforts across partner programs emphasizes a collaborative, unified approach to reach shared customers and targeted populations. This coordination is designed to maximize resources, reduce duplication of services, and ensure that individuals most in need are connected to appropriate workforce and training services.

### Key aspects of this coordination effort include:

#### 1. *Unified Messaging and Branding:*

- America's Job Center offices are presented as the central hub for all partner services under a unified brand to make it easier for customers to identify and access services. All partners use common outreach materials and language to promote a consistent message about the availability of services.
- Example: Flyers promoting workshops and job fairs feature the America's Job Center logo alongside non-located partner programs like Vocational Rehabilitation and Adult Education. These materials emphasize the full range of services available to individuals, such as job placement assistance, training opportunities, and support services like childcare.

#### 2. *Collaborative Outreach Plans:*

- The LWDB provides clear direction for joint outreach plans that engage all partners, including Title I (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs), Title II (Adult Education and Literacy), Title III (Wagner-Peyser), Title IV (Vocational Rehabilitation), and others such as TANF, SNAP E&T, and Veterans Services. Partners meet regularly to develop outreach strategies aimed at shared customer populations, ensuring that resources are pooled and efforts are not duplicated.
- Example: A coordinated outreach effort might focus on veterans who are unemployed or underemployed. Through this effort, outreach is targeted to veterans via partnerships with local Veterans' organizations, veteran job fairs, and community events, and all partners ensure veterans are aware of available services like skills training, job search assistance, and supportive services.

**3. Target Population Focus:**

- Specific outreach efforts are tailored to meet the needs of target populations identified by the Governor and the LWDB, such as individuals with disabilities, long-term unemployed, low-income individuals, youth, veterans, migrant and seasonal farmworkers, and individuals facing barriers to employment. The direction emphasizes the need to integrate services across programs to help these populations achieve self-sufficiency.
- Example: For individuals with disabilities, outreach efforts are coordinated between Vocational Rehabilitation services and Adult Education programs, where staff members work together to develop and distribute information about adaptive technology training and educational resources that help prepare participants for employment.

**4. Utilization of Data and Technology:**

- Outreach is enhanced through the use of shared data systems like NMWCOS, which allows partners to share customer information and track participation across multiple programs. This system helps identify which services customers have received and which additional services may be needed, streamlining follow-up and engagement efforts.
- Example: When a customer enrolls in a TANF program, the data is shared with other partner programs, allowing for targeted outreach regarding WIOA training opportunities or job placement services without requiring the customer to reapply or navigate multiple systems.

**5. Shared Staffing and Cross-Training:**

- The Southwestern region promotes cross-training of staff across partner programs to ensure that all front-line staff are knowledgeable about available services. Cross-training allows staff to perform outreach and make referrals across programs, enhancing the customer experience and ensuring that no population is left unserved.
- Example: Staff at America's Job Centers may receive training on identifying customers eligible for TANF services, and conversely, TANF caseworkers may receive training on identifying participants who could benefit from WIOA Title I job training or Wagner-Peyser services. This cross-training ensures that customers are efficiently referred to the correct services.

**6. Collaborative Events and Workshops:**

- Partners are directed to co-host events and workshops aimed at target populations, such as job fairs, résumé writing workshops, or industry-specific



- training sessions. These events are advertised to ensure maximum participation from shared customers.
- Example: A job fair co-hosted by America's Job Center, local community colleges, and Vocational Rehabilitation might focus on industries like healthcare or manufacturing and include workshops tailored for individuals with disabilities. All partners contribute to marketing the event and ensuring that services are available on-site.

#### **7. *Partnering with Community-Based Organizations:***

- Direction is provided to engage with community-based organizations (CBOs) that serve the same target populations, such as housing authorities, food pantries, faith-based organizations, and non-profits focused on assisting specific demographics. This helps expand the reach of outreach efforts and connect customers to services they may not otherwise know are available.
- Example: Outreach to unhoused individuals might involve partnerships with local shelters. CBOs help disseminate information about workforce services available at America's Job Centers, including supportive services like housing assistance and training opportunities.

#### **Conclusion:**

The coordinated outreach efforts across partner programs are designed to ensure that shared customers and target populations have access to the full range of services available through the workforce system. Through unified messaging, collaborative planning, use of shared data systems, and partnerships with community-based organizations, the LWDB and its partners aim to increase service accessibility and reduce service duplication for individuals with barriers to employment. The direction from the Governor and the LWDB emphasizes leveraging all available resources to maximize the impact on the local workforce and ensure that no population is left underserved.

The SAWDB, in accordance with WIOA sec. 134(c)(3)E and 680.600 of the WIOA DOL Rule, establishes Priority of Service that is given to the One-Stop Operator for participants that are low-income, on public assistance, or who are basic-skills deficient. The Board establishes a Priority of Service for veterans or eligible spouses of veterans, who are followed by other individuals who are NOT low-income, on public assistance, basic-skills deficient, veterans or spouses of veterans, but meet WIOA's eligibility requirements. The priority of services always exists, regardless of funding.

The SAWDB will ensure that the service provider incorporates the Priority of Service into their application process for every individual receiving career or training services and that the service provider's management self-monitors their program for compliance.

The One-Stop Operator will ensure that the Priority of Service requirements are being met by conducting a review and monitoring of the process not less than six times per year. The Board will conduct desk reviews at least four times per year by sampling participants to ensure compliance.

### **Order of Priority**

In accordance with TEGl 03-15, priority will be provided in the following order:

- First, to veterans and eligible spouses who are also included in the groups given statutory priority for WIOA adult formula funds. This means that veterans and eligible spouses who are also recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic-skills deficient will receive first priority for services provided with WIOA adult formula funds
- Second, to non-covered persons (that is, individuals who are not veterans or eligible spouses) who are included in the groups given priority for WIOA adult formula funds
- Third, to veterans and eligible spouses who are not included in WIOA's priority groups
- Last, to non-covered persons outside the groups given priority under WIOA

The SAWDB has given the Service Providers direction to give priority to participants that are low-income, on public assistance, or are basic-skills deficient. This process follows the WIOA sec. 134(c)(3)E and 680.600 of the WIOA DOL Rule, stating that WIOA establishes a priority requirement with respect to funds allocated to a local area for adult employment and training activities.

### **Coordination of Outreach Efforts**

---

[§679.560\(c\) Describe how the board will coordinate outreach efforts across partner programs for shared customers and target populations.](#)

---

The SAWDB, working through the One-Stop Operator, will ensure that a cohesive and comprehensive outreach strategy is implemented across all WIOA-mandated partners to effectively serve shared customers and target populations.

**Title I - Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs**

Through the One-Stop Operator, the SAWDB will guide outreach efforts for Title I programs, ensuring that individuals most in need—such as economically disadvantaged adults, dislocated workers, and youth—are identified and connected with essential job training and career services. The Board will set clear expectations for outreach to underrepresented groups, ensuring they have access to the resources that support their entry or reentry into the workforce.

**Title II - Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) Programs**

The SAWDB will work with the One-Stop Operator to coordinate outreach with Title II providers, focusing on individuals with low literacy and limited English proficiency. The SAWDB will emphasize the importance of integrating basic education with workforce development, ensuring that outreach efforts highlight educational opportunities that lead directly to career advancement.

**Title III - Wagner-Peyser Employment Services**

The SAWDB will ensure that the One-Stop Operator collaborates closely with Wagner-Peyser programs to expand outreach, particularly in rural and underserved areas. This collaboration will focus on making job search assistance, labor market information, and reemployment services widely available and effectively promoted across all platforms.

**Title IV - Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)**

The SAWDB, through the One-Stop Operator, will prioritize outreach to individuals with disabilities by coordinating efforts with VR programs. The Board will ensure that outreach strategies emphasize the availability of specialized services and advocate for inclusive workforce opportunities, ensuring that all individuals have access to the resources they need to achieve employment.

**Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)**

With TANF now integrated into the one-stop system, the SAWDB will direct the One-Stop Operator to develop outreach strategies that connect TANF participants with a broad range of workforce services. The SAWDB's vision includes promoting training, education, and employment services that help TANF recipients transition to economic self-sufficiency.

**Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)**

The SAWDB will guide the One-Stop Operator in enhancing outreach to older workers through coordination with SCSEP. Outreach initiatives will be designed to highlight employment opportunities that value the experience of senior workers and promote the availability of community service positions that can lead to sustained, unsubsidized employment.

**Perkins Career and Technical Education (CTE)**

The SAWDB will ensure the One-Stop Operator collaborates with Perkins CTE programs to target students and adults pursuing technical education. The Board will stress the importance of promoting CTE as a key pathway to high-demand careers, ensuring that outreach efforts align with regional economic development priorities.

**Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Programs**

Through the One-Stop Operator, the SAWDB will ensure that outreach to low-income individuals and families is comprehensive, leveraging CSBG programs to connect these populations with workforce services that support stability and economic mobility. The Board will emphasize joint outreach efforts that integrate support services, such as housing and childcare, with employment opportunities.

**Unemployment Insurance (UI)**

The SAWDB will direct the One-Stop Operator to work with UI programs to identify individuals who can benefit from workforce services. The Board's approach will include targeted outreach to promote reemployment services and training opportunities, helping UI recipients transition back into the workforce more quickly.

**Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Employment and Training Programs**

The SAWDB will ensure that the One-Stop Operator coordinates with HUD programs to reach individuals receiving housing assistance. Outreach efforts will be designed to link stable housing with employment services, supporting the Board's vision of helping individuals achieve long-term self-sufficiency.

**Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFW)**

The SAWDB will place special emphasis on reaching Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers, directing the One-Stop Operator to collaborate with partners who serve this population. The Board's vision includes outreach strategies that address the unique needs of MSFWs, such as language barriers and the transient nature of their work. The Board will ensure that outreach efforts are culturally sensitive and that MSFWs are fully integrated into the workforce system, with access to tailored education, training, and job placement services.

By working through the One-Stop Operator, the SAWDB will ensure that all WIOA-mandated partners are engaged in a unified outreach strategy that effectively serves shared customers and target populations. This coordinated approach will maximize the impact of the workforce system, align with the Board's vision, and promote economic inclusion and opportunity for all individuals in the community.

---

## Coordination of Professional Development Activities

---

§679.560(c) Describe how professional development activities will be coordinated across all partner programs staff.

---

The SAWDB ensures that professional development activities are coordinated across all partner programs to enhance the skills and knowledge of staff, improve service delivery, and foster a cohesive workforce system. The focus is on creating a continuous learning environment where staff from different programs can share expertise, learn new techniques, and stay updated on industry trends and regulatory changes. Coordination of these activities is vital for maintaining high standards of service and ensuring that staff are equipped to meet the needs of diverse populations.

### Key elements of the coordination of professional development activities include:

#### 1. *Joint Training Initiatives:*

- The SAWDB facilitates joint training sessions that bring together staff from various partner programs, including WIOA Title I (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs), Title II (Adult Education and Literacy), Title III (Wagner-Peyser), Title IV (Vocational Rehabilitation), TANF, SNAP E&T, Veterans Services, and others. These sessions are designed to address common areas of need and ensure that all staff have a comprehensive understanding of the services offered across the workforce system.
- Example: A training session on customer service best practices might involve staff from America's Job Centers, Adult Education providers, and Vocational Rehabilitation agencies. This session could cover topics such as effective communication techniques, cultural competency, and strategies for working with individuals with disabilities or language barriers.

#### 2. *Cross-Training Programs:*

- Cross-training is a critical component of professional development, allowing staff to gain a working knowledge of the services and processes of other partner programs. This ensures that staff can provide accurate information and referrals to customers, enhancing the overall customer experience.
- Example: America's Job Center staff might be cross-trained on the eligibility criteria and services available through TANF and SNAP E&T programs, while TANF caseworkers might be trained on WIOA Title I services and job placement resources. This cross-training enables staff to guide customers through the workforce system more effectively, regardless of their initial point of contact.

**3. Use of Technology and Online Learning:**

- The SAWDB leverages technology to provide ongoing professional development opportunities through online learning platforms, webinars, and virtual workshops. This approach ensures that all partner program staff, including those in rural areas, have access to training regardless of their location.
- Example: An online course on the latest labor market trends in Southwestern New Mexico might be made available to all partner staff, allowing them to better understand the local job market and provide relevant career advice to customers. Webinars on changes to federal regulations or new program initiatives can also be recorded and shared with staff for flexible learning.

**4. Regular Partner Meetings and Workshops:**

- The SAWDB organizes regular meetings and workshops where partner program staff can come together to discuss challenges, share best practices, and participate in professional development activities. These meetings foster collaboration and ensure that all partners are aligned in their approach to workforce development.
- Example: Quarterly partner meetings might include a workshop on effective case management techniques, where staff from different programs can discuss strategies for managing caseloads, improving follow-up with customers, and coordinating services. These workshops also provide an opportunity for staff to network and build relationships that enhance collaboration.

**5. Specialized Training for Target Populations:**

- Professional development activities are tailored to the specific needs of staff working with targeted populations, such as individuals with disabilities, veterans, migrant and seasonal farmworkers, youth, and others. This specialized training ensures that staff are equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively serve these groups.
- Example: Staff working with individuals with disabilities might receive training on assistive technology, disability awareness, and strategies for supporting individuals in competitive employment. Similarly, staff working with veterans might receive training on understanding military culture, navigating veteran-specific benefits, and providing job placement services tailored to veterans.

**6. Leadership Development and Succession Planning:**

- The SAWDB emphasizes leadership development and succession planning as part of its professional development strategy. This includes training for

current and emerging leaders within the partner programs to ensure a strong leadership pipeline and continuity of services.

- Example: A leadership development program might include workshops on effective management, strategic planning, and conflict resolution. These programs help prepare mid-level managers and frontline staff for future leadership roles, ensuring that the workforce system has capable leaders at all levels.

### **7. Evaluation and Continuous Improvement:**

- The SAWDB regularly evaluates the effectiveness of professional development activities through feedback from participants, performance metrics, and customer satisfaction surveys. This evaluation helps identify areas for improvement and ensures that professional development activities remain relevant and impactful.
- Example: After a training session on new job search technologies, staff might be surveyed to assess their confidence in using the tools and the impact on customer outcomes. This feedback is used to refine future training sessions and address any gaps in knowledge or skills.

The coordinated professional development activities across all partner programs ensure that staff are well-prepared to deliver high-quality services to customers. By fostering a culture of continuous learning, cross-training, and collaboration, the SAWDB helps to create a more integrated and effective workforce system. These efforts ultimately enhance the ability of partner programs to meet the diverse needs of job seekers and employers in Southwestern New Mexico, ensuring that the workforce system is responsive, innovative, and capable of driving economic growth in the region.

### **Coordination of Referrals**

---

[§679.560\(c\) Describe how the board will coordinate customer referrals across partner programs.](#)

---

The SAWDB is committed to ensuring seamless and efficient coordination of customer referrals across partner programs within the one-stop system. Using the NMWCOS online referral system allows for real-time tracking and management of referrals, ensuring that customers are directed to the services they need without unnecessary delays.

One-Stop Operator, Giselle Palomares shared the following information:

*“Job seekers are referred to other programs depending on the platform that program requires. Some partner programs have their own referral form online and require that form to be filled out when referring a job seeker and some partners prefer a referral via email. The partner program may have in place a time frame of when they are able to contact the job seekers once their referral has been received.”*

To utilize the NMWCOS referral system, all partners are required to complete specific software training. This training ensures that all staff members are proficient in using the system to its full potential, allowing for accurate and efficient referrals. Partners not currently using NMWCOS must gain access from NMDWS and are also required to complete Security Awareness Training (SAT) annually. The SAT ensures that all data is handled securely and that partners are aligned with the state's standards for information security.

Service providers within the one-stop system are responsible for developing a comprehensive referral process that guarantees customers are promptly connected to the appropriate services. This process is designed to align services across multiple delivery systems and partners through a unified plan, ensuring that performance outcomes are consistent across all core programs. The SAWDB prioritizes meaningful, triaged referrals, which are crucial in avoiding the inefficiency of bouncing job seekers between programs if they are not yet ready for enrollment. This approach ensures that customers receive the right services at the right time, based on their individual needs.

The SAWDB has set clear expectations for follow-up and follow-through on all referrals. Service providers are expected to maintain communication with customers throughout their journey, ensuring that they are progressing and receiving the support they need to achieve their goals. This ongoing engagement is vital to the success of the referral process, as it helps to prevent gaps in service and ensures that customers are not lost in the system. By prioritizing meaningful referrals and consistent follow-up, the Board aims to provide a more cohesive and supportive experience for all job seekers within the one-stop system.

In coordination with the One-Stop Operator, the Administrative Entity developed an online referral system accessible through the EmployNM website. This system will allow all partners, even those who do not currently have access to WCOS, to refer customers and current participants to other program services. The referral process is one of the greatest factors in the State's initiative for aligned case management, as referenced in the New Mexico WIOA Combined State Plan as Alignment Strategy 4.



---

## Coordination with Other Partner Programs

---

§679.560(c) Describe any other services provided in the one-stops to support the local workforce development system and customers. Include any coordination plans or activities the board has with any other partner programs such as, AmeriCorps, Job Corps, Youth Build, Mission: Graduation, Innovate Educate, etc.

---

The SAWDB, along with its One-Stop Operator and service providers, offers a range of services to support the local workforce development system and its customers. These services are enhanced through coordinated efforts with various partner programs, such as Job Corps, Youth Build, and other community-based initiatives. The Board has established memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with the National Farmworker Jobs Program and the low-income housing program in Doña Ana County to ensure aligned services and activities.

The SAWDB also engages with economic development offices and other agencies to develop collaborative strategies that leverage resources and reduce service duplication. For example, Job Corps has previously allocated workspace at America's Job Center in Las Cruces, providing their participants with access to resources such as the NMWCOS, résumé writing services, job search assistance, and On-the-Job Training (OJT) programs. Additionally, workspaces are available for Job Corps and other partners in America's Job Centers in Silver City, Deming, Socorro, and Truth or Consequences, New Mexico.

This collaboration ensures that Job Corps youth and other program participants can seamlessly integrate into the workforce development system, benefitting from the comprehensive services offered at the centers. The SAWDB remains open to forming new partnerships with organizations that align with its workforce development mission, continually seeking opportunities to enhance service delivery.

The SAWDB's One-Stop Committee plays a crucial role in these efforts by recommending policies and providing guidance to the Administrative Entity and One-Stop Operator on coordinating with partner programs. The primary objective is to ensure that all workforce partners work in harmony, delivering streamlined services to customers and maximizing the effectiveness of the workforce development system in the region.

The SAWDB, its One-Stop Operator, and its service providers service hundreds of customers every week. With so much contact with customers comes the need to coordinate services with partners, such as Job Corps, Youth Build programs, and other

---

community-based programs. In connecting with these programs, the Board's Administrative Entity will continue to engage with economic development offices and other agencies to develop strategies for services, leverage resources, and minimize the duplication of services.

The SAWDB will continue to explore and be receptive to developing relationships with other organizations that support the mission of workforce development within the region.

The SAWDB's One-Stop Committee will recommend policy to the Board and offer guidance to the Administrative Entity and One-Stop Operator on the coordination with other partner programs. The focal point of the policy is to ensure that the workforce partners are coordinating their efforts to provide a streamlined service to customers.

The SAWDB's Administrative Entity and several of the America's Job Center partners have participated in providing technical information to The Bridge of Southern New Mexico, a community-based organization, in their development of a workforce talent strategic plan, titled the Doña Ana County/Borderplex Joint Regional Workforce Talent Development Strategic Plan. Through a community collaboration of organizations, the group worked together to identify and understand the barriers to success, plus identify eight industries and their occupational pathways.

The New Mexico National Guard Youth Challenge Academy, a state-supported program, is a 17 ½ month program that starts with a demanding 22-week quasi-military residential phase for cadets in Roswell, New Mexico. It is followed by a year of mentoring support to help the cadets maintain positive lifestyles. The program is for young men and women, ages 16 to 18, who are not currently attending school or do not have enough credits to graduate from high school. The SAWDB will work with the program to develop a pathway to transition youth who reside in the Board's seven-county area under the WIOA out-of-school youth program. This partnership will leverage federal and state resources and seek to develop more significant positive outcomes that lead to career training and job placements for the youth in the region.

### **One-Team Approach**

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act calls for a fully integrated model with Adult Education and Family Literacy, and Vocational Rehabilitation to better serve individuals and employers. The One-Team Approach is a "We" concept of how staff think about their workforce partners as one team.

Management from the different partners will develop training programs and practices to incorporate this approach into the workforce system's daily practices.

## ADMINISTRATIVE ELEMENTS

### G. Fiscal and Performance Management

---

§679.560(b)(14) Identify the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in WIOA sec. 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III).

---

#### **Disbursement of Funds**

The South Central Council of Governments is responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in WIOA sec. 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III). The South Central Council of Governments shall disburse the grant funds for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act activities at the direction of the SAWDB.

---

§679.560(b)(15) Provide a detailed description of the competitive process that will be used to award the subgrants and contracts for WIOA title I activities. (Please provide a copy of the board's procurement policy or policies, including conflict of interest provisions as a part of Attachment A.)

---

#### **Competitive Process**

The SAWDB follows the New Mexico State Procurement Code 13-1-1 through 13-1-199 NMSA 1978, and in conjunction with the requirements under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, such as, but not limited to, the procurement of one-stop operators and service providers.

The Code of Federal Regulations, Section 662.410 states the following on how the One-Stop Operator is selected.

- (a) "The Local Board, with the agreement of the chief elected official, must designate and certify One-Stop Operators in each local area.
- (b) The One-Stop Operator is designated or certified:
  - (1) Through a competitive process,
  - (2) Under an agreement between the Local Board and a consortium of entities that includes at least three or more of the required One-Stop partners identified at §662.200, or
  - (3) Under the conditions described in §§662.420 or 662.430. (WIA sec.121(d), 121(e) and 117(f)(2))
- (c) The designation or certification of the One-Stop Operator must be carried out in accordance with the "sunshine provision" at 20 CFR 661.307."

§679.560(b)(16) Provide the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor (NMDWS) and chief elected official consistent with WIOA sec. 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the local board for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under WIOA title I subtitle B, and the one-stop delivery system in the local area, in Attachment E.

### Local Performance Levels

The negotiated performance levels for PY 2024 are contained in the following table.

Performance Measures – PY 2024 & 2025	Adult	Dislocated Worker	Youth
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	79%	73.5%	67%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	80%	73.5%	64%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$8,750	\$7,500	\$4,500
Credential Attainment 4th Quarter After Exit	57%	60%	51%
Measurable Skills Gain	67%	65%	55%

§679.560(b)(17) Describe the actions the LWDB will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing workforce development board.

To work toward fulfilling the needs of employers in the area, the SAWDB will need to coordinate with its key workforce partners and employers to identify the needs and expected outcomes within the region. The Board may establish a makeshift committee to implement the region's Career Pathways Plan.

Throughout its years of performance, the SAWDB met and/or exceeded its performance measures in entered employment, average six-month earnings, retention, entered employment or education for youth, measurable skill gains, and credentials earned for the Adult program. The credential attainment performance has dipped for the Dislocated Worker and Youth programs, and staff is working with service providers to identify and remedy this issue. The Board has been very successful in many facets and will continue to pursue improvements in its performance and the performance of its service and training providers. An example of innovation that pursues high performance is Youth Industry Forums, a modified version of the SEEDS initiative that board members and staff learned about from Workforce Solutions Cameron while attending a Texas

Workforce Conference. At an Industry Forum, the Youth program partners with a local school that hosts an industry-specific panel. The panel of local industry professionals provides students with insight into different careers through their personal stories. These forums will allow the Southwestern region to highlight career exploration by facilitating conversations between students and industry experts.

The SAWDB will also periodically examine its vision, structure, future initiatives, and partnerships as it develops strategies for its programs and how it can best support economic development and the employers in the region. It will convene stakeholders, align its partner program, and seek to increase capacity among partners.

At the board level, the SAWDB has incorporated professional development items on its meeting agenda to educate its members on the workforce system. Testimonials are also incorporated into the meetings. Both participants and employers will continue to provide SAWDB members with first-hand accounts of their experience in the WIOA program.

---

[§679.560\(b\)\(18\) Describe how training services outlined in WIOA sec. 134 will be provided through the use of individual training accounts, including, if contracts for training services will be used, how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of individual training accounts, and how the local board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided.](#)

---

In accordance with WIOA Section 134(b), Local Employment Training Activities, funds allocated under the Act for adults and dislocated workers will provide for Career Services, Individual Training Accounts, On-the-Job Training, and Customized Training. Individuals will be screened for eligibility, as provided in the Act. Individuals will receive an orientation of services, assessment of skill levels, supportive service needs, labor exchange services, referrals to partner programs, labor market information, as well as a list of eligible training providers with customer choice instructions for those entering training programs.

The SAWDB will require that service providers maintain a customer choice document signed by the participant outlining the customer choice requirements, as required by the Act. This requirement will be monitored through the monitoring process on an annual basis.

§679.560(c) Boards may implement a pay-for-performance contract strategy for certain elements, for which the board may reserve and use not more than 10 percent of the total funds allocated to the board under WIOA Section 128(b). Describe any plans the board may have to use pay-for-performance contracts to communicate performance expectations to service providers.

---

As a preliminary phase to issuing a request for proposals involving pay-for-performance contracts, the SAWDB may explore the benefits and methods of issuing such contracts with its Administrative Entity and legal counsel. The Board may request technical assistance from NMDWS to ensure that it follows federal and state regulations, as it relates to pay-for-performance contracts.

§679.560(c) The local board grant agreements require boards to achieve or exceed a Minimum Training Expenditure Requirement of 60%. Local boards should obligate a minimum of 80% and expend a minimum of 40% of current year funding by the end of the third quarter of the program year. Please report on the local board's expected obligation and expenditure rates for PY 2023.

---

The SAWDB prepares a 15-month budget beginning in July and ending in September of the following year. Local boards are allowed two years to use their funds. The SAWDB intends to achieve or exceed the minimum training expenditure requirement of 40%, as well as achieve or exceed the minimum annual obligation and expenditure requirements of 80% and 40%, respectively.

The SAWDB has traditionally used at least 50% of its Adult and Dislocated Worker funds for training. It is anticipated that the Board will incrementally increase its participant expenditure amount to 60%. The Board plans to achieve this requirement by establishing minimum expenditure levels in its service provider's contract. The Board will also use a monthly desk review process to ensure that expenditures are consistent with the contractual level. Information will be reviewed by the SAWDB's Monitoring/Performance Committee and report the information to the Board. If the service provider is not meeting the minimum requirements, the SAWDB's Administrative Entity will request an action plan outlining the service provider's steps to remedy the deficiency.

---

§679.560(b)(20) Describe how one-stop centers are planning to implement or transition to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA and by one-stop partners.

---

The SAWDB currently has the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act's Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth (Title IB) programs integrated with the Wagner-Peyser program in the One-Stops located in Deming, Las Cruces, Silver City, Socorro, and Sunland Park, New Mexico.

The Board has determined that there are significant barriers in the way customers are serviced among the different partners and programs. The WIOA Wagner-Peyser and Title IB programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) have and will continue to use NMWCOS, which is capable of registering individuals into one system. The issue lies with the New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and Commission for the Blind and Adult Education Services partners because they use different online client management software that does not interface with NMWCOS.

The SAWDB, through its One-Stop Operator, will promote the use of the NMWCOS with workforce partners for referrals, intakes, and case management. They will also evaluate systems and propose an interface system that will work for all partnering programs.

## **H. Definitions**

---

§679.560(c) Because the State has chosen not to define "additional assistance," as it relates to WIOA Youth program eligibility, each local board has the responsibility for determining its own definition of this eligibility category. If the local board wishes to use this eligibility category, a local policy must be developed that specifies what conditions must be met for a youth to require "additional assistance" and what documentation is needed to demonstrate this eligibility category. In each area, not more than five percent of the in-school-youth under WIOA Section 129(3)(B) may be eligible under "individual who requires additional assistance" to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment. If applicable, provide the definitions the board uses for "requires additional assistance" and a copy of the related local policy as a part of **Attachment A**.

---

The SAWDB created Policy 18-03.1 Youth Requires Additional Assistance for the WIOA Youth program. This Board defines a person who requires "additional assistance" as "an individual (including a youth with a disability) who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or secure and hold employment." A copy of this policy is listed under Attachment A and contains what conditions must be met for youth to

require “additional assistance” and what documentation is needed to demonstrate this eligibility category.

---

§679.560(c)The state defines “basic skills deficient” for Adults and Youth as follows.

---

- For Adult – An individual who is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual’s family, or in society.
- For Youth – An individual who computes or solves problems, reads, writes, or speaks English at or below the eighth-grade level on a generally accepted standardized test or comparable score on a criterion-referenced test. Please describe the process the board uses to test individuals for basic skills deficiency.

The SAWDB authorizes its service providers to use WorkKeys Conversion Table for determining basic-skills deficiency (BSD) for Adult and Dislocated Workers individuals. A score of 4 or below is considered basic-skills deficient. For youth, the Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE) is used and anything below 8.9 is considered basic-skills deficient. The TABE is administered at intake to all youth participants and is used to determine the need for educational assistance and/or eligibility reasons. The assessment is administered through the Online TABE system through DRC INSIGHT. Youth participants are initially assessed with the locator test that determines the appropriate level of the TABE 11/12 the participant will continue with. TABE results administered by partner agencies for referred participants are used if assessed is within the last six months. Tutoring is provided to participants testing basic skills deficient to increase skills and a post-TABE is administered within 6 months to determine a measurable skill gain of at least one educational functioning level. Post-TABE can continue up until one year of program participation. With the need for remote services, the youth provider is in the process of certifying youth staff to conduct remote proctoring of the TABE assessment.

As stated in WIOA Section 3 Basic Skills Deficient is defined as follows:

**BASIC SKILLS DEFICIENT.**—The term “basic skills deficient” means, with respect to an individual— (A) who is a youth, that the individual has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test; or (B) who is a youth or adult, that the individual is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak



English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society.

**I. Note on Regional Planning**

---

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act identifies specific requirements for any planning that will occur across local areas, i.e. "regional areas." This requirement does not apply in New Mexico as the New Mexico WIOA State Combined State Plan designates our existing four local areas as the regional planning areas; however, LWDBs are encouraged to describe regional economies in their local area and provide strategies of how unique regional economies will be addressed.

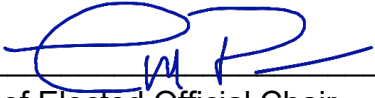
---

**J. Assurances**

#	Assurance	Indicate Yes / No
1.	The LWDB obtained input into the development of the Local Plan and provided an opportunity for comment on the plan by representatives of local boards and chief elected officials, businesses, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, the entities responsible for planning or administrating the core programs and other programs included in the Plan, other primary stakeholders, and the general public, and the Local Plan is available and accessible to the general public.	Yes
2.	The LWDB has established a policy identifying circumstances that may present a conflict of interest for a local board member, or the entity or class of officials that the member represents, and procedures to resolve such conflicts.	Yes
3.	The LWDB has established a policy to provide to the public (including individuals with disabilities) access to meetings of local boards and local boards, and information regarding activities of local boards, such as data on board membership and minutes.	Yes
4.	The LWDB has established fiscal control and fund accounting procedures necessary to ensure the proper accounting for funds paid to the local boards for adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs to carry out workforce investment activities under chapters 2 and 3 of subtitle B.	Yes
5.	The Federal funds received to carry out a core program will not be expended for any purpose other than for activities authorized with respect to such funds under that core program.	Yes
6.	Service providers have a referral process in place for directing Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) to DVOP services, when appropriate.	Yes
7.	The LWDB has implemented a policy to ensure a process is in place for referring veterans with significant barriers to employment to career services provided by the JVSG program's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist.	Yes
8.	The LWDB established procedures that set forth criteria to be used by chief elected officials for the appointment of local workforce investment board members.	Yes
9.	Priority of Service for covered persons is provided for each of the Title I programs: and	Yes
10.	The LWDB has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 2900 and WIOA 184(a)(3).	Yes

ORIGINAL RECORD OF ASSURANCES AND SIGNATURES ON FILE AT  
600 HWY 195, ELEPHANT BUTTE, NM 87935

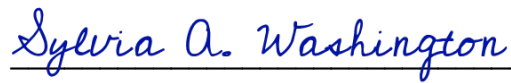
Signatures:



\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Elected Official Chair

01/31/2025

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



\_\_\_\_\_  
SAWDB Chair

01/28/2025

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **K. Attachments**

**Attachment A** Provide on a flash drive, copies of all LWDB policies relevant to the implementation of WIOA. (Refer to Section III of these guidelines, Process for Plan Modifications, for information on required updates to this section.)

The following policies are current in the Southwestern region and housed on the America's Job Center Southwestern Area regional website:

<https://www.employnm.com/policies-regulations>

To view the policies, use the hyperlinks below.

- 13-01.1 [Contract Signature Authority Policy](#)
- 14-1 [Electronic Signature Policy](#)
- 15-1 [Contract Procedure Policy](#)
- 17-01 [Oversight Monitoring Policy](#)
- 17-03.4 [On-the-Job Training Policy](#)
  - [On-the-Job Training Policy Addendum #1](#)
  - [On-the-Job Training Guidance Letter DWS 18-006](#)
  - [SWAGL 22-02 OJT Reimbursement Waiver](#)
- 17-08.6 [Individual Training Account Policy](#)
  - [ITA Addendum No. 1 – Film Industry and Digital Media](#)
  - [SWAGL 15-1.3 ITA Waiver Request Letter](#)
  - [SWAGL 17-02 Occupation in Demand/Labor Market Analysis](#)
  - [LLSIL PY24 Income Table](#)
- 17-09.6 [Supportive Services Policy](#)
  - [SWAGL 19-02 Laptop Purchases](#)
- 17-11 [Eligible Training Provider List Policy](#)
- 17-16 [Self-Sufficiency Policy](#)
- 17-17 [One-Stop Delivery System Policy](#)
- 17-18.2 [Follow-Up Services Policy](#)
- 17-19.1 [Electronic Files Content & Records Management Policy](#)
- 17-20 [Incumbent Worker Training Activities Policy](#)
- 17-21 [Performance Policy](#)
- 17-22 [Conflict of Interest Policy](#)
- 18.01 [Contract Approval Authority Policy](#)
- 18-02 [Co-Enrollment Policy](#)
- 18-03.1 [Youth Additional Assistance Policy](#)
- 18-04.1 [Youth Activities Policy](#)
- 18-05.1 [Referral Process Policy](#)
- 18-06 [Veteran's Referral Process Policy](#)

- 18-07.1 [Use of Assessments Policy](#)
- 18-08 [SAWDB Meeting Accessibility Policy](#)
- 18-09 [Governance Policy](#)
- 18-10.1 [Grievance and Complaint Policy](#)
- 18-11 [Internet Usage and Equipment Policy](#)
- 18-12 [Workforce Center Purchases Policy](#)
- 18-13.1 [Incentive Policy](#)
- 18-14 [Eligibility Policy](#)
  - [STAG – Attachment to Eligibility](#)
  - [Basic Skills Deficiency Definition for Adults/DW and Youth](#)
- 19-01.1 [Customized Training Policy](#)
- 19-02.1 [Required Information in Communications Policy](#)
- 19-03 [Supplemental Wage Data Policy](#)
- 19-04 [Transitional Jobs Policy](#)
- 21-01 [Individual Career Services Policy](#)
- 24-01 [Stevens Amendment Policy](#)
- 24-02 [Firewall Policy](#)

[DWS 16-005 One-Stop Common Identifier](#)

[SWAGL 20-01 Workforce Center Requisition and Purchase Order Process](#)

[SWAGL 20-02 Information Technology for Computers](#)

[SAWDB Financial Policies Manual](#)

[WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Services STAG July 2015](#)

**Attachment B** Provide a full roster of local board membership, including the group each member represents. Include a list of all standing committees, along with a description of the purpose of each committee. (Refer to Section III of these guidelines, Process for Plan Modifications, for information on required updates to this section.)

The SAWDB consists of 18 members. The following is a full roster of the SAWDB membership including the group each member represents. You will also find a list of all standing committees, and a description of the purpose of each committee.

Click here to view online: <https://www.employnm.com/sawdb-membership-admin>

NAME	SECTOR
Cassie Arias-Ward	Agency Partner: Economic Development
Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez	Agency Partner: HUD
Alisa Estrada	Private Sector: Health Care and Social Assistance
Jacqueline S. Fryar	Private Sector: Retail Trade
Conor Kiely	Private Sector: Mining
Magdaleno Manzanarez	Agency Partner: Education and Training
Marcos Martinez	Agency Partner: WIOA Title III, Veterans
Michael Olguin, Jr.	Private Sector: Finance and Insurance
Joshua Orozco	Private Sector: Manufacturing
Erik Padilla	Agency Partner: Vocational Rehabilitation
Anton Salome	Private Sector: Other Services
Debbie Schoonover	Agency Partner: Workforce & Private Sector: At-Large
Kim Skinner	Private Sector: Other Services
Marlene Thomas-Herrera	Agency Partner: Education and Training & Labor
JC Trujillo	Private Sector: Health Care and Social Assistance
Mary Ulrich	Agency Partner: Education and Training
Sylvia Washington	Private Sector: Health Care and Social Assistance, Workforce
Gary Whitehead	Private Sector: Real Estate and Rental and Leasing

## Standing Committees and Descriptions

The SAWDB currently has seven standing committees:

- Disabilities Committee
- Executive Committee
- Monitoring/Performance Committee
- One-Stop Partner Committee
- Planning Committee
- Policy Committee
- Youth and Youth Adult Committee

**Disabilities Committee:** This committee will provide information and assist with operational and other issues relating to the provision of services to individuals with disabilities, including issues relating to compliance with section 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding providing programmatic and physical access to the services, programs, and activities of the one-stop delivery system, as well as appropriate training for staff on providing supports for or accommodations to, and finding employment opportunities for, individuals with disabilities.

**Executive Committee:** This committee has the responsibility for reviewing and coordinating the work of the other committees prior to the Chair of those committees reporting to the SAWDB. This committee is accountable to and reports all actions taken to the Board. Any action taken by the Executive Committee must be in accordance with the SAWDB's mission statement and is subject to ratification by the Board.

**Monitoring/Performance Committee:** The responsibility of this committee is to oversee and evaluate workforce development areas and local programs for compliance with rules and regulations to determine program success or failure. Additionally, it will review and approve state and local performance goals, review monitoring and performance reports, make recommendations for recognition, award incentive grants for program success, take corrective action, and/or impose sanctions for non-compliance or program failure. The goal of this committee is to assure the continuous improvement of State training programs.

**One-Stop Partner Committee:** This committee will facilitate the integration of all the America's Job Centers in the Southwestern area. They will make efforts to minimize program duplication, facilitate coordination and communication between agencies, employers, and training providers. The committee will research and identify employment and training activities, services available, and facilitate the interaction between the

government and private sector to assure they do not overlap and are effective and efficient to promote a clear strategy leading to program success.

**Planning Committee:** This committee has responsibility for reviewing and making recommendations pertaining to workforce development planning and operation. This includes reviewing state and local plans, resources for those workforce areas, and identification of education needs for services and training. The Planning Committee shall develop a Local Plan with Board approval and CEO concurrence and annually review and update said plan as necessary, as outlined in the Local Plan.

**Policy Committee:** This committee is responsible for reviewing and recommending local board policy to the SAWDB that supports the objectives of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. The local policies provide direction to service providers, other partners within the public workforce system, and the public. The committee reviews requests for new policies, modifications, or rescissions. The committee will meet semi-annually or more frequently.

**Youth and Young Adult Committee:** This committee will provide recommendations to the SAWDB on matters related the WIOA Youth program, its related policies, measures, and practices. The committee shall also review the youth services provider’s performance reports, to include quarterly performance measures.

**Attachment C** Provide a list of the one-stop centers in the local area, including addresses and phone numbers. Indicate the one-stop operator for each site and whether it is a comprehensive or satellite center. Include a list of the one-stop partners physically located at each of the one-stop centers in the local board area, and the services provided by these partners.

Click here to view online: <https://www.employnm.com/offices>

OFFICE LOCATION	PARTNER AGENCIES
<p><b>Alamo Navajo Reservation</b>                      Alamo Navajo School SAWDB                      Highway 169, Mile Marker 26                      Alamo, NM 87825                      575-854-2543 ext. 1403  <b>Managed by:</b> ANSBI  <b>DESIGNATION TYPE:</b> Satellite</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alamo Navajo School SAWDB, Inc.</li> </ul>



OFFICE LOCATION	PARTNER AGENCIES
<p><b>America's Job Center – Deming</b>            322 E. Oak St.            Deming, NM 88030            575-546-0192  <b>One-Stop Operator:</b> Equus  <b>DESIGNATION TYPE:</b> Satellite</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NMDWS</li> <li>• Equus</li> <li>• MET</li> </ul>
<p><b>America's Job Center – Las Cruces</b>            226 S. Alameda Blvd.            Las Cruces, NM 88005            575-524-6250  <b>One-Stop Operator:</b> Equus  <b>DESIGNATION TYPE:</b> Comprehensive</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NMDWS</li> <li>• Equus</li> <li>• MET</li> </ul>
<p><b>America's Job Center – Silver City</b>            420 W. Broadway St.            Silver City, NM 88061            575-538-3737  <b>One-Stop Operator:</b> Equus  <b>DESIGNATION TYPE:</b> Satellite</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NMDWS</li> <li>• Equus</li> </ul>
<p><b>America's Job Center – Socorro</b>            198 Neel Ave.            Socorro, NM 87801            575-835-0067  <b>One-Stop Operator:</b> Equus  <b>DESIGNATION TYPE:</b> Satellite</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NMDWS</li> <li>• Equus</li> </ul>
<p><b>America's Job Center – Sunland Park</b>            1500 Appaloosa Dr. Ste. A-160            Sunland Park, NM 88063            575-618-1249  <b>One-Stop Operator:</b> Equus  <b>DESIGNATION TYPE:</b> Satellite</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NMDWS</li> <li>• Equus</li> <li>• MET</li> </ul>
<p><b>America's Job Center – Truth or Consequences</b>            1705 N. Date St.            Truth or Consequences, NM 87901            575-956-9200  <b>One-Stop Operator:</b> Equus  <b>DESIGNATION TYPE:</b> Satellite</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equus</li> <li>• *NMDWS visits once a week</li> </ul>

**KEY SERVICES PROVIDED BY AGENCY PARTNERS**

- Job candidate search
- Learn strategies for finding a job
- Prepare for job interviews
- Effective résumé
- Learn how to start your own business
- Explore your career interests
- Learn about jobs and careers suitable for you
- Learn about jobs in demand and rates of pay
- Get information about employer in local area
- Learn what employers expect from their employees
- Get an assessment of your skills
- Job referral and placement
- Veteran employment services
- ACT WorkKeys
- ACT Career Ready 101
- Individual Training Accounts
- On-the-Job Training
- Occupational training
- Labor market information
- Out-of-area job search assistance
- Pre-screened job applicants
- Search for veteran candidates
- Training cost reimbursements for your business
- Recruiting strategies
- Job Corps services
- WIOA youth services
- Adult Education and Literacy services
- Vocational Rehabilitation services

**Attachment D** Provide copies of any draft or completed cooperative agreements, resource-sharing agreements, and memoranda of understanding relevant to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

Click here to view online: <https://www.employnm.com/policies-regulations>

- [MOU: PY24 SAWDB & AJC Partners](#)
- [IFA: New Mexico Workforce Connection, Las Cruces](#)
- [MOU: City of Las Cruces](#)
- [MOU: Community Action Agency of Southern NM](#)
- [MOU: Motivation, Education, and Training \(MET\)](#)
- [MOU: Tierra del Sol Housing Authority](#)

**Attachment E** Provide the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor (NMDWS) and chief elected official consistent with WIOA sec. 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the local board for measuring the performance of the local Fiscal Agent (where appropriate), eligible

providers under WIOA title I subtitle B, and the one-stop delivery system in the local area, for PY18 and PY19. (Refer to Section III of these guidelines, Process for Plan Modifications, for information on required updates to this section.)

[Click here to view Section G. of this plan for the negotiated performance measures.](#)

## **Public Comment**

The 30-day public comment period began on September 23, 2024, and ended on October 22, 2024. The legal notice for public comment was published in the following newspapers of general circulation and sent to WIOA service providers within the Southwestern region of New Mexico, as well as on the [www.employnm.com](http://www.employnm.com) website.

- Albuquerque Journal