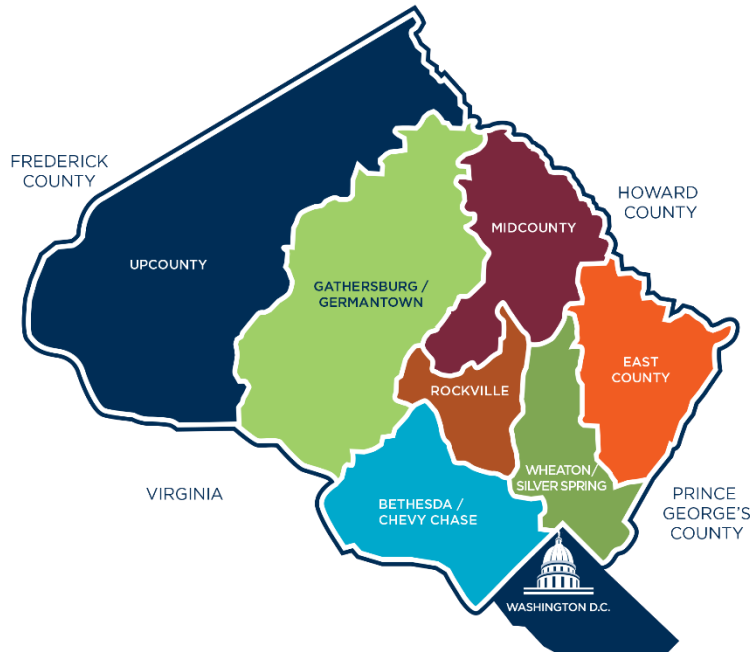# MONTGOMERY COUNTY
LOCAL AREA WORKFORCE PLAN
2016-2020

CORE PARTNERS

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION TO THE PLAN

Montgomery County's Workforce Development System is currently undergoing a transformative change. This change requires a paradigm shift in the delivery of workforce services, with a focus on collaboration, alignment of services, and customer-centric strategic design.

WorkSource Montgomery, Inc. (WSM), a new non-profit charged with operations for the Workforce Development Board (WDB), was established as part of Montgomery County Executive Isiah "Ike" Leggett's economic development plan with the goal to promote job training and placement for county workers and meet the workforce needs of county employers. The system established as part of this plan places responsibility for the county's workforce system in the hands of business leaders and community stakeholders.

The system is comprised of two boards: WorkSource Montgomery Board, which oversees operations for the non-profit, and the WDB itself, which directs the policies and workforce vision for the county. Together, the two boards will direct a robust system of talent development aligned to the future and current economic development priorities within the county.

In his December 2014 inaugural address, County Executive Leggett outlined a six-point economic development plan designed to position Montgomery County for the future. One key initiative identified was to consolidate all workforce programs and to develop innovative ways to address both community workforce needs and market

Montgomery County's Workforce Development System is currently undergoing a transformative change. This change requires a paradigm shift in the delivery of workforce services, with a focus on collaboration, alignment of services, and customer-centric strategic design.

demands. Based on the Call to Action developed by community input convened by Montgomery Moving Forward in October 2015, County Executive Leggett's initiative to transform the workforce system in the county moved forward with County Council approval to establish the non-profit WSM as the operating arm for the recently seated WDB. Since then, WSM has been launched as the workforce development resource for county employers and jobseekers, and much progress has been made on strategic priorities for the WDB and WSM.

A major emphasis of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) is improving coordination between the workforce development, economic development, adult education, literacy, and vocational rehabilitation systems. The alignment of WIOA and the County Executive's vision creates an immense opportunity to create a transformational system that is easy to access and navigate by employers and individuals alike.

The WDB plans to draw on its partnerships with its industry and economic development partners, educational providers, and community stakeholders to create a results-driven talent development system through this plan.

In creating this new, robust, and inclusive workforce development system, WSM developed a strong vision, mission, and value proposition to guide delivery of services.

OUR VISION is that economic development, education, and the system of talent development are aligned both locally and regionally to sustain a vibrant economy in the county.

OUR MISSION is that the WDB helps businesses succeed through workforce services by:
- Meeting the talent attraction, development, and retention needs of strategic industries.
- Meeting the needs of the underemployed and unemployed.
- Developing career pathways that lead to sustainable wage jobs and support a thriving economy.

The WDB has adopted the following **VALUE PROPOSITION**: We are consultative in meeting employers' needs and enhancing the customer experience through innovation, knowledge, quality, professionalism, and being forward looking and anticipatory in meeting businesses' needs.

Members of the WDB, partners and the staff believe in and are passionate about the following shared principles, beliefs, and priorities:

Leadership. We will have the courage to lead from the front and shape the future. We believe in our role as stewards of the public trust and the future of the people we serve.

Change. We believe in bringing to bear all relevant talents and resources to provide opportunities for our customers to succeed and thrive, one person and one business at a time.

Service Excellence. We will give the best and world class service and achieve excellence each passing day.

Integrity. We believe in living our values every minute of every day. We believe in doing the right thing right the first time for our customers and always honoring our commitments.

Montgomery County has a proud history of government and community programs to help employers, and unemployed and underemployed citizens. The vision of WSM is to facilitate the convening and coordination of existing workforce services, and augment delivery where gaps may occur. By developing a strong, coordinated workforce ecosystem in the county, employers and job seekers will be able to more effectively utilize and leverage the system to grow and maintain a strong economy based on quality talent.

The WDB's strategic priorities for the next two years (WIOA Program Years 2016 – 2017) are as follows:
- Increase business satisfaction and trust through efficient, effective, and accountable workforce services.
- Focus on Industry Alliances to create substantial impact and outcomes for the targeted industry.
- Develop a deep understanding of the skills gap, e.g., the gulf between the skills job

seekers currently have and the skills employers need to fill their open positions. Execute strategies/programs and initiatives to address the skills gap.

- Improve the Montgomery County Job Center operations to make them the 'go to' place for both business and jobseekers.

The WDB serves as strategic leader and community convener of employers, workforce development professionals, education providers, economic development agencies and other stakeholders to drive innovation, catalyze change, align systems, and advocate on behalf of partner investments at the state, regional and local level. The WDB, cognizant of the powerful role ascribed to them in the law, operates independently of other entities and exercises strong leadership in the workforce development agenda and strategy of the state, region, and local area. With a solid role as change agent, the WDB leads the development of a strong, vibrant regional economy where businesses thrive and people want to live and work.

"Because we have so many of the pieces of the puzzle already in place, I think [the workforce system has] the opportunity – and the obligation – to become a model for the region."

Luisa Montero, Director
Maryland Multicultural Youth Center

The WDB believes that the county is well positioned to have a robust workforce development system that is designed to meet the needs of economic development, business, and industry, and the unemployed by understanding and forecasting the long and short term skills employers need in a qualified workforce. These skill demands will be addressed by a delivery system that is positioned to meet a wide variety of needs for a diverse population.

The following local plan for workforce development was developed by a Planning Team convened by the WDB. This team was made up of all the required WIOA partners and programs in the state's WIOA combined plan, as well as other key stakeholders in Montgomery County whose organizations, through their mission, connect to workforce development.

The following plan outlines Montgomery County's coordination of workforce activities and strategies across:

- WIOA Title I – Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth;
- WIOA Title II – Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program;
- The Wagner-Peyser Act Program;
- The Vocational Rehabilitation Program;
- The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program; and
- The Jobs for Veterans State Grant Program

SECTION 1: STRATEGIC PLANNING

A. Regional Economic Conditions

Montgomery County is in the Silver Spring-Frederick-Rockville, MD statistical division and is a part of the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV statistical area, which creates a dynamic economic landscape. The region, which includes Frederick, Montgomery, and Prince George's Counties, is economically dominated by federal government and their contractors, as well as a large science and engineering base. The area was ranked as the second best High-Tech Center in the country by the American City Business Journals, and provides a hotbed of research universities, think tanks, and non-profit organizations. In addition, the region is a top international tourism destination, which fuels robust hospitality sectors in the area.

The total employment for the region (Silver Spring-Frederick-Rockville, MD statistical division) was 670,989 in May 2016 and is represented in Table 1. Montgomery County constitutes a significant portion of the employment in the region.

Table 1: Regional Industry Supersector Employment.

Industry Supersectors	Washington MSA Jobs	% Change 2015-2016	Silver Spring Division Jobs	Montgomery County Jobs
Total Nonfarm	3,232,300	2.3%	595,300	451,809
Mining, Logging and Construction	158,900	7.3%	35,900	23,621
Manufacturing	52,500	-0.2%	17,300	11,219
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	410,500	3.6%	78,900	12,359
Information	75,100	-2.7%	12,600	12,359
Financial Activities	154,700	1.4%	39,000	30,479
Professional and Business Services	735,700	2.4%	125,000	98,510
Educational and Health Services	424,700	1.7%	88,100	66,767
Leisure and Hospitality	320,500	4.8%	59,700	40,257
Other Services	199,400	1.6%	32,400	22,307
Government	700,300	0.7%	109,600	88,683

Sources: Bureau of Labor Statistics for May 2016, Maryland DLLR Montgomery County Fact Sheet (2013 data).

In the greater Washington metropolitan area, professional and business services is the largest base of employment, followed by government. Mining, logging, and construction has shown the largest employment growth in the past year, followed by trade and leisure. Both the Silver Spring Division and Montgomery County follows the same employment and industry patterns as the Washington metropolitan area.

Montgomery County is a significant economic driver of Maryland labor patterns. In May 2016, county employers posted 47,105 job openings, creating more job demand than any other county in the state. Despite the significant opportunity in the county, there are not enough individuals in the county to fill those positions. In May 2016, there were only 17,792 potential candidates in the

labor exchange for the county. Thus, there were 2.64 times more jobs than candidates.[1] County employers have substantial need for support in finding talent.

Key Industries in Montgomery County

Montgomery County has strong industry presence across several sectors, providing a variety of opportunities at all educational and skill levels.

Table 2: Top 10 Industries in Montgomery County.

Industry	Number of Employees	FY16 Job Postings	Number of Establishments	Annual Growth	Location Quotient
Professional and Technical Services	61,576	17,332	6,256	2.4%	2.21
Healthcare and Social Assistance	58,383	18,856	3,596	1.5%	0.98
Retail Trade	45,565	8,046	2,616	1.5%	0.89
Accommodation and Food Service	33,218	7,902	1,824	1.7%	0.79
Administrative, Support, Waste Mgt, and Remediation	30,000	2,821	1,958	-0.1%	1.05
Construction	23,710	873	2,421	1.5%	1.16
Other Services, Except Public Administration	22,642	2,067	7,467	1.5%	1.60
Finance and Insurance	19,240	8,929	1,567	-1.7%	1.02
Information	12,625	4,392	588	2.2%	1.38
Manufacturing	11,310	6,241	423	0.9%	0.28

Sources: Burning Glass (postings from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016), DLLR Growth Industry Tool (2014 data).

Table 2 shows key industry indicators. The number of job openings shows the current demand of employers; growth patterns gives insight into which subsectors are likely to see future expansion and additional need of talent. Location quotient analysis shows how concentrated current employment is in a particular industry in the county relative to the entire country.

As seen in the table, Professional and Technical Services is the highest employed industry in the county, followed by Healthcare and Social Assistance. The Healthcare and Social Assistance industry had the highest job openings in the past year, followed by Professional and Technical Services. The data shows that the highest concentration of employers in Montgomery County is under Other Services, followed by Professional and Technical Services. Professional and Technical Services has the largest annual growth, followed by Accommodation and Food Service, while Finance and Insurance is seeing decline.

We can gain a deeper understanding of each key sector through analyzing their subsectors. For many of these subsectors, Montgomery County has the highest numbers in the state. In Table 3[2], data points that are marked with a (*) indicate the highest number within the state.

---

[1] Maryland Workforce Exchange Area Profile for Montgomery County. http://mwejobs.maryland.gov.
[2] Employer and Employee counts based on Quarter 4, 2015 data. Postings based on FY2016 data.

Table 3. Key Subsectors in Montgomery County.

Subsector	Employers	Employees	Postings	Wages
Accommodation and Food Service				
Traveler Accommodation	117	3,662	3,408*	$18.15
Restaurants and Other Eating Places	1,612*	28,130	2,517	$10.05
Administrative, Support, Waste Management, and Remediation				
Business Support Services	140	755	1,266	$27.78
Employment Services	287*	7,117	568*	$27.33
Services to Buildings and Dwellings	960*	13,301*	417*	$16.50
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services				
Scientific Research and Development Svcs	399*	15,671*	4,372*	$51.18
Management, Scientific and Technical Consulting	1,559*	11,919*	1,822	$57.45
Architectural, Engineering and Related Svcs	494*	6,552*	1,261	$56.33
Other Professional, Scientific, and Technical Svcs	275*	3,002*	947*	$26.13
Computer Systems Design and Related Svcs	1,680*	17,145*	769	$60.43
Other Services, Except Public Administration				
Personal Care Services	438	3,605*	295	$13.13
Business, Professional, Labor, Political and Similar Orgs	242*	4,187*	241*	$46.53*
Automotive Repair and Maintenance	419	2,591	141	$24.35*
Manufacturing				
Pharmaceutical and Medicine Manufacturing	27*	3,222*	1,421*	$75.15*
Information				
Newspaper, Periodical, Book and Directory Publishers	100*	1,448	1,761*	$41.23
Cable and Other Subscription Programming	10*	1,963*	722	$57.13*
Software Publishers	103*	1,714*	475	$47.83
Wired Telecommunications Carriers	50*	3,630*	354*	$42.30
Healthcare and Social Assistance				
General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	21	13,258	4,311	$32.85
Offices of Other Health Practitioners	463*	2,930*	1,398*	$25.38
Continuing Care and Assisted Living Facilities	105*	5,816	908*	$16.05
Offices of Physicians	1,179*	10,247*	800	$53.08
Finance and Insurance				
Insurance Carriers	82*	3,785	3,602*	$45.35
Depository Credit Intermediation	359*	4,124*	2,555	$34.00
Construction				
Building Equipment Contractors	483*	6,856	294	$34.95
Nonresidential Building Construction	181*	5,108*	184	$45.73
Retail Trade				
Department Stores	48	6,296	1,695*	$11.95*
Grocery Stores	290	11,233*	1,204*	$14.53
Health and Personal Care Stores	312	2,856	534*	$22.28
Clothing Stores	258*	3,067	476*	$10.00

Sources: Maryland Workforce Exchange Industry Profiles, Burning Glass.

A location quotient analysis clearly shows that the presence and/or proximity of government institutions and agencies such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) have encouraged the development and clustering of **scientific and technical consulting** industries in the county. Biotechnology research and development, with a location quotient of 18.7, is the most highly concentrated industry in the county; while science and technology consulting (4.0) is also significant.

Health care services is not as concentrated, but is a major employer in the county. Employment in this section is expected to grow by nearly 11,000 jobs through 2022, as an aging population requires more services (employment in nursing and residential care facilities is expected to grow 59% over the time period).[3]

The county is also home to a particularly high concentration of jobs in **information and communications technology**, driven again by the proximity to government and business needs.

The WDB will focus efforts on analyzing trends within these subsectors and providing services and industry-led initiatives targeted within these sectors. This data shows a complex and dynamic economic landscape that will guide employment and training activities in the county.

Montgomery County is considered an epicenter of biotechnology and has emerged as a life sciences hub. The county is home to over 300 biotech companies, 10,000 highly educated biotech workers, and key federal research and regulatory institutions, such as the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the Federal Drug Administration (FDA), the National Institute of Standards of Technology (NIST), and the Walter Reed Army Institute.[4]

Growth in biotechnology is expected to grow and represents a cross-industry sector. WSM has identified elements of key industry sectors to be included in BioTech in Table 4.

Table 4: BioTech Industry.

Industries	SubSectors
Manufacturing	Medical Device and Equipment Manufacturers
	Pharmaceuticals and Therapeutics
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	Architectural, Engineering, and Related Services
	Scientific Research and Development Services
	Management, Scientific, and Technical Consulting Services
Wholesale Trade	Professional and Commercial Equipment and Supplies

---

[3] Maryland Department of Labor Licensing and Regulation (DLLR). "Workforce Region Industry Projections - Maryland Occupational Projections - 2012-2022 - Workforce Information & Performance."

[4] Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation. "Biohealth/BioSciences."

Based on a compilation of data, the key industries WSM will target are:
1. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (with a focus on Cybersecurity/IT)
2. Healthcare and Social Assistance
3. Hospitality (including Retail, Accommodation, and Food Service)
4. Biotechnology
5. Other Services
6. Construction
7. Public Administration

Occupational Analysis

The targeted occupations consist of a variety of occupational groupings across industry sectors. The top 10 occupational groups, seen in Table 5, represent jobs within high-growth or high-demand industries and will be a priority of the WDB.

Table 5: Key Occupational Groups.

Occupational Group	Estimated Employment	FY16 Job Openings	Location Quotient	Average Salary
Office and Administrative Support	70,700	10,759	0.97	$41,485
Sales and Related	40,950	11,260	0.85	$44,440
Business and Financial Operations	38,160	9,799	1.66	$85,631
Management	35,210	13,788	1.55	$132,527
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	31,010	13,895	1.17	$101,515
Computer and Mathematical	30,400	21,382	2.35	$97,954
Food Preparation and Serving Related	29,630	4,091	0.72	$24,209
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	18,460	923	1.25	$28,318
Life, Physical, and Social Science	13,860	2,930	3.59	$97,835
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	8,230	3,043	1.36	$64,924

Sources: Burning Glass, DLLR Growth Occupational Tool.

As seen in the table, Office and Administrative Support has the highest volume of employees in the county, followed by Sales positions. Computer and Mathematical occupations has the high number of job openings, showing continued growth in these positions. Life Sciences has the highest location quotient, showing the high concentration of life science occupations in the county. These occupational groupings support the industry growth around Biotechnology and IT, as well as sustain the industries of hospitality and professional services.

Within these occupational groups, several occupational titles stand out within the county:

Top 10 Occupations by Largest Growth Rate[5]
1. Information Security Analysts – 41.2%
2. Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists – 27.8%
3. Operations Research Analysts – 25.5%
4. Logisticians – 24.4%

---

[5] DLLR. "Occupational Growth – 2012-2022." (with at least 100 annual openings).

5. Computer Systems Analysts – 22.2%
6. Software Developers, Systems Software – 22.1%
7. Computer User Support Specialists – 21.1%
8. Software Developer, Applications – 20.9%
9. Web Developers – 20.0%
10. Personal Care Aides – 19.9%

Top 10 Occupations by Employment
1. Retail Salespersons – 11,500
2. General and Operations Managers – 11,210
3. Cashiers – 10,610
4. Janitors and Cleaners – 10,050
5. Secretaries and Administrative Assistants – 10,010
6. Business Operations Specialists – 7,810
7. Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers – 7,350
8. Accountants and Auditors – 6,720
9. Office Clerks, General – 6,580
10. Customer Service Representatives – 6,190

Top 10 Occupations by LQ
1. Health Diagnosing and Treating Practitioners – 34.49
2. Biological Scientists – 23.01
3. Computer and Information Research Scientists – 11.11
4. Microbiologists – 11.06
5. Physicists – 10.86
6. Statisticians – 9.28
7. Physical Scientists – 8.72
8. Atmospheric and Space Scientists – 8.26
9. Natural Sciences Managers – 7.25
10. Personal Care and Service Workers – 7.17

These occupations yield a number of analyses. Top growth of occupations remains within IT careers, with the highest growth in the cybersecurity occupation of Information Security Analyst. The largest volume of occupations is in the traditionally lower skilled occupations. Finally, the highest concentration of occupations is overwhelming in biotech careers.

Two industry areas that are high-demand within Montgomery County are Biotechnology and Cybersecurity. These sectors are not well categorized by traditional labor market information, but are supported by key occupations listed above. Tables 6 and 7 show key occupations in each of these industries. The prevalence of computer occupations in the biotechnology sector shows a cross-over into IT with such fields as bioinformatics and health IT/mobile health applications.

Table 6. Top Occupations within the Biotechnology Sector.

Occupation Title	Number of Job Postings	Number Employed	MD Change 2012-2022	Mean Salary
Medical Scientists, Except Epidemiologists	697	4,900	6.9%	$103,380
Managers, All Other	634	11,240	2.1%	$119,970
Computer Occupations, All Other	545	13,990	-0.6%	$104,020
Medical and Health Services Managers	536	9,280	10.2%	$111,420
Statisticians	344	3,090	17.8%	$97,940
Natural Sciences Managers	329	2,550	3%	$133,580
Registered Nurses	251	51,100	12.9%	$73,200
Chemists	249	3,070	0.9%	$106,690
Software Developers, Applications	246	12,490	20.9%	$108,190
Biologists	225	N/A	N/A	$90,355

Source: Burning Glass.

Table 7: Top Occupations within Cybersecurity.

Occupation Title	Number of Job Postings	Number Employed	MD Change 2012-2022	Mean Salary
Information Security Analysts	1,212	3,370	41.2%	$102,950
Computer Occupations, All Other	367	13,990	-0.6%	$104,020
Software Developers, Applications	313	12,490	20.9%	$108,190
Network/Computer Systems Administrators	197	12,990	14.1%	$100,620
Computer Network Architects	170	5,290	16.2%	$105,430

Source: Burning Glass.

The WDB will develop strategies to prepare job seekers for these key occupational groups.

B. Employment Knowledge and Skills Needs of Local Area Businesses

The WDB believes in an industry-led approach to employment and training services in the county. WSM balances labor market data analysis with real-time feedback from the employer community. A demand for high educational levels among Montgomery County employers can be seen across industry sectors. Within the Biotechnology industry cluster, for example, high educational attainment is a requirement for many of the positions.

Many industries also require certifications or licensure. Looking at job postings within each of these key sectors, we can identify the most desired certifications within each area. Advertised certification requirements can be seen in Table 8.

Table 8. Top Advertised Certifications by Industry

Biotech		Healthcare	
Project Management Professional (PMP)	257	Registered Nurse	4,070
Registered Nurse	201	First Aid CPR AED	1,096
Certified Ambulatory Perianesthesia Nurse	143	Basic Cardiac Life Support	546
Institutional Review Board	86	American Heart Association	521
National Institute of Standards and Tech	75	Nurse Practitioner	425
Hospitality		**Professional, Scientific and Technical**	
ServSafe	194	Project Management Professional (PMP)	546
Automotive Service Excellence (ASE)	143	Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP)	244
Project Management Professional (PMP)	89		
Certified Public Accountant (CPA)	66	Certified Public Accountant (CPA)	208
Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP)	51	Registered Nurse	181
		Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA)	165

Source: Burning Glass.

The Healthcare industry requires the most certification and licensure attainment, followed by Professional, Scientific and Technical. Some certifications can be seen across industries, namely Project Management Professionals, Registered Nurses, and Certified Public Accountants.

WSM will continually review labor market information and employer feedback on key certifications, skills, and educational attainment requirements of key industries and occupations within the region to stay relevant and responsive to industry needs.

C. Montgomery County's Talent Pool

In many ways, Montgomery County occupies an enviable position. With a population of 1,040,116, the county has the highest population in the state. It is among the best-educated and wealthiest counties in the United States: 57.4% of individuals over 25 have a bachelor's degree (compared to 29.3% nationally), median household income is more than $98,000 (vs. $53,500 for the US), the unemployment rate as of June 2016 is 3.7% (vs. 4.9% for the US), and the poverty rate is 7.2% (less than half of the national rate of 14.8%).[6]

Waves of global immigration over the last thirty years as well as urban-to-suburban migration from the District of Columbia (DC) have created a culturally diverse community. By 2014, 33% of county

Graphic 1: County Demographics

- Asian 15%
- Black or African American 19%
- Caucasian 47%
- Hispanic or Latino 19%

---
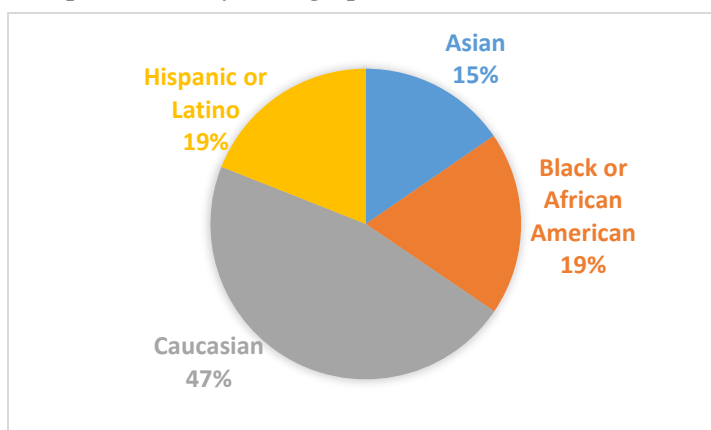
[6] U. S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey. "2010-2014 5-Year Estimates"; Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE); Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement (CPS ASEC).

residents were foreign-born and 39.8% spoke a language other than English at home, the highest concentrations in the state of Maryland. In 2015, 47% of the residents identified themselves as White; 19% as Latino; 19% as Black or African American; and 15% as Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Other Pacific Islander American.[7]

Graphic 2. Commuter Patterns for Montgomery County
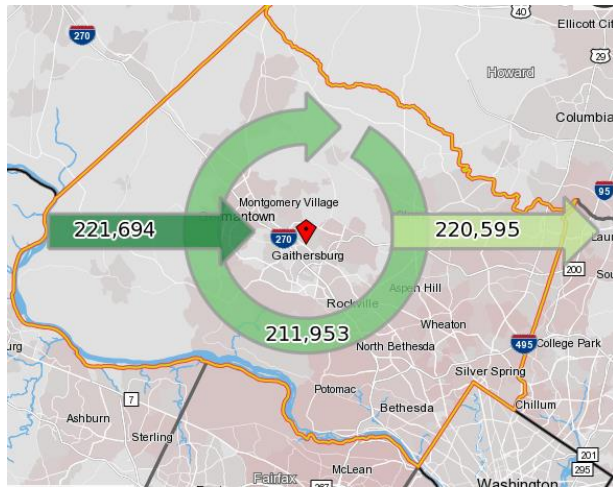
Commuter patterns show the regional nature of employment and residence in the area. More Montgomery County residents work outside of the county as do work within the county; only 49% of Montgomery residents work within the county. The prime commute Montgomery residents make is to Washington, DC (19.6% of residents), followed by Prince George's County (7.3%) and Fairfax, VA (4.8%).

Conversely, more individuals employed in Montgomery County reside outside of the county as do within the county; only 48.9% of Montgomery County employees reside in the county. Other areas of residence include Prince George's County (10.6% of employees), Frederick County (6.2%), and Washington, DC (4.9%). These strong commuter patterns require WSM to look at regional employment initiatives to best serve both the residents and employers of Montgomery County.

Veterans are an important piece of Montgomery's talent pool. The county is home to 23,189 working age veterans,[8] 5,417 of whom are ages 18-34. Among this age group, 4,962 are in the labor force with 4,788 of those veterans employed. Employment among ages 35-54 is 97% with 10,645 of the 11,497 veterans in the labor force. Veterans can take advantage of the more than 15 educational and workforce placement and training services at the state and local level. At the state level, programs such as the 100 Day Veteran Hiring Challenge and the Veterans Full Employment Act, signed in April 2013, encourage employers across the county and state to hire and train the veteran population.

Barriers to Employment
While Montgomery County is a vibrant and robust community and economy, there are populations that face additional barriers that can impede their success in obtaining and retaining employment. A high diversity within the talent pool creates a wide range of barriers, hence a need for a wider capability of support structures and a strong community approach. WSM targets the following populations that need additional supports.

---

[7] U. S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey. "2014 1-Year Estimates."
[8] Ibid.

Disconnected Young Adults

Per U.S. Census statistics, there are 106,109 young adults in Montgomery County between the ages of 16 and 24. In general, the readiness of these young adults in Montgomery County for work or post-secondary education is high. The county boasts a 94.4% graduation rate and a high enrollment into post-secondary training institutions. Although graduation rates are high, achievement gaps for the county's minority and disadvantaged young adults persist.

The Census projects that all the growth in the school-age population will be driven by increases in Latino students. More specifically, Latino school-age children will increase by 10 million (from 12 to 22 million) compared to an 8 million increase in the overall number of school-age children (from 54 to 62 million).[9] This diversity creates a need for increased cultural competence and English language skills.

Approximately 8,000 young adults in Montgomery County are either disconnected – i.e. neither in school nor working – or weakly connected to school or work.[10] Youth of color (black and African American or Hispanic and Latino young adults), are three times as likely as their peers to be disconnected. In addition, young adults from low-income families, or from limited-English proficiency families have a higher likelihood of dropping out of high school. In a county with an increasingly diverse population, it is imperative to create lasting solutions for disconnected and weakly connected young adults.

Graphic 3: High School Drop-Out Rates by Population

Population	Drop-Out Rate
White	<3%
Asian	<3%
African American	7%
Hispanic	11%
Free & Reduced Price Meals	9%
Limited English Proficiency	24%
Special Education	10%
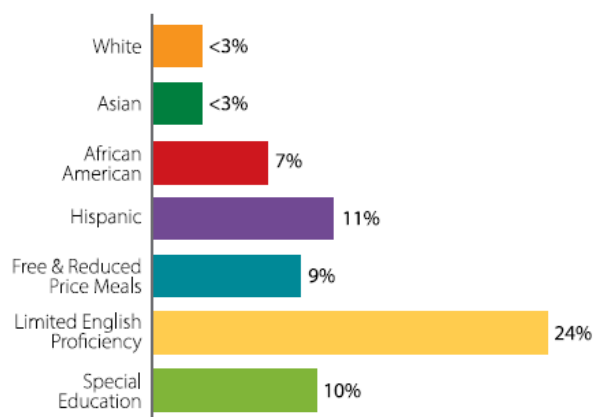
Source: Maryland State Department of Education

Low academic achievement is one of the leading causes of youth disconnection. High school drop-outs were 11 times more likely to have the lowest reported grade point average (GPA; 0.5 or less). Yet, more than half of youth from all groups in a study by the Community Foundation wanted more academic support programs.[11] This provides an opportunity for in-school youth programs to support weakly connected young adults and engage in drop-out prevention.

Young parents, in particular, find themselves at great risk for homelessness and often find themselves without access to many opportunities and supports. Most unaccompanied pregnant and parenting youth have not completed high school. Young parents must navigate through

---

[9] Montgomery County Collaboration Council. "2015 Data Book." 2015.

[10] Montgomery County Office of Legislative Oversight. "Youth and Work in Montgomery County." Dec. 10, 2013.

[11] Community Foundation for the National Capital Region. "Connecting Youth to Opportunity: How Black and African American Youth Perspectives Can Inform a Blueprint for Improving Opportunity in Montgomery County, Maryland." October 2015.

issues such as work requirements, childcare arrangements, and completion of education in addition to work. In Montgomery County, there is an annual average of 1,731 births to young mothers (under age 25 years), with numbers remaining steady or increasing for Latinas.[12] For Latino young adults surveyed by the Community Foundation, 86% of these pregnancies occurred in 10th grade or earlier.[13]

Disconnected and at- risk youth report significant levels of unemployment, as only 31% of youth who dropped out of school reported currently working, and 48% of drop-outs perceived their future economic situation as bad or very bad. Of the Latino youth surveyed by the Community Foundation, 73% reported not having ever received any type of job training and 60% reported not knowing where to get job training if they needed it.[14] This shows a significant need for job readiness and occupational training along a career pathway for our disconnected youth.

Individuals with Basic Skills Needs

Adults in Montgomery County, especially immigrant populations, are served by English as a Second or Other Language (ESOL), General Equivalency Diploma (GED), and Adult Basic Skills (ABS)classes. In 2014, 5,515 adults were enrolled in adult education classes in Montgomery County under Title II funding, with 5,007 enrolled at Montgomery College and 508 enrolled with the Literacy Council of Montgomery County. There are an estimated 1,700 individuals currently enrolled in GED programs in the county, around 1,300 of whom are 24 or younger.

In Montgomery County, individuals requiring English language skills support significantly exceeds individuals needing basic skills support. English language learners represent 83% (or 4,591 individuals) of the adult education population across Title II providers, highlighting the focus on English language acquisition in the county. In both adult basic skills and English language classes, the majority of learners are at the lower level of skill acquisition. 84% (or 806) of the individuals in adult basic skills are functioning at one of the Adult Basic Education (ABE) levels. 52% (or 1,879) of English language learners are at the Low literacy level, while only 16% of English language learners are at

Graphic 4: Demographics of Individuals Served Using Title II Funds

- Asian: 576
- Black-African American: 1092
- Hispanic/Latino: 2506
- White: 291

---
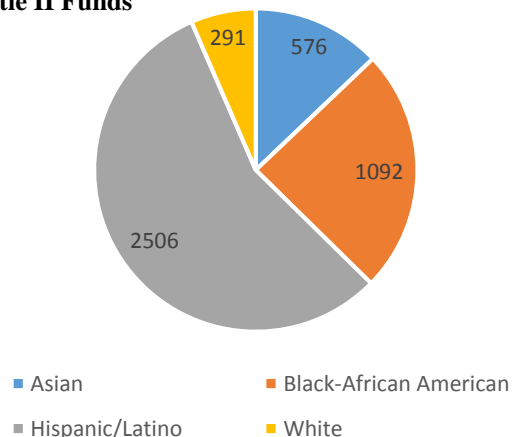
[12] Montgomery County Collaboration Council. "2015 Data Book." 2015.

[13] Community Foundation for the National Capital Region. "Connecting Youth to Opportunity: How Latino Youth Perspectives Can Inform a Blueprint for Improving Opportunity in Montgomery County, Maryland." June 2014.

[14] Ibid.

Graphic 5: Ages of Individuals Served Using Title II Funding

the Advanced literacy level.

The demographics of individuals with basic skills needs in Montgomery County match the general demographics of Montgomery County's foreign-born and ESOL population. Graphics 4 and 5 show the demographics of Title II enrolled adult basic skills and English language learner populations. The highest population receiving Title II support are Hispanic/Latino individuals, followed by Black-African American individuals, as shown in Graphic 4.

Most of the individuals receiving Title II services are of working ages, between 25-44, as seen in Graphic 5.

About half of the individuals served through the Literacy Council of Montgomery County and about 35% of individuals through Montgomery College do not provide a Social Security Number and are therefore not considered in the labor force. Additionally, the majority of individuals served are employed rather than unemployment, implying a high rate of underemployment.

In total, 28,222 residents are in English classes throughout the county's network of classes provided by community and faith-based organizations, which represents only 17% of the 162,000 LEP residents in the county. This leaves a significant gap in English skills in the county.

Individuals Facing Substantial Cultural Barriers

A large percentage of residents in Montgomery County are foreign-born. In the public schools, students come from 157 countries and speak 128 languages. In 2014, 321,500 county residents spoke a second language at home. Of those, less than 130,000 speak English very well.[15] The most common languages spoken at home are Spanish, Chinese, African languages, French, and Korean, respectively. 96% growth for Maryland's labor force during last decade with immigrants accounting for nearly all growth. Individuals from different cultures may have challenges gaining licensure or certification in the U.S. for foreign-trained degrees, communication challenges, adjusting to different perceptions of work and careers, or potential stigma from employers.

Graphic 6: Concentration of Non-Native English Speakers.
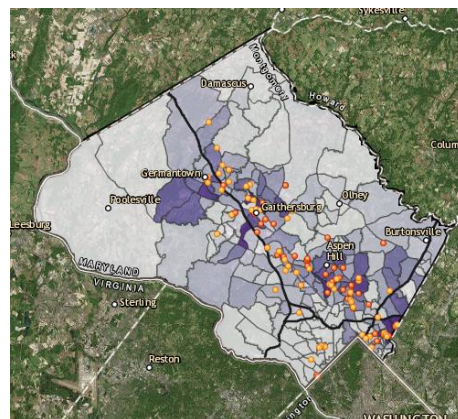
Source: MCAEL "Adult English Literacy: Mapping the Diversity of Needs

---

[15] U. S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey. "2014 1-Year Estimates."

Individuals with Disabilities

County-wide, 6.8% of the population aged 16-64 has a disability. 54.6% of this group are working, while 6% are in the labor force but not employed.[16] In 2014, 2,468 disabled persons were enrolled in middle school and 5,255 were enrolled in high school. Table 9 shows the employment characteristics of individuals with disabilities in Montgomery County. Individuals with disabilities have a higher rate of unemployment than the general population, with the highest level of unemployment among individuals with a cognitive disability. An additional 16% of individuals with a disability are not in the labor force altogether.

Table 9: Employment Status of Individuals with Disabilities

	Montgomery County, Maryland
	Estimate
Total:	631,734
In the labor force:	529,841
Employed:	497,134
With a disability:	16,712
With a hearing difficulty	4,773
With a vision difficulty	3,384
With a cognitive difficulty	4,640
With an ambulatory difficulty	5,410
With a self-care difficulty	1,318
With an independent living difficulty	2,661
No disability	480,422
Unemployed:	32,707
With a disability:	2,913
With a hearing difficulty	600
With a vision difficulty	674
With a cognitive difficulty	1,493
With an ambulatory difficulty	992
With a self-care difficulty	364
With an independent living difficulty	902
No disability	29,794
Not in labor force:	101,893
With a disability:	13,829
With a hearing difficulty	1,933
With a vision difficulty	1,899
With a cognitive difficulty	6,562
With an ambulatory difficulty	7,358
With a self-care difficulty	3,280
With an independent living difficulty	7,195
No disability	88,064

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2013 Year American Community Survey

Of the high school population, 980 disabled students graduated while 195 students dropped out.

Individuals 50+

Individuals over the age of 50 provide a vital component to Montgomery County's economy and

---

[16] Local Disability Data for Planners. "Disability Population Statistics for Montgomery County." http://disabilityplanningdata.com.

workforce. Older workers often face stigmas and misconceptions surrounding employment. In addition, older workers are especially vulnerable to long-term unemployment, with 50% of older job seekers becoming long-term unemployed.[17] Not only do they represent a higher percentage of long-term unemployed, they are also more likely to drop out of the labor force altogether. This impacts their ability to save for retirement or leads to early draw down of Social Security benefits, resulting in lower monthly benefits for workers and their survivors.[18] WSM believes it is imperative to ensure that our older workers have quality opportunities in the labor force available to them, and that area employers see the value of workers over 50.

> *"When [older individuals] call us for job-search assistance, you can hear anxiety and panic in their voices…The job-search experience can be demoralizing, and we see the human impact every day."*
> *- David Gamse, CEO*
> *Jewish Council for Aging*

Challenges for individuals over 50 include ageism in the larger culture, lack of awareness among employers of the benefits of older workers, need for additional technical or transferrable skills, and lack of knowledge of worker rights for individuals over 40. Age-friendly practices is a high priority across the county. A strategic plan to address age-friendly practices was developed in the fall of 2016 that includes an awareness campaign of current laws and rights for both the employers and the job seekers. The County has made a commitment to directly address employability challenges within this demographic.

Other Individuals with Barriers

Other individuals with barriers, as defined by the state, include:
- Displaced homemakers
- Ex-offenders
- Homeless individuals
- Individuals within two years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under Part A of the Social Security Act
- Individuals who are unemployed, including the long-term unemployed
- Low income individuals, including TANF and SNAP recipients
- Long-term unemployed individuals
- Single parents (including single pregnant women and non-custodial parents), and
- Young adults who are in, or have aged out of, the foster care system

Leveraging current progressive programs and strategic partnerships, WSM WIOA Adult activities will focus additional services on these populations with additional workforce barriers. WSM will be providing an integrated service model to ensure comprehensive supports and services. WSM will also periodically review with partners whether additional populations should be included in targeted WIOA populations.

---

[17] Sara Rix. "Older Workers and the Great Recession: A Look Back Over Five Years." *Huffington Post.* January 11, 2013.

[18] GAO Report. "Unemployed Older Workers." April 2012.

D. Workforce Development Activities in Montgomery County

WSM, DLLR, and partners provides a variety of workforce and economic development services and support to Montgomery County employers and residents. These services include a broad range of activities which offer Montgomery County's workforce the skills, knowledge, and abilities needed to succeed in a growing and robust economy. Employers can also utilize the job centers for recruiting, hiring and retaining an outstanding workforce. The WDB and WSM oversee Montgomery County's Workforce Development System and its three (3) Montgomery County Job Centers, in addition to a youth center. On average, the system serves 12,000 to 14,000 individuals and 400 employers each year. The job centers were initially developed to bring together employment and training services that work with all people in one place and make it easier for job seekers and employers to find, access and use these services.

The comprehensive job center in Wheaton supports WSM program operator, DLLR, and partner staff. The affiliate job centers and the youth center are supported by WSM program operator staff. Both WSM and DLLR have staff to serve job seekers and job creators. The Wheaton Job Center hosts local workforce and wrap-around service partners. Job Corps outreach is on-site to provide information about Job Corps locations and review eligibility with youth. TransCen provides workforce services for youth with disabilities and operates the Public Internship Program for individuals with disabilities from the Wheaton Job Center as well. Jewish Council for the Aging (JCA) is the county's recipient for Senior Community Service and Employment Program (SCSEP) funds. JCA has an off-site location at the Wheaton Job Center to more effectively connect with low-income seniors needing services. The Wheaton Job Center is located at the Westfield South Building, which also houses key partners in the workforce system: Montgomery College's Title II activities and DORS.

The graphic below, Graphic 7, shows the current staffing level at each WIOA-funded location. The core federally-funded workforce services in the county come together monthly as part of the Job Center Consortium.

Additional workforce development activities are provided through a network of agencies and organizations in Montgomery County. Over 180 community organizations and government agencies provide workforce services within Montgomery County. With such a robust workforce delivery system, WSM serves as a convener for workforce activities across the county. WSM supports the county council workforce grant process by reviewing grant applications and providing recommendations for funding. WSM has committed a full time leadership staff position to better understand the capacity of our community-based organizations and works with them to enhance opportunities for strategic partnerships and capacity building.

Graphic 7: Montgomery County Job Center and Programmatic Staffing.

Wheaton Job Center

WIOA Staff
- Management Staff
- Administrative Staff
- 3 Career Specialists
- Re-Entry Specialist
- Resource Specialist
- Follow-Up Coordinator
- Workshop Trainer
- Business Services Representative

Wagner-Peyser Staff
- Labor Exchange Administrator (LEA)
- Local Veteran Employment Representative (LVER)
- 2 Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialists
- 2 Business Services Representatives
- 2 Supervisors
- 3 Job Service Specialists

Germantown Job Center

WIOA Staff
- Management Staff
- Administrative Staff
- 3 Career Specialists
- Re-Entry Specialist
- Resource Specialist
- Workshop Trainer
- Business Services Representative

Correctional Center

WIOA Staff
- Coordinator
- Re-Entry Specialist

Youth Center

WIOA Staff
- Management Staff
- Administrative Staff
- 2 Case Managers
- Outreach Coordinator
- Training Coordinator
- Account Manager

Analysis of Workforce Development Activities

WSM was initiated to provide a roadmap for workforce and economic development aimed at creating long-term sustainable economic prosperity in the region and aligning workforce development, economic development and outreach activities around a shared set of objectives. To be successful, strong leadership from community, business and educational organizations are needed to provide their expertise in achieving those objectives. The WDB and partners identified the strengths of the county, challenges and enhancements needed around workforce development topics.

Strengths
- Fully engaged WDB with representation from key sector leaders and community leaders.

- WDB focused on expanding scope and scale of workforce programs and systems with a goal of capacity building, resource diversity and responsiveness to talent development demand.
- Diverse resource opportunities for workforce development activities.
- Regional outlook and proven ability to address local and regional workforce development needs with contiguous workforce areas in the Capital region (Prince George's and Frederick Counties), and in the Metro Region (DC and Northern Virginia).
- Proven ability to exceed common measures.
- Proven successful track record with grants and special populations.
- In-depth knowledge of local and regional key industry sectors and labor force.
- Strong area performance in regional sector partnerships throughout the Capital Region.
- Strong partnerships with local economic development and local chambers of commerce.
- Strong partnerships with local postsecondary educators.
- Key contributor to business services group.
- Key contributor to statewide workforce development through Workforce Directors group.
- Utilization of customer-centered design methodology to ensure best-in-class results.
- History of promoting industry-let career pathway development
- Innovative and responsive to both local and regional demands

Challenges
- Resource diversification. Increased fiscal capacity is needed from non-WIOA and private sources.
- Linkages between young adult programming involvement and sector partnership efforts.
- Linkages between the WDB and wrap-around services, including mental health.
- Formal referral relationships with mandatory partners and other programs that serve the needs of individuals with various barriers.
- Ease of access for less mobile populations to all services.

Capacity Enhancements
- Serving individuals with significant barriers by increasing resources through strategic partnerships.
- Enhancing work-based learning programs through stronger engagement of our employers.
- Increasing extensive cross training with staff so customers can be better matched with appropriate career pathways through:
  - Formula and discretionary grant funded programming.
  - Sector partnerships.
  - Special programs which may include, but not limited to, grant funded initiatives.
  - Work-based learning to include, but not limited to, on-the-job training (OJT), work and learn placements, pre-apprenticeships, and/or apprenticeships.
- Broadening access for workforce development services by bringing services to hard-to-reach populations through a pop-up job center going to homeless shelters, Head Start sites, and other organizations that serve specific populations throughout the county.

- Broadening remote access to workforce development services by maximizing technology capacity utilizing social media and virtual one stop platforms.
- Streamline and standardize intra-regional processes for work and learn placements, OJT and apprenticeship.

Analysis of Education and Training Activities

Montgomery County is home to Montgomery College, a public, open access community college. The state university system operates a facility called Universities at Shady Grove, a collaborative of 6 different public Universities providing access to baccalaureate and Master's level programs from several of the state's public universities. Johns Hopkins' Campus is located in the county, and the area is also home to a number of accredited and private postsecondary institutions. An additional network of non-profit and for-profit training providers exist in the county, providing training in high-demand industries, such as Information Technology and healthcare.

"With a sense of urgency for our future, higher education, employers, the school system, philanthropy and nonprofits must ensure that everyone in our community – parents and their children – can access pathways to success necessary to thrive not just survive, to fuel our economy with skilled workers, and to propel our community forward."

- DeRionne P. Pollard, President Montgomery College

English Language Learners and individuals with low academic skills seek basic skills instruction through Montgomery College and the Literacy Council for Montgomery County through Title II services. Due to the high volume of English language learners in the county, an additional county-funded network of providers is coordinated through the Montgomery Coalition for Adult English Literacy (MCAEL). In total, 52 organizations offer English classes in Montgomery County through 75 programs and 108 locations. MCAEL collects information on programs offering classes in Montgomery County and analyzes English programming available in the county. Even with the number and diversity of programs, learners wait to access classes as the demand exceeds the supply of classes available.

One of the key goals of WSM is to increase capacity and to diversify resources for training and education activities in the county. The WDB is in the process of developing policies to improve partnerships with training providers that are responsive to high growth and demand occupations. Policies will be developed based on state guidance and are targeted by June 2017. Further, WSM is working to ensure that the Eligible Training Provider List represents the full strength of the educational system in the county, and that local training policies allow WIOA participants to have multiple opportunities to attain training outcomes. WSM have been awarded key cyber/IT grants in partnership with Montgomery College to enhance the talent development demand and is committed to forging similar partnerships to accelerate pipeline development across industry sectors.

Strengths in Education identified by local planning focus groups:
- Industry sector focus of the WDB, currently on four key industries identified as high demand and high growth with career pathway opportunities or high wage:
    - Construction
    - Health
    - Hospitality
    - Cyber Security/IT
- Career and technical education focus of the Montgomery County Public Schools through the following Maryland Career Technology Education (CTE) career clusters:
    - Arts, Humanities, Media and Communication
    - Business Management and Finance
    - Human and Consumer Services, Hospitality and Tourism
    - Education, Training, and Child Studies
- County economic development efforts focused on key market sectors:
    - Cybersecurity
    - Ambulatory Health Care Services
    - Leisure and Hospitality
    - Life Sciences
    - Finance and Insurance
    - Advanced Manufacturing
    - Information Technology
    - Self-employed/Entrepreneurs
- Partner in a region-wide, multi-state USDOL funded Workforce Innovation Grant to utilize the IBEST evidence based practice model, called Accelerating Connections to Employment (ACE), in integrated learning models (blended adult basic skills and occupational training) for healthcare occupations in partnership with Montgomery College.
- Employment Advancement Right Now (EARN) Grant initiative from the state - Healthcare Workers R_X for Employability- working with industry leaders to design training programs that meet their need for a talent pipeline.
- Epicenter for biotechnology in the Mid-Atlantic region. Montgomery County, as third largest biotechnology cluster in the U.S., holds a large cluster and companies of large corporate size within the state.
- Many large firms are based in the county, including Discovery Communications, Coventry Health Care, Lockheed Martin, Marriott International, Host Hotels & Resorts, Travel Channel, Ritz-Carlton, Robert Louis Johnson Companies (RLJ Companies), Choice Hotels, MedImmune, TV One, BAE Systems Inc., Hughes Network Systems and GEICO. These provide industry specific and economic development partnership opportunities to further develop industry specific training that meets their talent needs.

Challenges
- Lack of business awareness of the WDB as the single, readily identifiable entity through which to address their workforce needs.
- Process challenges exist where partners have written grants or started specific programs,

without sufficient input from business leaders in key sectors and/or workforce development. This is changing within the newly transformed system.

- Coordination of training content to be relevant to the speed of business.

Capacity Enhancements

- The development of system-wide sector expertise to work across organizations in the context of existing and developing sector partnerships.
- Increase partnerships to address pre-employment issues and increase work/learning experiences.
- Implement best practices in industry-led occupational training and matriculation, such as the development of specialty nursing programs and the EARN Grant initiative driven by sector leaders in healthcare should be broadened for critical occupations in other key sectors.
- Create local job opportunities and priorities through closely aligning the workforce development and economic development entities through collaborative activities when working to attract business to the county.
- Strong industry-led partnerships that identifies current demands and demands of the future.

During the last year and a half of operation, WSM has partnered with Montgomery College and other organizations to pursue grants (such as the Tech Hire Grant, EARN grant, and Maryland Tech Connection) to expand training capacity, with a specific focus on training in high demand and high growth sectors. Through EARN grant funding, WSM had addressed several healthcare career pathways and developed an employer led work-readiness curriculum that has been adopted by MCPS, Montgomery College, and Identity, Inc. The WDB program committee and Executive Committee serve in an advisory capacity when pursing, implementing and evaluating new opportunities.

E. Strategic Vision and Goals for Preparing an Educated and Skilled Workforce

WSM is the "Go-To" place linking local and regional economic development and workforce efforts by developing a deep understanding of target and emerging industry demands and creating sustainable workforce solutions that are tailored to the region, thereby increasing the ability for individuals to compete for higher-quality jobs and for employers to compete within the marketplace. WSM will convene key stakeholders to create and sustain the ecosystem for an effective one-system approach to workforce development.

Graphic 8: WSM Integrated Focus.

The workforce infrastructure of the county includes public and private sector entities. It is
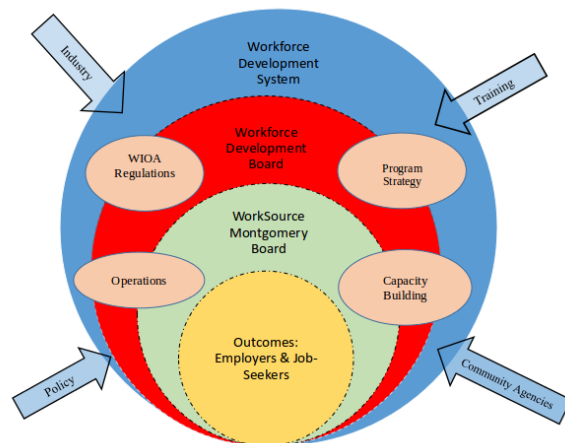
this public/private partnership which is working to transform the local workforce development system. As such, the WDB is dedicated to identifying and implementing workforce development strategies that positively impact the economic well-being of the county. WSM sees its role within the workforce system to catalyze change; serve as a facilitator and convener of workforce entities in the county; serve as an intermediary and broker; and advocate on behalf of the system. The WDB serves as a strategic leader and convener of employers, workforce development professionals, education providers, economic development and other stakeholders to drive innovation and alignment of workforce investments at the local level.

Our philosophy on how to accomplish integration is to:
- Utilize a push-system approach addressing demand (forecasted or actual) through coalition building in our role as conveners.
- Focus on systems change and not just programmatic improvements to ensure that the customers' (employer and jobseeker) experience when interacting with the system is easy, accessible, transparent, and responsive to their needs.

Our strategy for integration will focus on three key areas, which will create the foundational context through which the WDB's strategic goals and objectives are deployed:
- Strategically align federal, state and local investments to support job seekers and employers thereby increasing return on investment (ROI) across agencies
- Establish workforce priorities as the driver of economic development and quality of life.
- Create an ecosystem connecting talent development strategies and programs to sustainable employment

WDB's strategic vision is to convene an industry-led workforce development model. The board leads industry solutions through Industry Alliances in key sectors. These Alliances will inform employment and training services within the Montgomery County Job Centers, guide innovative initiatives with employers and community stakeholders, and be a compass for future discretionary grant activities.

Goals for Preparing an Educated and Skilled Workforce

The WDB conducts strategic planning every three years. The current strategic plan is from July 2014 through June 2017, with a review conducted annually. To develop a new comprehensive strategy every three years, the WDB creates a Strategic Planning Team that consists of WDB members, WSM staff, and community stakeholders not represented on either board. During the session held April 2016 to review and update the plan in its final year, the WDB embraced their new role under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) and re-evaluated their mission, vison, values and strategic priorities and structure to ensure that the WDB and WSM aligned purposefully with the new requirements and changes within WIOA. The strategic goals and objectives identified are outlined below.

Strategic Goal 1: Engineer a comprehensive system of talent development matched to the ongoing needs of business and industry in the county.

   Key Objectives:
- Develop and strengthen relationships with businesses through a Business Solutions Team that develops customized services for businesses.
- Continue to grow the capacity of the WDB's industry sector approach as a means of providing services to business.
- Facilitate the on-ramps to career pathways for jobseekers and develop methods for employers to reach into the pathways to find qualified individuals.
- Support individuals' (youth and adults) skills development through job search assistance, skills assessment, coaching, and skills training that result in obtaining an industry-recognized certificate or a credential.
- Support proven strategies designed to help vulnerable and disconnected young adults obtain the credentials they need to find sustainable and meaningful employment.

Strategic Goal 2: Develop and implement a system of quality assurances and certification for any organization delivering workforce development services.

   Key Objectives:
- Adopt standards and indicators that define organizational standards of quality and assist organizations in meeting them.
- Create a certification process against the quality standards.
- Develop policies related to how the WDB will use certification in program service and funding decisions, including to work with county to promote certified agencies as part of who business should work with and as value add to economic development attraction activities.
- Ensure the certification process and system is embedded in the WDB's strategic communication and marketing plan.

Strategic Goal 3: Lead and drive an efficient and effective workforce development system in Montgomery County.

   Key Objectives:
- Build and maintain relationships with educational institutions to become the source for useful demand side information for application in instruction, curriculum and career pathway development.
- Network with existing groups that support workforce development.
- Provide advice, counsel and consultation on workforce issues to county leadership and elected officials.
- Work with businesses to analyze their needs and provide workforce related consulting services, as appropriate
- Collaborate with all community partners to ensure the WDB is the delivery system for all workforce development and related community initiatives.

- Produce a study on return on investment (ROI).

Measuring Outcomes

The WDB believes in a data-driven model based on WIOA performance indicators, as well as other quantitative and qualitative measures. Decisions are data-driven to ensure that workforce investment, educational and economic development strategies are based on accurate assessments of regional labor markets and meet the needs of job seekers. Relevant workforce intelligence is critical to periodic evaluations of the workforce system which is the basis for continuous improvement opportunities. Continuous improvements are guided by transparent performance indicators that include WIOA performance indicators, qualitative customer focused data, Return on Investment statistics and analysis of labor market patterns and trends. Quarterly reports are provided to key stakeholders and current interactive performance data is live on our website. The WDB Quality Assurance committee serves as an oversight and advisory committee for performance attainment

Negotiated WIOA critical measures for PY2016 and PY2017:

WIOA Adult
- Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit – 80%
- Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit – 70%
- Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit - $8,000
- Credential Attainment Within 4 Quarters After Exit – 72%

WIOA Dislocated Worker
- Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit – 85%
- Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit – 80%
- Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit - $10,000
- Credential Attainment Within 4 Quarters After Exit – 71%

WIOA Youth
- Employment or Placement Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit – 60%
- Employment or Placement Rate 4th Quarter After Exit – 60%
- Credential Attainment Within 4 Quarters After Exit – 60%

Wagner-Peyser
- Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit – 55%
- Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit – 55%
- Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit - $6,500

WSM tracks monthly workforce activity and proactively assesses WIOA indicators of success. Program operators and the WDB also look at qualitative indicators, including a portfolio of customer satisfaction indicators. Customer surveys gain feedback on the job centers and workshops, as well as key touch points throughout the WIOA service delivery process.

The WDB developed additional critical measures that extend beyond the WIOA performance indicators. These eight key measures determine progress and outcomes in real time:

Customer Perspective
1. Increase and sustain employer customer satisfaction
2. Increase and sustain jobseeker customer satisfaction
3. Increase the number of businesses engaged with the economic development corporation that report using workforce services
4. Number of individuals employed at or above the county's living wage rate
5. Number of individuals who were placed in a job in the targeted industry for which they were being trained

Internal Processes Perspective
6. Decrease cycle time to develop and execute products and services
7. Improve the image of the workforce system

Financial Perspective
8. Return on Investment (both financial and social)

The WDB has created an electronic dashboard of measures that will include critical measures and the WIOA indicators of performance. Future additions to the dashboard include key indicators demonstrating employer and community sustainable and enduring relationships and up-to-date labor market data.

F. Alignment Across Core Programs to Achieve the Strategic Vision and Goals

The WDB is committed to developing and enhancing a workforce system across core and additional partners that keeps the customer (employers and job seekers) at the center of service delivery. WSM will lead the system in creating alignment of services and resources to minimize bureaucracy and redundancy, create multiple avenues and access points, and collectively enhance the economic and social impact of the system for Montgomery County.

As the operating arm of the WDB, WSM has many roles, including developing systems, processes and methods that facilitate alignment among all organizations in the county that deliver workforce services, not just those funded through WIOA. Through procurement of WIOA services, WSM continues to design an operational structure that will help to align workforce service delivery within the county. Process maps and workflows for customer flow and service delivery will be developed as part of this alignment.

As a result of collaborative Job Center Consortium partner meetings and board input, WSM has identified three areas to focus on for alignment and coordination efforts: Business Solutions/Consultation, Job Seeker Services, and Accessibility of Services. The core partners have agreed to align resources and integrate services to carry out the vision and goals identified above as codified in the MOU.

Individualized career services for adults and dislocated workers and young adult services are

provided through WSM's subcontracted agencies. These partners are an integral part of the workforce system working within a coordinated strategy to increase capacity and improve effectiveness. As part of this greater system, there is a high level of communication that occurs across programs, facilitating maximum benefits to customers. WSM is committed to expanding service delivery services through key partnerships with organizations that have demonstrated excellence within their area of service.

SECTION 2: ALIGNMENT OF THE LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

A. The Workforce Development System in Montgomery County

Montgomery County's workforce development system includes a diversity of programs designed to serve all employers and residents. Table 10 identifies the programs included in the system and the partners involved. Detailed roles of the partners will be further defined in the Resource Sharing Agreement (RSA) and MOU, as well as coordinated through the Job Center Consortium, which acts as the One-Stop Operator in Montgomery County. All core partners are members of the Job Center Consortium.

Table 10: WIOA System Core Partners (Section 121 (1)(B) of WIOA).

Partner	Maryland WIOA Programs
WorkSource Montgomery	Convener of Montgomery County WIOA Programs, WIOA Administrative Entity
Career Development Services	Job Corps Outreach and Admissions
Community Action Agency under HHS	Community Service Block Grant Employment and Training Activities
D.B. Grant Associates, Inc.	WIOA Young Adult Program Operator
DLLR	Wagner-Peyser Act, Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers, Jobs for Veterans State Grant, Unemployment Insurance
DORS	Vocational Rehabilitation
Housing Opportunity Commission	Department of Housing and Urban Development Employment and Training Activities
Jewish Council for the Aging of Greater Washington, Inc. (JCA)	Senior Community Service Employment Program
Literacy Council of Montgomery County	Adult Education and Family Literacy Act
Montgomery College	Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, Career and Technical Education programs at the post-secondary level
Montgomery Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
Ross Innovative Employment Solutions Corporation (Ross IES)	WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs Operator, Ex-Offender Program Operator

The Job Center Consortium's defined role is to:
- Establish processes and systems that help to oversee the system, across all sites and MOU partners.
- Implement and inform Workforce Development Board policy regarding Job Center activities.
- Ensure collaborations and referrals among partners.
- Ensure the right partners are involved in Job Center activities.
- Ensure integrated services are provided at the Job Centers.
- Develop and implement the Job Center Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and the Resource Share Agreement (RSA)
- Enhance co-enrollment capabilities and joint programming through the Job Centers.

- Enhance financial and in-kind resources within the Job Centers.
- Regularly review customer feedback of Job Center activities and ensure quality customer services are provided with integrity.
- Facilitate professional development for all Job Center partners.
- Facilitate continuous improvement within the Job Centers.
- Ensure appropriate tools and technology are available for customers and to use for management and operational purposes.
- Facilitate data sharing solutions across Job Center partners.

The focus for the local area in working together to carry out these workforce programs in a coordinated and integrated manner is to enhance access for customers across all the programs and strengthen engagement of all the key partners. WSM is working with partners to align services around customer flow, avoid duplication of services, engage in strategic policy development, share data across systems, engage in continuous improvement, explore collaborative case management, and leverage resources.

As codified in the MOU, partners commit to coordination and alignment through a focus on systems change to ensure that the customers' (business and jobseeker) experience when interacting with the system is easy, accessible, transparent, and responsive to their needs.

- Business Solutions – The Business Solutions Team will work towards providing a single point of contact for businesses across all workforce system partners. Key elements include a client relationship management system, coordinated business development across sub-contractors and core partners, communication strategies around services offered through the entire system, and collection of business customer satisfaction data. The partners commit to participating in the development of a coordinated business service delivery system.
- Job Seeker Solutions – Coordination will be accomplished by focusing on enhancing access for customers across all the programs and strengthening engagement of all the key partners. MOU partners will address coordination around customer flow, reduction of duplication of services, strategic policy development, data sharing, continuous improvement, and leveraging of resources. Partners commit to participating in the development of a coordinated referral and intake system, as well as the development of a common customer satisfaction system data collection and analysis system. Additionally, partners commit to promoting information sharing and the coordination of activities across MOU partners to enhance communication and cross-customer engagement.
- Accessibility for All Customers – The partners will continuously ensure that all facilities, technology, services, employment placement and outreach materials meet all requirements for access to the Job Centers, including but not limited to, requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- Partners commit to engage in ongoing Job Center Consortium-led training in areas such as case management strategies, integrated service delivery models, county assets, and customer service.

Table 11: Services of Job Center Partners

Key:
  Type of Service
1. Core Service
2. Supplemental Services provided to participants

Location of Service
J – Service provided at the Montgomery County Job Center
V – Service only provided virtually or off-site

	DLLR	DORS	Grant	HHS	HOC	JCA	Job Corps	LCMC	MC	Ross
Basic Career and Education Services										
Outreach, intake, and orientation to information and services	1 J	2 J	1 J	1 V	1 V	1 J	1 J	1 V	1 V	1 J
Eligibility determination	2 J	1 J	1 V	1 V	1 V	1 V	1 J	1 V	1 V	1 J
Initial assessment of skill levels, abilities, and support services	2 J		1 V	1 V	1 V	1 V	1 J	1 V	1 V	1 J
Job search services and job referrals	1 J	1 V	1 V	1 V		2 J	1 V		2 V	1 J
Labor market information	1 J	2 V	1 V	2 V			1 V	2 V	2 V	1 J
Job search and work readiness workshops	1 J	1 V	1 V	1 V		1 V	1 V		2 V	1 J
Referrals and coordination of services within Job Center partners and other workforce development programs	1 J	1 J	1 J	2 V	1 V	2 J	1 J	1 V	2 V	1 J
Information on eligible training providers		2 J		2 V	1 V		1 J		2 V	1 J
Referral to community resources	1 J	1 J	1 V	2 V	1 V	2 J			2 V	2 J
Provision of information in understandable formats and languages regarding services	1 J	2 J	1 V	1 V	1 V	2 V			1 V	2 J
Intensive Career Services										
Comprehensive assessment of skill levels and service needs	2 J	1 J	1 V	1 V		1 V	1 V	1 V	1 V	1 J
Development of individual employment plan	1 J	1 J	1 V	1 V		1 V	1 V		2 V	1 J
Career planning and guidance	1 J	1 J	1 V	1 V			1 J		2 V	1 J
Pre-vocational services		1 V	1 V	2 V				2 V	1 V	1 J
Work and learn activities		1 V	1 V	2 V		1 V				1 J
Financial literacy services			2 V	2 V	1 V	1 V	2 V	2 V		2 J
English language acquisition and adult basic skills connections	2 J		1 V	2 V	1 V			1 V	1 V	2 J
Workforce preparation activities	1 J	1 V	1 V	2 V	2 V	1 V			1 V	1 J
Wrap-around services			1 V	1 V						1 J
Job retention	2 J	1 V	1 V	1 V		1 V	1 V			1 J
Training Services Available										
Occupational skills training	1 J	1 V	1 V	2 V	2 V		1 V			1 J
On-the-Job Training (OJT)		1 V	1 V	2 V			1 V			1 J

	DLLR	DORS	Grant	HHS	HOC	JCA	Job Corps	LCMC	MC	Ross
Contextualized learning			1 V		2 V			2 V	1 V	2 J
Skills upgrading and retraining	1 J	1 V	1 V		2 V					2 J
Entrepreneurial training		1 V	2 V							2 J
Adult Education and Literacy			2 V		1 V			1 V	1 V	2 J
Customized training		1 J	2 V							2 J
Supported or transitional employment		1 V	2 V			1 V				2 J
Business Solutions										
Talent development services	1			2						1
Retention services		2	1							1
Career progression development	2		1							2
Industry Alliances	2			2						
Incumbent worker training	1							1		2
Consultation, planning, and growth services	2		1							2
Recruitment, screening, and placement services	1		1	2	2	2				1
Strategic promotion of job openings	1		2	2	2					1
Applicant screening and matching services	1	1	1	2	2	2				1
Train-to-Hire options			1		2	2				1
Rapid response services	1									2

B. Access to Services for Eligible Individuals

The WDB has an established partnership with local social service and community providers, in addition to WIOA mandated partners. The partnerships will continue to examine strategies to expand access to services for eligible individuals in several ways. WSM is currently working with core partners and WIOA contracted Title I service providers to establish processes to facilitate co-enrollment between youth and adult programs for older young adults and across core programs when appropriate. Local WIOA policies on adult and youth eligibility promote co-enrollment among core WIOA partners. In addition, WSM works with community partners and government agencies to further enhance and align the workforce system in Montgomery County.

There are a number of potential services that the system is exploring and reviewing in order to expand services for eligible individuals per local plan focus group discussion, including:

- Service Enhancements – WSM will ensure sub-contractors have quality customer service through strong case management capabilities, career navigation, and follow-up through job placement, with an emphasis on career pathways. WSM will ensure sub-contractors have strong engagement with employers and businesses regarding high demand, high wage opportunities and will coordinate training with industry-led business partnerships.
- Data Analysis – WSM will work with partners to conduct robust data analysis to identify skills gaps, job projections and areas for alignment with economic development to ensure a strong data-driven foundation.
- Bridge Programs – WSM is working with Montgomery College, Literacy Council of Montgomery County, and other training partners to accelerate skills gain for individuals who have basic skill deficiencies through integrated basic and occupational skills cohort trainings, such as the MI-BEST programming and contextualized learning at Montgomery College. Such trainings may include a basic skills, English language and/or job readiness skills component blended with occupational training.
- Enhance Training Delivery – The WDB will work to map current training offerings against career pathways, share data with training providers to create/enhance/revise curriculum based on employer feedback, work with training providers to expedite training approaches, and recruit training organizations that may not be on the approved training provider list, specifically apprenticeship programs.
- Affiliate Job Centers – The WDB is in the process of analyzing potential target affiliate job center locations and populations in order to increase access points to the workforce system. Such affiliates could be in libraries, homeless shelters, recreation centers, or through a mobile training and employment lab. In addition, such job centers may be sector focused.
- Maximization of Technology – Core partners are committed to expanding access to services through use of technology and will explore virtual services and activities to support transit-dependent or self-service customers.
- Asset Mapping – WSM recognizes that the workforce ecosystem in Montgomery County is more than one organization. There are 180 community organizations in the county that provide some sort of workforce development services. WSM wants to expand access to services by engaging in asset mapping of workforce services and connecting the services across organizations to outline a continuum of services that expands opportunities for eligible individuals.

- Work Readiness Activities – The WDB is working to implement a portfolio of work readiness activities customized to employer and job seeker needs, including implementing industry-recognized curriculum and work and learn strategies.
- Connection to local Age-Friendly Initiative – As part of Montgomery County's Age Friendly initiative, WSM will work to expand services to individuals over 50. The Strategic Plan for workforce includes increasing workshops to build skills of job seekers over 50, increasing the number of businesses that sign the AARP age-friendly (Work Reimagined) pledge, and conducting training on age-friendly practices for job seekers and employers.

In addition, WSM is working with partners to enhance understanding and utilization of career pathways. As part of this, WSM intends to build a common, system wide approach to career pathways and identify career pathways within the targeted industries and high demand occupations within the county's key industries. WSM has a proven record of career pathway development through the Rx for Employability EARN program. Modeled after the Rx for Employability success, the Career Advancement Program has been established that creates a standardized model for industry-led career pathways and talent development. In addition, the WDB has contracted with a consulting firm to support the development of interactive career pathways processes and tools.

C. Steps Taken to Engage Entities in the Creation of the Local Plan

WSM has been committed to community involvement in the formation of the local plan. The WDB created a Local Planning Team made up of representatives of all the WIOA required partner programs, those identified in the state's combined plan, and other key stakeholders as seen in Table 12. The team met twice in meetings facilitated by the board's workforce consultant. During those meetings, partners addressed the key areas outlined in the state's planning document. The team also discussed their approach to integrated service delivery, ongoing plan execution strategies, and continuous improvement. In addition, core partners informed key sections relating to alignment and service delivery.

Table 12: Local Planning Team Members.

Member	Title	Partner Entity
Uma Ahluwalia	Director	HHS
Beth Lash	Program Manager II	DORS
Donna Kinerney	Dean of Instruction, Adult ESOL & Basic Skills for College and Careers	Montgomery College
Christine Neil	Director of Programs	Literacy Council of Montgomery County
Monica Tally	Program Manager I, TANF	HHS
Sharon Friedman	Director	Montgomery Moving Forward
Brigid Howe	Executive Director	Nonprofit Montgomery
Tina Benjamin	Special Assistant, County Executive	Montgomery County
David Gamse	Executive Director	Jewish Council for the Aging
Kathy Stevens	Executive Director	MCAEL

Gail Starkey	Deputy Warden	Montgomery County Corrections
Deborah Murphy	WDB Business Member	Ernest Maier
Mike Sullivan	WDB Chair, Business Member	Pepco
Donna Cooper	WSM Chair, Business Member	Pepco
Neil Stablow	WDB Business Member	Donohoe Construction
Jill Hoyt	WDB Business Member	Novavax
Diego Uriburu	WDB Member	Identity
Marie Taylor	President and CEO	Leadership Montgomery
Bridgette Gray	WDB Member	Per Scholas
Donald Moragne	WDB Business Member	The Success Zone, Inc.

The team met by phone to finalize the draft in preparation for public comment. The plan was sent to the WDB members for review on August 1, 2016. The board met on August 9th for a preliminary approval. The plan was posted for public comment from August 15th through September 15th and comments were solicited by WSM staff from key stakeholders in the community. Comments were collected electronically from the WSM website and reviewed by the CEO for inclusion into the plan prior to submission to DLLR.

D. Strategies and Services for Area Employers

The WDB maintains the philosophy that employers are the primary customer and job seekers are the primary beneficiary. Employers create job growth and as such must guide the workforce system. As such, WSM has created an approach to providing employers, including small businesses, with solutions to their workforce needs and to better engage and formalize relationships with employers.

This approach includes the formation of a Business Solutions Team that will provide a single point of contact for employers across all workforce system partners. To assist with the development of the tools and strategies necessary to make this approach a reality, the WDB is working with a consulting group that has experience and expertise in building the key elements of such a system. Key elements include:
- A customer relationship management system;
- Protocols for how to interact with the employer customer to provide consistency;
- Coordinated business development across sub-contractors and core partners;
- Communication strategies around services offered through the entire system; and
- Collection of employer customer satisfaction data.

The WDB also believes in an industry-wide approach, and has invested in Industry Alliances in key industry sectors in the county. These industry-led partnerships will be key to delivery of services across the workforce system. One element of industry approaches will be use of work and learn strategies.

The local planning focus group identified strategies to strengthen engagement of employers and industry alliances in collaboration with economic development programs:
- Continue meetings with key business organizations such as chambers, sector associations,

alignment with economic development entity, and industry sector engagement.
- Continue to work with identified Industry Alliances to create initiatives that focus on development of the talent pipeline.
- Reach out to business groups and associations for increased engagement and collaboration.
- Convene a small business advisory group to support capacity building and retention.
- Create and train teams of employers from the board(s) to go into other employers to seek out information on their workforce needs and to build awareness of the services offered.
- Build a Business Solutions Team made up of all partner agencies.
- Expand and increase a common set of core services offered to employer customers.
- Ensure a core set of work ready competencies are taught and commonly certified by all providers.
- Promote entrepreneurial opportunities through targeted education, mentoring and connections

Engagement of Employers in Workforce Development Programs

WSM is dedicated to proactively engaging local and regional employers to address current and future talent development demands. Both the WDB and the WSM Board is comprised of business leaders that represent the leading industry sectors within Montgomery County. The WDB has engaged local and regional employers through targeted focus groups and advisory committees. Given that 95% of all employers in Montgomery County are small business, we have also formed a small business advisory group that meets monthly to address the talent requirements to enhance small business retention and expansion.

Utilizing our new Business Solutions approach, consistent and frequent employer outreach and services will be provided. This approach is based on best practices and is designed to ensure internal system-wide alignment and external consistency when reaching out to employers. Through our Montgomery County Job Centers and WSM structure, we will engage our employers throughout their business life cycle promoting strategic growth through career pathways and strong talent development.

The Business Solutions Team will offer the following employer services to both large and small employers within Montgomery County and the region:
- Consultation, Planning and Growth Services – this includes labor market research, training curriculum analysis and validation, general consulting services for operational improvements, tax and financial incentive services.
- Talent Development and Retention Services – this includes assessments and skill gap analysis, internal career pathways development, connections to industry partnerships, custom OJT development, custom incumbent worker training, and wage subsidies.
- Recruitment, Screening and Placement Services – this includes creating or revising job descriptions, posting job listings, strategic advertising of job openings, screening and matching applicants, coordination of interviews, and targeted recruitments.

WSM is a convening organization and views our Business Solutions approach as a part of the

entire workforce development system. Therefore, strategic partnerships are critical; partners in engaging employers in workforce development programs include DLLR, DORS, Maryland Department of Commerce, Montgomery County Government, local chambers of commerce, economic development entities, industry associations, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations and an outstanding system of college, university and training entities.

Strategies to Meet the Needs of Employers in Montgomery County

The WDB and the partners, through the Business Solutions Team, supports employer needs by focusing on the following strategies:

Access: Encouraging more employers, across employer size and industry sectors, to engage with the workforce system to meet their respective short- and long-term needs.

Alignment: Align members of the Business Solutions Team and all partners to ensure that employers are being served by the American Job Center brand, and that services are organized and synchronized.

Accountability: Improve services by measuring effectiveness and responsiveness to employers, and monitoring and integrating information provided by the selected customer relationship management system and other tools with matching functions to link employers and job candidates for timely filling of positions.

Growth: Continuously improve services by developing a consistent protocol to learn from and respond to employer needs in a real-time feedback loop that includes performance outcomes and employer surveys.

None of these strategies can be executed if employers do not know that services exist to help them with their workforce needs. Our operating principle, foundational to the key strategies above, is to expand awareness through communication and outreach to let employers know of the system, what it does and how it might meet their talent development needs.

Key components for alignment and integration include:
- Industry-led Alliances;
- Career Pathways;
- Single Point of Contact; and
- Common Metrics.

Coordination of Workforce and Economic Development Programs

WSM will be working closely with the county's newly formed Economic Development Corporation to address economic priorities and corresponding talent needs. WSM's business services strategies are designed to provide a robust set of 'response strategies' that can be called upon by the county's economic development agency when working to attract and retain employers. The WDB is a key member of the county's economic development team when meeting with employers. In addition, WSM and Economic Development will share Salesforce and labor market data to coordinate business outreach and activities. To promote strong collaborative activities, WSM and MCEDC (the economic development entity will co-locate.

This arrangement will better support promotion of incumbent worker strategies for existing businesses and ultimately contribute to the economic vitality of Montgomery County.

Linkages Between the American Job Centers and Unemployment Insurance Programs

WSM will take direction from DLLR's Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning on ways to collaborate effectively between the Montgomery County Job Centers and the Unemployment Insurance programs. WSM will facilitate training in which Montgomery County Job Center staff will be educated on the correct information and services they can provide to unemployment insurance claimants.

WSM and Core Partners in Montgomery County will work together to ensure active engagement in coordination of Unemployment Insurance and Montgomery County Job Center offerings.

E. Implementation of Initiatives to Meet the Needs of Employers

Ongoing plans to meet the needs of employers include the enhancement and expansion of targeted industry sector and career pathway efforts. A primary strategy to identify employer requirements is the deliberate inclusion of business leadership on industry-led sector partnerships (e.g., Alliances) to ensure that appropriate input is incorporated into workforce planning activities, and that these requirements are driven by solid labor market information. Business and industry will be able to utilize a talent system that supports:

Closing the Skills Gap: The gap between the skills employers want and those workers have, called the "skills gap," is significant and continues to grow as the number of prepared workers fails to keep up with market demand. The workforce system will work to close this gap through implementation of targeted training programs.

Providing Real-Time, Skill-Based Labor Market Data Systems: Real-time labor market data benefit all stakeholders in workforce development. The WDB will work to produce a strong data system that informs workforce development strategies and better target investment in effective programs.

Improving Job-Seeker-to-Employer Matching: Employers struggle to find the talent they need, and job seekers cannot find the jobs they want. In studies conducted by management consulting company Accenture, only 18% of employers said their access to skilled workers was sufficient. Job seekers reported similar struggles: a mere 12% said finding the right job was easy. Fifty-six percent of employers and 48% of job seekers expressed a desire for a better system of matching needed skills with available jobs.

The WDB, WSM and the larger workforce system will support such a talent system through a variety of activities and initiatives:
- Industry-Led Projects – WSM currently operates an EARN Maryland initiative for healthcare. WSM will continue and grow this initiative to better serve the hospitals in Montgomery County. In addition, WSM has secured funding from alternative sources to

support industry-led projects in energy, cyber/IT, health care and bioscience.

- Work and Learn Strategies – Work-based learning strategies is a foundational service for employer services. WSM utilizes On-the-Job Training and youth work experience initiatives to help employers grow their own talent and better connect with the candidate base. WSM is working with DLLR and Montgomery County government to expand apprenticeship opportunities in the county, including opportunities within non-traditional occupations and industries. In addition, WSM has partnered with MCPS to increase career exploration opportunities through a program titled – Summer R.I.S.E. to all rising high school Juniors and Seniors that provide a structured connection between kids and companies in the county (see website)
- Employer Training Programs – WSM will target employer training programs within the county's high-growth industries and within the small business community. Employer training programs include customized training and incumbent worker training options. WSM will collaborate with DLLR on Maryland Business Works as appropriate to ensure coordinated training options.
- Sector Strategies – Sector strategies is a natural outgrowth of business engagement. This model can make a larger impact on the business community by helping the industry grow and become more economically competitive. Sector strategies helps develop our area's key employment sectors and support those industries that impact our community the most.
- Career Pathways Initiatives – WSM is currently engaging a consultant to support the development of Career Pathways from the employer perspective. The WDB sees career pathways as an opportunity to promote industry opportunities and enhance job seeker knowledge of occupations within the industries.
- Consultation Strategies – WSM is developing a portfolio of services designed to meet the needs of businesses in Montgomery County. Part of this portfolio includes working closely with recruiting firms to better support candidate matching for businesses. In addition, WSM is building a vetted listing of human resource consultants that can support employers with their talent needs beyond the system's offerings.

F. Coordination with Economic Development Activities

The WDB has always recognized the importance of a partnership between workforce and economic development. Engagement in activities with economic development partners is a community-wide effort that provides a more holistic approach that creates an environment where significant job creation can occur. The county has created an independent economic development agency, the Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation (MCEDC).

Coordination is occurring through the following strategies:
- The WSM CEO sits on the MCEDC board and the CEO of the MCEDC sits on the WSM board of directors to assure strategic alignment.
- The WSM staff is a full partner on the MCEDC team that makes visits to prospective employers so that any workforce needs presented will be addressed as part of the plan for the employer.
- The county's comprehensive economic development plan incorporates strategies for

talent development that are also part of the WDB's strategic plan.
- WSM will work closely with established sector incubators and accelerators to promote entrepreneurial skills and microenterprise services.
- WSM and MCEDC will co-locate to better align services.

G. Leverage and Coordination of Supportive Services

WSM recognizes the need for participants to gain seamless access to support services, and has experience in coordinating and collaborating with many of the agencies that provide these services. Many are formal MOU partners, including the Department of Health and Human Services and the Housing Opportunities Commission.

> *"We're not going to be able to really address poverty in the county unless there's a good job strategy along with a good housing strategy…we must have well-articulated, well supported strategies that can help workers/residents achieve economic stability and mobility."*
> *- Uma Ahluwalia, Director*
> *Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services*

The Local Management Board in Montgomery County is the Montgomery County Collaboration Council for Children, Youth and Families, Inc. WSM and the Collaboration Council have partnered on proposals to expand support services to disconnected young adults. Other collaborative efforts are underway.

As an active member of Non-Profit Montgomery, a convening organization, the WDB is enhancing our collaboration and effective partnership with the multitude of non-profit agencies and community-based organizations that provide valued and essential services such as, but not limited to, food, shelter, transportation, literacy, language learning, and mental health services. Understanding the critical role that our community-based organizations provide within the workforce development system, WSM strives to engage partnerships and collaborative activities with the multiple agencies working with foreign born/trained, veterans, disconnected young adults, homeless, returning citizens, and individuals with disabilities that are essential in providing strong quality of life support services. Through this strong and valued collaboration, we can mitigate employment barriers, leverage resources across the system, and potentially braid funding streams to connect the capabilities of wrap-around supports for shared customers.

In addition, WSM continually seeks additional resources to expand the capabilities and programming around barrier mitigation. In partnership with the Department of Health and Human Services, WSM operates a two-generation grant to enhance delivery for young parents and to redesign intake to include holistic review of workers as parents.

Strategies to enhance employment barrier supports as defined by the local plan focus group:
- Regularly scheduled convening of community based organizations.
- A community based organization representative on the WSM board codified in the by-laws.
- Non-profits well represented on the WDB.
- Use of technology such as a community based organization database and asset map.

- Development of a system of staff certifications for workforce professionals (such as the National Association of Workforce Professionals' Certified Workforce Development Professional)
- Investment in capacity building.
- Promotion of organizational quality standards.
- Delivery of workforce services at community agencies where individuals are being served through both virtual service delivery and pop-up job centers.
- Preference for local community based agencies in WIOA procurement processes.

Due to diversity of Montgomery County's talent pool, job seekers can face a wide range of barriers. WSM will work to effectively train staff on diversity awareness and cultural sensitivity, as well as continue to explore ways to leverage the wide capabilities of the community in addressing barriers of Montgomery's talent pool through an integrated and customer-centric supportive service system. In addition, WSM will review its supportive service policy with partners to expand capabilities of offerings under WIOA. The revised supportive services policy will be finalized by March 31, 2017.

H. A Strong Business Voice

The WDB is focused on employers as a primary customer and intends to maximize the demand driven approaches found in WIOA. WIOA affords employers a variety of opportunities to ensure that workforce development is aligned with their specific needs.

A key strategy of the WDB is to convene and actively participate in sector partnerships, which the WDB calls Strategic Industry Sector Alliances. These Alliances are made up of key industry representatives and industry stakeholders. The goal is to facilitate dialogue that results in understanding of the needs within the industry, creating initiatives that will address talent gaps.

The WDB is utilizing the information and guidance on sector strategies to develop apprenticeship opportunities, increase sector employer cooperation around critical occupational training, develop industry-specific recruitment and retention strategies, and build industry awareness, as well as encourage private sector resources and effort to supplement the system. In addition, the WDB solicits employer participation in forums, roundtables, and other structured activities that inform system delivery and improvements.

"The future of healthcare is going to be focused on integrated solutions…Providers should partner with each other to develop our pool of healthcare talent. Rather than focusing on talent development for a single hospital or employer, we should think in terms of cultivating Montgomery County talent…"

- Marta Brito Perez, Senior VP and Chief Human Resource Officer Adventist Health Care

I. Promotion and Cultivation of Industry-Led Partnerships

WSM and the WDB have created industry alliances for each approved sector and, guided by their input, are currently developing corresponding programing. The WDB has established a Program Committee to

provide oversight and set priorities for all industry sector activities. The WDB has established four industry-led Industry Alliances in high demand and high growth industries to date: Hospitality, Construction, HealthCare and Cyber/IT. These Alliances are engaged or will be engaged in advising on the development of career pathways and identification of skills and solutions needed within their industry to ensure a robust talent pipeline.

WorkSource Montgomery is designing and implementing a sustainable industry-led talent development model to support industry-led partnerships. Using experience with industry alliances and the EARN Maryland grant as a model, WSM will cultivate industry-sector partnerships using the following steps:

- Convene Industry-led capacity building groups
  - Determine current and future employment needs
  - Identify required skill sets for each career
- Create training curriculums and work/learning experiences
  - Employability skills
  - Technical training
  - Work-learning opportunities (Earn while you learn)
- Industry-led talent development projects
  - Training programs
  - Career awareness campaigns
  - Connection to pipeline – targeted recruitment efforts
  - Career pathway articulation
- Outreach/Recruitment strategies
  - Pipeline Development (Community-Based Organization, MCPS, Higher Ed. Professional & Business Associations)
  - Incumbent worker training
  - Outreach/recruitment within region for immediate employment demands
- Industry Navigation
  - Employment barrier supports
  - On the Job Coaching

Every sector will have different projects they want to pursue. Staff will support the industry in making those projects a reality. The staff become the conduit between the industry sector partnership and the solutions-focused workforce system.

Strategies to enhance innovative initiatives to address employability needs as defined by the local planning focus group:
- Conduct quarterly partner forums designed to share best practices being used within partner organizations and to design system wide processes.
- Increase the use of technology on two fronts. One: to increase the effectiveness of system and process management across partners and two: to increase access and effectiveness in customer interfacing processes and services.
- Improve effectiveness and integration of processes across the system using customer

relationship management systems, dashboards and common databases.
- Improve the customer's experience through of virtual one stop platforms, communication and engagement through social media, and expanded electronic resources.
- Continue and expand current industry-led employability career pathway models.
- Expand Work-Learning experiences through strategic partnerships.

WSM is also an active participant in the EARN Maryland program, Maryland Tech Connection, Tech-Hire, Apprenticeship USA, American Promise, and The Disabilities Employment Initiative grant to cultivate additional opportunities for industry sector strategies. WSM will continue to seek discretionary funding to maintain and expand industry-led initiatives.

J. Inclusion of Faith and Community-Based Organizations

Currently the board has a representative from the faith community that represents the pastoral conference for the county. The WDB and its partners are committed to fuller engagement with faith-based organizations, as they provide a valuable voice for specific segments of the community. WSM is currently reaching out to faith-based organizations to enhance our outreach and connect to existing faith-based workforce services.

Strategies to enhance engagement of faith-based organizations as defined by local planning focus groups:
- Identify benefits for the faith based organization
- Create a communication and outreach plan
- Identify and meet with faith organizations, such as the Montgomery County Faith Community Advisory Council and interfaith organizations, to engage them in identifying how they would like to become involved and what their communities need.

SECTION 3: AMERICAN JOB CENTER DELIVERY SYSTEM

A. American Job Centers in Montgomery County

WSM collaborates with Core WIOA partners to manage three Montgomery County Job Centers in the County:

Wheaton – Comprehensive Center
Operator: Job Center Consortium
Westfield South Office Building
11002 Veirs Mill Road, First Floor
Wheaton, MD 20902
301.929.6880
TTY: 301.962.4083

Germantown
Operator: Job Center Consortium
Up-County Regional Services Center
12900 Middlebrook Road, 1st Floor
Germantown, MD 20874
Phone: 240.777.2050

Montgomery County Correctional Facility – not open to the public
Operator: Job Center Consortium
22880 Whelan Lane
Boyds, Maryland 20841
Telephone: 240.773.9700

WSM is committed to reaching out to our career seekers in the communities where they live to ease access and create a stronger customer experience. WSM is finalizing a MOU process to provide "pop-up" job centers at the community libraries. The first "pop-up center" is scheduled for late March with monthly services and workshops to be held in a variety of library locations.

B. Customer Flow System

WSM and the Core Partners are in the process of redesigning the customer flow in the Montgomery County Job Centers, in tandem with a physical redesign of the comprehensive Montgomery County Job Center. The new focus of the customer flow will be the customers' experience in receiving services, in addition to ensuring all job seekers receive quality access, regardless of skill level, barriers, or demographic background.

As customers walk into the Montgomery County Job Center, a greeter will be available to provide a warm welcome. The front desk staff are trained to determine whether any customers are veterans. Customers who self-attest to veteran status shall receive priority of service from this point forward. If a customer self-attests to veteran status, staff complete DLLR's Significant Barrier to Employment (SBE) Checklist to determine whether the veteran qualifies as having one or more SBEs.

When the Personalized Needs Assessment is completed, veterans choose from the following options:

1. If the customer qualifies as SBE, and requires intensive services to overcome a barrier to employment, AJC staff assists in setting up an appointment for him/her to meet with Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialist.

2. If the customer does *not* require intensive services, he/she is then referred to Basic Career Services resources, WIOA Title I resources, an AJC Job Service Specialist, or other resource as determined appropriate based on the Personalized Needs Assessment.

The core partners are currently reevaluating the intake and customer flow process and will ensure that the flow has multiple access points. The new intake process will provide different avenues for initial intake that best meets the customers' needs and will begin in full at the completion of the physical redesign of the space in April 2017. New customers will be introduced to the services in the center through a customized intake process directed by the customer's needs and desired services. The Job Center Consortium is currently working through a redesign of the intake process that could include a PowerPoint/video on the computer, a workshop-style orientation to the center (currently offered), or a customized one-on-one intake.

As part of the intake process, customers will be triaged and channeled into three categories to enhance and customize service options by either WIOA or Wagner-Peyser staff members:
1. Work Ready → WIOA Basic Career Services through Wagner-Peyser services. Services include job search resources, labor market information, access to job service specialists, workshops, job opportunity e-blasts.
2. Work Ready, Needs Training → WIOA Training Services through blended service offerings. Services include workshops and occupational training services. WDB will explore expedited service delivery for this category.
3. Needs Intensive Supports → WIOA Individualized Career Services through Title I services. Services include skill development (to include both technical and essential workplace skills), career guidance, job readiness skills, and barrier mitigation.

Individuals who fall into the second or third categories will be connected to a WIOA orientation offered multiple times throughout the week at Montgomery County Job Center locations to access individualized employment and training services. The "7 Steps" to Employment model for WIOA adult programming is outlined in Section 4A.

The Job Center Consortium is currently reviewing the best ways to ensure all WIOA partners are included in the customer flow process. Currently, many of the WIOA partners have a physical presence in the comprehensive Montgomery County Job Center in Wheaton. Job Corps has a staff member who conducts outreach out of the center, and DLLR and the adult sub-contractor staff refer to each other for services. Montgomery College and DORS have a presence in the building – for individuals that need additional support for training, adult basic skills, or vocational rehabilitation, customers are referred to the appropriate entity. Department of Health and Human Services refers TANF customers that need additional employment or occupational training support to the Montgomery County Job Center.

As part of the customer flow redesign, the partners are working on partner profiles to support quality referrals among each other. In addition, the Job Center Consortium is create a "Holistic Career Seeker" wheel that identifies the key skills needed to be successful in a career. The wheel will identify what services partners provide for each category and will become the basis for an integrated assessment and referral system.

C. Meaningful Access to All Customers

WSM is committed to ensuring meaningful access to services in the Montgomery County Job Centers and affiliate sites for all customers. The Montgomery County Job Centers are expected to meet the needs of job seeker customers by ensuring universal access to their programs and activities for all eligible individuals. Meaningful access includes access to service delivery, resources, and customer support throughout the process. WSM will be exploring strategies and processes for deliberate navigation for customers through key personnel for both the jobseeker customer and the employer customer.

WSM understands that no matter how streamlined the system is, some customers will need additional navigation support. Core partners are currently reviewing how best to help both sets of customers navigate the system. In addition, WSM will continually work with partners to enhance and eliminate gaps in the customer flow and service delivery model that inhibits customers from receiving meaningful access.

D. One-Stop Operator Selection Process

WSM is committed to following all federal, local and state procurement policies and processes. Contracts are awarded based on pre-established qualifications and scoring protocols.

In Montgomery County, the One Stop Operator is the systems manager. Their responsibility is to ensure that all centers and affiliate sites are configured and operate in collaboration with all the required partners and other potential partners in Montgomery County. As the Montgomery County Job Centers require multiple partners to deliver services on site, effective collaboration is essential. The current One Stop Operator is the Job Center Consortium.

The WDB followed the requirements to procure a one stop operator. Given there were no responses to the solicitation, the WDB met all the requirements for a well-advertised, open and fair competitive process. In the absence of responses, the WDB (as indicated in our procurement procedures) voted to sole source the function of one-stop operator to the current consortium, complying with applicable federal, state and local requirements, i.e., Title 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 200. Other key agencies and community organizations are engaged in the Consortium provided they have a presence in the Montgomery County Job Center.

E. Continuous Improvement in the Montgomery County Job Centers

The WDB has several systems in place to ensure continuous improvement. The Job Center Consortium ensures that all facilities, technology, services, employment placement and outreach materials meet all compliance requirements and engage in external monitoring of the Montgomery County Job Centers and services to measure compliance and quality services. In addition, ongoing training in areas such as case management strategies, integrated service delivery models, county assets, and customer service will be explored for entities with a presence in the Montgomery County Job Centers.

WSM and the WDB through a RFP process procured two national organizations to provide direct services under the Adult, Dislocated Workers and Youth programs. These organizations both

have substantial experiences and a strong national reputation for progressive and robust service delivery and conduct their own continuous improvement processes. Additional local providers augment the services provided the prime WIOA youth program operator. WSM works with program operators to ensure standardization of key services across program operators and to encourage best practices and continuous improvement methods.

The WDB is committed to using evidence-based practices and to identifying opportunities to improve all processes, systems and services. WSM utilizes many sources to find nationally recognized practices, including resources provided through the National Association of Workforce Boards and the National Association of Workforce Development Professionals.

F. Additional Access to Services

The Montgomery County Job Centers are in the process of improving the customer flow process and the service delivery model. Included in the development and implementation of the enhanced customer flow, increased job-seeker access is a priority. WSM intends to explore access to services through additional means, such as use of technology and developing mobile "Pop-Up Career Centers" that can be taken into the community.

Technological access options currently under review include a video orientation to services within the centers that will be accessible on WSM's website. Additional possible uses of technology include the ability to interact with WIOA staff virtually to mitigate transportation barriers, and delivery of core workshops via webinar. The core partners will continue to explore feasibility and implementation of service delivery via technology through enhancing efforts around social media as a way to communicate and interact. In addition, the partners will explore the creation of a virtual one stop platform.

G. Compliance with Provision of Services for Individuals with Disabilities

Montgomery County Job Centers are required to provide reasonable accommodation for individuals with disabilities to ensure equal access and opportunity. Staff must use the same processes for all customers, including individuals with disabilities. The program operator will also make reasonable modifications in practices and procedures when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination based on disability. WSM will be the entity responsible for ensuring the Montgomery County Job Centers meet accessibility requirements, and DLLR will support accessibility compliance at the Wheaton Job Center. DORS will provide technical assistance around accessibility and accommodations.

All Montgomery County Job Center staff will provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities who utilize WIOA career and training services and WIOA youth program services to ensure equal access and opportunity. The policies pertaining to reasonable accommodations apply to qualified individuals with disabilities in regard to:
- Registration and orientation,
- Initial screening, assessments, and testing,
- Service delivery, including career services, training services, and support services, and
- Continuous improvement.

All contractors/venders post notice of the availability and the right to receive reasonable accommodations. This notice is directed to registrants, applicants, participants, and applicants for employment/employees, program operators, and the public; and includes that it is a qualified individual's right to receive reasonable accommodations.

Staff assure that facilities wherever WIOA services are provided are ADA accessible. In addition, assistive technology is available for use within the centers, including American Disability Act-compliant computers in the resource rooms and classrooms. WSM staff will work with partners to ensure alignment of staff development.

H. Sub-Awardee Compliance with Provision of Services for Individuals with Disabilities

WSM will ensure that sub-recipients utilize appropriate procedures and processes under the ADA and Rehabilitation Act -Title IV. All service providers, including sub-recipients, may be subject to the following provisions of law:

- Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, which prohibits discrimination on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief and requires that reasonable accommodations be provided to qualified individuals with disabilities in certain circumstances.
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, which prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities by recipients of Federal financial assistance.
- Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which prohibits discrimination in employment based on disability.
- Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which prohibits State and local governments from discriminating based on disability.
- Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act, which requires recipients to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, certain programs run by the U.S. Department of Education.
- Maryland's Anti-Discrimination Laws, which prohibits discrimination based on marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or genetic information in addition to those covered by Section 188 above.

I. Roles and Resource Contributions of the American Job Center Partners

WSM values our strong partnerships. Specific partnership roles and resource contributions will be detailed in the MOU and RSA. Under direction from DLLR, WSM has extended the current partnership MOU through December 31, 2016 and the RSA through June 30, 2017. In the interim, staff continue to have regularly scheduled meetings with partners to discuss options for resource sharing that support stronger integrated service delivery.

J. Use of Individualized Training Accounts to Support Priority Industries

The WDB will define how ITAs will be utilized as part of a larger training strategy in its local policy guidance. Use of ITAs to support priority industries will be used in combination with

industry-led cohort trainings, incumbent worker training, and work and learn strategies. With input from partners, the WDB is currently updating ITA policies that align with new regulations and local priorities.

K. Priority of Service

The WDB will ensure that participants in the WIOA Adult program meets the federal, state, and local priority of service guidelines, and as such, that the targeted Adult populations can access the WIOA system on a priority basis. The WDB will revise its eligibility policy to reflect the state's priority of service guidance and will have a completed policy by March 2017.

WIOA law has identified the following populations as targeted under Adult priority of service:
- public assistance recipients,
- low-income adults; **and/or**
- individuals who are basic skills deficient.

The Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR) has identified the following targeted populations under WIOA Adult funding:

Table 13: Maryland Priority of Service Populations.

Target Populations: Individuals with Barriers to Employment
Displaced Homemakers
Eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers
Ex-offenders
Homeless individuals
Individuals facing substantial cultural barriers
Individuals with disabilities, including youth with disabilities
Individuals within two years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under Part A of the Social Security Act[19]
Individuals who are English language learners
Individuals who are unemployed, including the long-term unemployed
Individuals who have low levels of literacy
Individuals without a High School Diploma
Low income individuals (including TANF and SNAP recipients)
Native Americans, Alaskan Natives, and Native Hawaiians
Older individuals
Single parents (including single pregnant women and non-custodial parents)
Veterans
Youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system

---

[19] This refers to the TANF program. Each State defines lifetime eligibility for TANF. In Maryland, individuals can receive TANF benefits for up to five years. If individuals reach year four and five of receipt of TANF benefits, these individuals become a targeted population according to WIOA, irrespective of the fact that after year five, individuals may continue to receive TANF benefits due to hardship.

The local board may add additional populations due to changes in economy or county conditions based on local demographic data and a vote by the WDB.

Priority to targeted populations will be given in the following order for services under WIOA Adult funding:

Table 14: Maryland Priority of Service Populations.

First Priority	Veterans and eligible spouses who are also low-income, recipients of public assistance and/or basic skills deficient
Second Priority	Individuals who meet criteria to be considered a target population (including veterans)
Third Priority	Eligible spouses who did not meet "first priority" conditions
Fourth Priority	Individuals who are not veterans and do not meet criteria to be considered a target population

Priority of service status is established at the time of eligibility determination and does not change during the period of participation. For the purposes of program eligibility, priority of service will be implemented through priority of intake. Out of a group of individuals who have applied for WIOA enrollment, individuals who are eligible for first priority must be served and processed first, followed by individuals who are eligible for second priority, and so forth. In addition, targeted programs and initiatives operated through WIOA Adult funding will be focused on priority populations where feasible.

Program operators are encouraged to identify barriers of customers for local performance measure determination. Any barriers documented for priority of service purposes must be verified through allowable documentation outlined in local policy. Participant files must show indication of priority status on the outside of the file. Priority of service implementation will be tracked by WSM and program operators.

L. Incumbent Worker Training Opportunities

In the fast and rapidly changing world of talent development, WSM is committed to incumbent worker training. Based on industry demand and career pathway development, incumbent worker training will be enhanced to include stackable credentialing, enhanced cohort training service delivery and additional case management.

The following factors will be considered when determining the eligibility of employers to receive the WIOA share of funds to provide training to incumbent workers using either Adult and/or Dislocated Worker formula funds:

- The characteristics of the incumbent workers to be trained and how they would benefit from retention or advancement.
- The quality of training. Whenever possible, the training should allow the participant to gain industry-recognized training experience and/or lead to industry-recognized credentials and/ or an increase in wages.
- The occupation(s) for which incumbent worker training is being provided should be in

demand, aligned with the WDB's targeted industries or small businesses.
- The employer has not laid of any workers within 120 days to relocate to Montgomery County.

The WDB will follow federal and state regulations for the employer share of the training costs.

M. Excellent Customer Service

Excellence in Service is a core WSM principle, and as such, provision of quality customer service in the Montgomery County Job Centers and county workforce initiatives is a priority.

To ensure quality customer service that meets WIOA compliance, WSM will provide staff development opportunities to address key principles of customer service, ensure appropriate certifications and skills of staff, and evaluate customer satisfaction for continuous improvement. WIOA sub-contractors also provide internal customer service training as well.

A Training Coordinator is on staff through the adult WIOA sub-contractor, and coordinates and tracks staff training for all adult sub-contractor employees. The WDB will work with all sub-contractors and partners to coordinate staff training efforts across entities to align strategies, knowledge bases, and customer service delivery. WSM is committed to ensuring that all customers are treated with dignity and respect and have engaged in cultural sensitivity training for all staff.

WSM has collected customer satisfaction information through comment cards, focus groups and annual surveys. Staff members are currently examining ways to improve the customer satisfaction data collection and analysis system to gather more information on customer satisfaction to serve as an indicator for the quality of customer service provided within the Montgomery County Job Centers and workforce programs. These surveys will assist in identifying areas of staff and sub-contractor improvement, and will be the basis for future training and provision of resources to advance customer service delivery.

SECTION 4: TITLE I – ADULT, YOUTH AND DISLOCATED WORKER FUNCTIONS

A. Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Activities

All employment services specified in the WIOA legislation are available to Adults and Dislocated Workers either directly in the Montgomery County Job Centers or through the core partners. Training services will be provided in partnership with a vast network of public and private training institutions, including the school districts, vocational technical centers, community colleges, private proprietary schools, and four-year public and private educational institutions. The WDB's delivery of WIOA workforce services for adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area include but not limited to:

Jobseeker Services:
1. Basic Services such as current labor market information, standard job referrals, job search assistance, workshops, and supportive services information.

2. Individualized Services such as comprehensive assessment, job readiness services, career planning, workforce preparation, work and learn strategies, financial literacy services (partnering with organizations such as the Community Action Agency (DHHS), Maryland CASH Campaign, Junior Achievement, Coalition For the Advancement of Financial Education Montgomery MD), and English language acquisition.

3. Training Services such as occupational skills training, customized training, On-The-Job-Training, transitional jobs and entrepreneurial and self-employment training.

The WSM website provides jobseekers with information for all services and activities provided through Montgomery County Job Centers. The WDB encourages the development of training modules that facilitate career development in high demand occupational areas through Individual Training Account (ITA) vouchers or through cohort training options. ITA's can only be used at WDB approved institutions.

Through the Job Center Consortium, WIOA Title I services are becoming more interconnected with other county workforce services to fully support employers and career seekers. This is a dramatic change from the previous model where activities and services through WIOA Title I have not been as aligned with other community workforce offerings, nor fully representing the vast diversity of the county. In addition, offerings to better serve a diverse customer base through co-enrollment and collaborative case management strategies are being developed as indicated in our most recent MOU.

An assessment of program operations of WIOA Title I services led to a recent change in sub-contractors and a reevaluation of service delivery systems. The WDB and WSM have built into the contract assessments of program operations at least bi-annually, in addition to monthly reporting and qualitative measures. Current program operators are national workforce vendors that maintain accountability for scope of services and meeting WIOA guidelines. They submit monthly fiscal and performance reporting.

Graphic 9: Title I Adult and Dislocated Customer Flow.

Outreach and Referral → Customer Registration → Initial Career Services → Identify as Veteran? —YES→ Referred to Veteran Services

Identify as Veteran? —N→ Customer navigates use of all services in Resource Room and eligible workshops

Customer navigates use of all services in Resource Room and eligible workshops → Remain Unemployed? —YES→ Career Counseling, Assessment: WIOA Orientation (101) → Career Plan (IEP):
1. Eligibility Document Collection
2. Suitability Assessment (102)
3. WIOA enrollment into MWE (142)
4. Initial Development of IEP (142)

Career Plan (IEP) → Career Services:
1. Meet with BSR (123,125,133)

Customer Follows IEP? —N→ Career Services: 1. Meet with BSR (123,125,133)

Customer Follows IEP? —YES→ Career Specialist meets with Customer (200, 202)

Training?
1. Career Services provided (200,202)
2. IEP Finalized (205)
→ Best Path to Employment?
1. CASAS (204)
2. Meet with BSR (123,125,133)

Best Path to Employment? —YES→ Customer choice of approved training vendor (103)

Customer choice of approved training vendor (103) —N→ Customer most in need?

Customer most in need? → Customer provides need of funds-tuition, books, etc. (Training Checklist)

Customer provides need of funds → Career Specialist submits ITA request to Supervisor → Approved?

Approved? —N→ Career Specialist meets with Customer (200, 202)

Approved? —YES→ Complete enrollment, MIS update IEP (300, 301)

Complete enrollment, MIS update IEP (300, 301) → Career Specialist verifies, track, and maintain case notes:
1. Collection of Measurable skills during 300 level code
2. Monthly contact
3. Collection of Credential at close of 300 level code

Career Services: 1. Meet with BSR (123,125,133) → Assistance with employment to match skill sets/abilities:
1. Career Guidance (200, 202)
2. Formal/Final Development of IEP (205)
→ Provide Career Services until employment achieved, or referred to OJT or Training. (123,125,133)
→ Employment (122)
→ Follow Up (F-codes)
→ Supportive Services → Workshops/ Adult Education Programs

Career Specialist meets with Customer → Customer completes all required paperwork or applications → Career Specialist will refer customer to appropriate services → All information updated in electronic files → Career Services/Training → Job Search with Business Liaison (123,125,133)

Career Specialist verifies... → Will refer to Job readiness near end of training/employment
1. Meet with BSR (123,125,133)
→ Employment Achieved? (122)

Employment Achieved? (122) —YES→ Follow Up/Career Ladder Services (F-Codes) → Job Retention/ Employability Support Services

Employment Achieved? (122) —N→ Continue Job Search/Career Counseling (123,125,133)

"7 Steps" Key

Basic Resource Center	
1. WIOA Orientation	
2. Career Plan	
3. Career Services	
4. Follow IEP	
5. Job Search	
6. Employment	
7. Follow Up	

rdination wi... gy that is... espon... d plant closings by

Response is a... ...Rapid Response Activities

quickly coordinating services and providing immediate aid to companies and their affected workers. The WDB will meet the requirements of any state rapid response policy and will work collaboratively with DLLR to provide Rapid Response services to worker groups on whose behalf a trade petition has been filed.

Rapid Response activities will be a coordinated effort that includes the employer, affected workers, WSM, DLLR Dislocation Services Unit, and Montgomery County Job Center partners. WSM will work with employers and employee representative(s) to reduce the disruptions on businesses, affected workers, and communities that are associated by job loss. The WDB is committed to working with both Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) and non-WARN businesses and employees to maximize resources in times of job loss.

Generally, Rapid Response Teams provide customized services onsite at an affected company, accommodate work schedules, and assist companies and workers through the challenging transitions associated with job loss. The WDB will work with the Rapid Response Team to conduct an initial business consultation, deliver an information session for affected employees, and customize additional solutions as appropriate under the Dislocation Services Unit's direction.

C. Youth Workforce Development Activities

The WDB is currently, through the young adults contractor, implementing a multi-tiered, comprehensive approach to individualized young adults workforce development activities. Activities include assessment and provision of education, training, and employment services by integrating core WIOA services with supporting services and enhancing service approaches by co-enrolling eligible young adults in other successful workforce based programs. The WDB is continually developing its capacity to serve individuals by expanding its programs and partnerships.

Crucial to this success is the competitive process used in selecting providers who have an established track record of serving young adults with workforce barriers. The WDB has instituted a five-step process for serving young adults to include individualized assessment, sector based job training in leading industries, young adults apprenticeship and work-based learning opportunities, placement, and follow-up services. Providers are required to comply with the five-part implementation process.

The WDB young adults contractor has partnered, through a subcontract, with a community based organization that has specific expertise in serving young adults with disabilities. The young adults service provider serves all at-risk young adult populations within the in-school and out-of-school young adult programs.

In-School and Out-of-School Youth Services include but are not limited to:
- Objective and comprehensive assessment services

- Career exploration and guidance
- Academic support and tutoring
- Obtaining a diploma or GED preparation and testing
- Post-secondary education and vocational training
- Job referrals and employment
- Work readiness and work maturity skills training
- Internship/ work experience activities, including summer youth connection programs
- Military information
- Support services
- Referrals to adult Montgomery County Job Center locations
- Mentoring and leadership development
- Job Corps information/ referrals

The WDB will ensure that sub-contractors conduct assessments of each participant to include academic level, skill level, and service need. The assessment, per federal guidance, will include review of basic skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests (including non-traditional occupations), aptitudes, supportive service needs, and developmental needs.

Following assessment, young adult staff will develop an Individual Service Strategy with each young adult that will map out anticipated progress through the program and will include employment goals, objectives and milestones, and appropriate services. Staff will focus on career pathways as part of their career guidance. The Individual Service Strategy will be reviewed every 90 days per federal guidance.

WSM and the WDB are currently structuring an effective operation and delivery of youth programs and services through the following:
- Providing objective assessments that focus on academic and occupational skill levels, as well as service needs and career pathways.
- Partnering with K-12 and other stakeholders to reduce dropout rates for in-school young adults.
- Prioritizing services to older and out of school young adults, specifically disconnected young adults.
- Re-engaging disconnected young adults through strategic partnerships with highest need secondary schools and postsecondary institutions.
- Increasing the number of young adults that attain postsecondary degrees/credentials with a priority on high growth industry sectors as defined by the local labor market information.
- Partnering with employers, education and other partners to connect young adults to work based learning opportunities.
- Co-locating youth programs in Montgomery County Job Centers to strategically align and target young adult services and resources to populations of highest need and to facilitate co-enrollment when appropriate.

- Utilizing technology to increase access and services.
- Partnering with local disability-serving agencies and providers as well as health and mental health providers.

Procedures are implemented to target and provide workforce services to young adults with the following barriers:

Foster Care/Aging out of Foster Care Youth: The foster care young adult population service delivery focuses on career guidance, assistance with social service referrals (mental health/ medical), tutoring and academic supports, employability skills/ life skills training, job referrals, leadership development skills, support services, and mentoring activities.

Justice-Involved Youth: The primary services to justice-involved young adults focus on work readiness and work maturity skills training, comprehensive career counseling, assistance attaining employment, liaison with court system, collaboration with organizations that target justice-involved young adults, development of strong partnerships to fill gaps in existing interventions, and mentoring activities.

Youth with Disabilities: Services for young adults with disabilities focus on collaboration and linkages with community partners' services for young adults with disabilities, customized work readiness skills, customized internships/ work experience, and supportive services.

Basic Skills Deficient: Services for young adults who are academic or English basic skills deficient focus on usage of standardized tests to determine basic skill levels, pre-testing and post-testing, tutoring, developmental activities to include individual or group academic activities, and specialized instructions to include integrated learning models.

Existing youth services will be enhanced to include industry sector strategies; this employer centered approach will give young adults unique and direct access to private sector employer opportunities in the WDB's four targeted growth industries of construction, information technology, healthcare, and hospitality. With enhanced young adults services around industry sectors, employers will be able to access a wider pool of qualified out of school and offer work-based learning opportunities.

D. Coordination with Secondary and Post-Secondary Education Programs

The partners meet quarterly to discuss coordination issues, including coordination with secondary and post-secondary education. In addition, WSM has entered into formal partnerships with both MCPS and Montgomery college to identify other areas of activity and service coordination with secondary and postsecondary education programs in the county that lead to local in-demand jobs.

The WDB will work with its partners to implement recognized post-secondary credentials across programs that are desired and endorsed by employers and aligned to career pathways. Strategies include:

1. Using the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) of vetted providers.
2. Selecting training providers that meet employer requirements for skill attainment, certification or degrees.
3. Providing career planning services through the Montgomery County Job Centers and ensuring the planning includes a review of post-secondary education options.
4. Augmenting occupational training with work-based learning initiatives, such as OJTs, work experiences, and apprenticeships.

Our vision is that every jobseeker who goes through the system will have access, when applicable, to obtaining:
- A High School Diploma equivalency.
- A clear pathway, provided by trained career specialists depending on customer interests and labor market information about demand occupations, to access post-secondary credit and non-credit programs that result in industry-recognized certifications of the technical skill requirements of the occupation.
- Increased opportunity for stackable certifications and credentials.
- Opportunities for work-readiness training
- Connection to practical, hands-on skill training.

E. Coordination with Local Transportation and Supportive Services

Supportive services are defined as those services or activities (provided either directly to or on behalf of customers) necessary to reduce or eliminate barriers to obtaining or retaining employment. The WDB permits the provision of supportive services for several populations to assist with the elimination or reduction of barriers that may hinder compliance with training, work activity requirements, and employment opportunities. The WDB will provide support services that are consistent with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

Common barriers to employment, employment training, and other required activities typically include lack of transportation, lack of available child care and in extreme case a lack of a proper home. To address these issues, the centers have informal partnerships with the public transportation system and various other non-profit organizations. Through these partnerships, the Montgomery County Job Centers can obtain bus passes each month that are distributed to clients to assist with transportation issues. Eligible clients are also able to receive child care vouchers that can be used to pay for daycare services and in those cases of extreme hardship. These informal processes are in the process of becoming formalized through the development of a master list of partnering agencies and center staff members receiving regular training on the informal referral process.

The WDB and the partners are currently developing a strategy to reach out to more organizations that provide these services to develop formal partnerships and the creation of an asset map. A key area of need is mental health services. Currently a family services agency is located at the one stop to provide some mental health counseling to customers who may be depressed or have other non-psychotic needs. More is needed, along with transportation and housing. A plan is in development to also provide training on trauma informed care to case managers at the centers.

F. Use of Local Adult Funding

Through our strong partnership with community-based organizations, our training organizations, and our Adult and Dislocated worker service provider, WSM is well positioned to provide a variety of employment and training related activities to all adult priority groups as indicated in the state plan and in support of Montgomery County initiatives. Program operators will ensure that individuals receiving intensive WIOA services meet eligibility requirements for adult and dislocated workers as outlined in local policies.

WSM and its program operators will also utilize WIOA adult funding to support employer engagement on behalf of the WIOA system, to include but not be limited to job fairs and job matching, industry specific recruitments, industry sector strategies, industry-led projects, retention, incumbent and other employer training, assessments, roundtables, and any other allowable WIOA activities to further support employer needs.

For job seeker services, WSM and its program operators may use funding to provide the full array of basic, individualized and follow-up services. These services may include, but are not limited to: outreach, staff services, counseling and guidance, assessment, barrier mitigation and support services, job readiness training, labor market information, training, work and learn opportunities, career pathway upskilling, integrated learning strategies, contracts, technology to support service delivery, and any other allowable workforce service that will benefit the job seeking customer and employers in the regional economy. Where available, WSM will fund special projects to support adult priority populations.

G. Use of Local Dislocated Worker Funding

WSM and its program operators will utilize WIOA dislocated worker funding to support the reemployment of dislocated workers through a dual employer-job seeker approach.

WSM and its program operators will fund employer engagement on behalf of the WIOA system, to include but not be limited to job fairs and job matching, industry specific recruitments, industry sector strategies, industry-led projects, retention, incumbent and other employer training, assessments, roundtables, and any other allowable WIOA activities to further support employer needs. In addition, Dislocated Worker funding will be used to support rapid response activities in the area.

For job seekers, WIOA Dislocated Worker Funding will be focused on helping job seekers retool and retrain to prepare for new careers. These services may include, but are not limited to: outreach, staff services, counseling and guidance, assessment, support services, labor market information, training, work and learn opportunities, career pathway upskilling, contracts, technology to support service delivery, and any other allowable workforce service that will benefit the job seeking customer and employers in the regional economy.

H. Definition of Self-Sufficiency

The WSM policy requires all programs receiving WIOA funding for Adult, Dislocated Worker

or Youth programs will use either the 2016 Poverty Income Guidelines or the 2016 70% LLSIL (whichever is higher) as outlined in Tables 15 and 16, to determine if applicants qualify as "low income" for those programs that require it.

Table 15: Poverty Guidelines.
2016 Poverty Guidelines

Size of Family	Poverty
1	$11,880
2	$16,020
3	$20,160
4	$24,300
5	$28,440
6	$32,580
7	$36,730

Table 16: Lower Living Standards.
2016 LLSIL – 70% by Family Size

Size of Family	Poverty
1	$11,484
2	$18,819
3	$25,832
4	$31,885
5	$37,632
6	$44,010
If 7+, add	$6,378

Addressing the definition of self-sufficiency guides WSM's internal performance measurements, therefore the WDB is currently revising the current self-sufficiency policy from WIA to expand and augment the definition. The Montgomery County Community Action Agency, which focuses on reducing poverty and increasing self-sufficiency in the county utilizes the Self-Sufficiency Standard (SSS), developed for the Maryland Community Action Partnership by the Center for Women's Welfare at the University of Washington. The SSS is a budget-based measure of the cost of living that defines how much families must make to meet basic needs without public or private assistance.

Montgomery County has the highest self-sufficiency rate in the state of Maryland with the self-sufficiency standard for one adult and one preschooler at $71,755 or $40.99 per hour to meet the families' basic needs. While Montgomery County has a higher minimum wage than Maryland at $10.75 an hour, a parent with one preschooler would need to work 128 hours per week to meet the self-sufficiency standard. Montgomery County's self-sufficiency standard is one of the highest in the region, as seen in Graphic 10.

Self-sufficiency will be equivalent to the wages identified in Table 17.

Graphic 10: Regional Self-Sufficiency

Table 17: Self-Sufficiency Standards for Montgomery County, 2016.

	Adult	Adult Preschooler	Adult Infant Preschooler	Adult Preschooler School-age	Adult School-age Teenager	2 Adults Infant	2 Adults Infant Preschooler	2 Adults Preschooler School-age
MONTHLY COSTS								
Housing	$1,511	$1,748	$1,748	$1,748	$1,748	$1,748	$1,748	$1,748
Child Care	$0	$1,279	$2,773	$1,929	$650	$1,494	$2,773	$1,929
Food	$294	$445	$584	$672	$779	$713	$839	$923
Transportation	$180	$180	$180	$180	$180	$360	$360	$360
Health Care	$179	$521	$535	$541	$566	$579	$590	$597
Miscellaneous	$216	$417	$582	$507	$392	$489	$631	$556
Taxes	$770	$1,522	$2,474	$1,903	$1,160	$1,623	$2,152	$1,758
Earned Income Tax Credit (-)	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Child Care Tax Credit (-)	$0	($50)	($100)	($100)	($100)	($50)	($100)	($100)
Child Tax Credit (-)	$0	($83)	($167)	($167)	($167)	($83)	($167)	($167)
SELF-SUFFICIENCY WAGE								
Hourly	$17.90	$33.98	$48.92	$40.99	$29.60	$19.53 per adult	$25.08 per adult	$21.60 per adult
Monthly	$3,151	$5,980	$8,610	$7,215	$5,210	$6,874	$8,827	$7,604
Annual	$37,807	$71,755	$103,322	$86,580	$62,518	$82,489	$105,925	$91,252
Emergency Savings Fund (Monthly)	$62	$295	$491	$402	$227	$77	$174	$112

For Dislocated Workers, the Local Board will consider self-sufficiency as 80% of the pre-layoff family income. A participant making less than 80% of the pre-layoff family income will be considered as an underemployed Dislocated Worker.

I. Definition of "Unlikely to Return to Previous Industry or Occupation"

For dislocated workers, unlikely to return to previous industry or occupation is considered when the dislocated worker is laid off and meets at least one (1) of the requirements below:

- Number of opportunities in previous industry/occupation is declining based on labor market information;
- Supply of candidates in previous industry/occupation exceeds the number of opportunities in the county;
- Projected annual employment increase for industry or occupation is less than 100 jobs;
- The individual has engaged in an unsuccessful job search in their previous industry/occupation for over 3 months;
- Individual can no longer meet the minimum requirements for positions available in their occupation;
- Wage variable for positions no longer matches with individual's level of skills and experience; and/or
- Individual is unable to perform the duties of the previous industry/occupation due to age, ability, illness/injury, disability, or other barriers.
- Individual may not like the current work or may physically be unable to perform the

same duties

This definition will be included in the revised policy for WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Eligibility.

J. Criteria for Youth who "Require Additional Assistance to Complete an Educational Program or to Secure or Hold Employment"

A young adult who requires additional assistance to complete and educational program or to secure or hold employment is defined by WSM as a young adult who meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) document showing a disability;
- Has a letter from a guidance counselor asserting their need of additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment;
- Is currently credit deficient (i.e. one or more grade levels behind peer group);
- Has a poor work history (been fired from 1 or more jobs within the last 6 months, or has a history of sporadic employment such as "has held 3 or more jobs within the last 12 months, and is no longer employed"); and/or
- Has actively been seeking employment for at least 2 months, but remains unemployed or underemployed. This includes a young adult with no employment history, with limited work experience, and/or actively seeking full-time employment, but have only achieved part-time employment.

This definition has been included in the revised policy for WIOA Youth Eligibility Requirements.

K. Demonstration of a "Need for Training"

A need for training is a collaborative decision made with input from the individual and the Career Specialist. Past activities, experience and education level, job readiness level, and the Individual Employment Plan determine the need for training per individual. The WDB in collaboration with our partners are currently defining "need for training" and the documentation required for training in local policy guidance anticipated completion mid- spring.

L. Provision of the Fourteen WIOA Youth Program Elements

Based on assessment results and the Individualized Service Strategy, WSM will ensure that youth providers offer participants access to all WIOA Youth Program elements to support attainment of a secondary school diploma, entry into post-secondary education, and/or career readiness. The program elements may be offered by the lead youth sub-contractor, other subcontractors, collaborators, and/or through referral relationships. All activities relating to delivery of the program elements will be documented within the Maryland Workforce Exchange.

Table 18: Fourteen WIOA Youth Program Elements.

Program Element	Activities/Strategies
Tutoring, study skills training, instruction and evidence-based drop-out and recovery strategies	Pathways Explorer 5-day training; connection to Basic Skills, ESL, and GED instruction (individual and classroom), study skills; Collaboration with universities and community colleges, as well as community based educational organizations to find the right resources for young adults to provide remedial services for areas of academic deficiency as related to industry expectations
Alternative secondary school instruction or drop-out recovery services	Direct referral to drop-out recovery programs, co-enrollment and coordination of educational activities
Paid and unpaid work experiences	Provision of paid and/or unpaid work experiences through year-round placements and Summer Earn & Learn; inclusion of pre-apprenticeship programs, internships, job shadowing, and OJT placement as appropriate and outlined in their Individual Service Strategies; liaison between the young adult and employer will monitor and support the work experience
Occupational skills training	Certification programs tied to targeted industries and individual career and educational goals
Education offered concurrently with workforce preparation and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster	Blended education and work readiness activities and blended sector training and education, such as MI-BEST programs
Leadership development opportunities	Monthly Leadership Lab; activities related to peer mentoring, community service, peer-centered activities, and other positive social behavior exercises
Supportive services	Gift card incentives, test and certification fees, work clothing and equipment, bus passes and other supportive services
Adult mentoring for at least 12 months during or after the program	Recruiting and training adult mentors; connecting young adults to worksite mentors
Follow-up services for at least 12 months	Making monthly contacts with participants, employers, social media, school visits, etc. to ensure young adults is receiving services until they are stable in the workplace per WIOA requirements
Comprehensive guidance and counseling	Provision of mental health and substance abuse assessment and referral to mental health and substance abuse services in the community as needed
Financial literacy education	Inclusion in youth workshops; collaboration with local organizations supporting financial empowerment, including financial institutions to provide financial literacy training, credit counseling, and other services
Entrepreneurial skills training	Inclusion in youth workshops; Connecting young adults with appropriate opportunities to develop and manage their own business enterprise

Labor market and employment information	Providing information on area employers and job openings, review high demand occupation trends and industry; career awareness, guidance, and exploration services; career fairs and job postings
Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training	College tours, academic planning, academic preparation workshops; Ongoing supportive and developmental services; regular contact with young adults, mentoring, and career pathway coaching; Social media will be utilized to stay connected with the youth

WSM will co-enroll youth where appropriate to leverage services in other programs, including Title I (Adult and Dislocated Workers), Title II (Adult Education and Literacy), Health and Human Service programs, and DORS programs.

M. Focus on Youth Work-Based Training Activities

The WDB sets aside at least 20% of its WIOA youth allocated funding for work-based learning activities. The youth contractor provided a budget that allocated 20% of their total funding to be used for this activity.

The WDB promotes, through its strategic plan, the use of 'work and learn' strategies. Work and learn strategies play an important role in preparing individuals for successful careers. The optimal programs combine career-oriented instruction, relevant work experience, and financial assistance. Our programs ensure that work-based learning opportunities are structured to deliberately and intentionally focus on building the work readiness skills and technical competencies validated by local employers.

N. Priority on Out-Of-School Youth

The WDB chose to commit 90% of youth services to out-of-school youth, and is included as a provision in youth sub-contractor contracts.

O. Montgomery County Youth Service Providers

The WDB's integrated WIOA youth workforce development system links services to local labor market needs, community youth programs, and services that effectively connect academic and occupational learning and provide for the holistic development of youth. The intensity and methods of delivering services are intentionally flexible and responsive to the individual needs of youth participants as they develop and progress through a continuum of customized services.

The WDB and the Youth Council undertook an initiative to create a resource map of all youth services in

Workforce Services Offered by Providers

Graphic 11: Youth Services in Montgomery County.
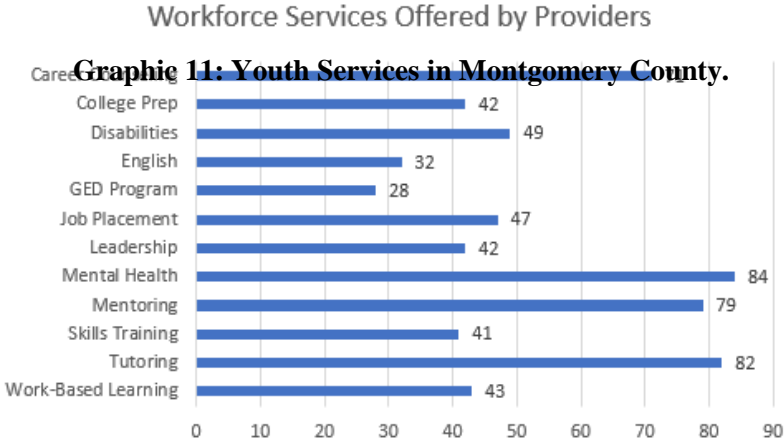
the county. To set parameters for the scope of the study, the Youth Council defined "workforce development-related" youth services using 20 categories. Graphic 11 outlines how many programs in Montgomery County provide each type of youth service based upon a self-reported survey sent to organizations. WSM works closely with the resources to provide integrated services and maximize efficiency.

P. Basic and Individualized Career Services to Customers

The entities selected to provide career services within the Montgomery County Job Centers are the same contracted service providers selected through a competitive procurement process to provide adult and dislocated worker services.

Career services are provided by the contracted service provider staff in collaboration with DLLR and are delivered by staff trained to provide an array of basic and intensive services or case management to job seekers with the desired outcome of employment. The pathway to employment for each job seeker may vary depending upon the individual's unique strengths and barriers.

Montgomery County Job Center staff is available to provide services that include but are not limited to:
- Career Coaching
- Job Search Assistance
- Employability Workshops
- Assessments (skills/interest)
- Labor Market Information
- Referrals to Appropriate Employers
- Career Training Enrollment

The contracted service providers review eligibility and suitability of individuals through an initial intake assessment for workforce development services. After enrollment, Career Specialists employed through the contracted service providers create an Individualized Employment Plan (IEP) with the customer that outlines the employment goals and objectives of the participant and details the employment and training plan for the individual. Individual supports include

Job Supports: Supports include workshops, recruitment events, job clubs, labor market information, and career guidance.

Skills Development: Services include workshops, referrals to training providers, occupational training, and work and learn strategies.

Case Management: Services include barrier mitigation and financial literacy.

Customers can also receive intensive employment services from the contracted TANF service provider through the Department of Health and Human Services and DORS. WSM and its sub-

contractors will work with these WIOA partners to leverage each other's services, braid funding for occupational opportunities, and coordinate service plans. Training services through Title II providers will be included in customer IEPs as appropriate.

Q. Follow-Up Services

The WDB will meet all the requirements of WIOA for the delivery of follow up services for 12 months after exit. The contractors are required to contact a participant in follow up at least once every 60 days. These contacts can be through electronic means or face to face. Every contact must be documented in the participant's file and in the Maryland Workforce Exchange. Further details will be outlined in local policies and procedures.

The follow-up services that are available to WIOA participants who have been exited due to employment may include, but not limited to:
- Referrals to community resources or medical services;
- Tracking progress on the job;
- Work-related peer support groups;
- Assistance securing a better paying job;
- Assistance in addressing work-related problems that arise;
- Career development and further education planning;
- Career pathway information;
- Provision of supportive services as necessary; and
- Mentoring, leadership development, and tutoring for youth.

SECTION 5: WAGNER-PEYSER FUNCTIONS

A. Coordination of Wager-Peyser Services in the Montgomery County Job Centers

Wagner-Peyser is a labor exchange program that brings together individuals who are seeking employment, and employers who are seeking employees. DLLR administers a labor exchange that has the capacity to assist job seekers to find employment; to assist employers in filling jobs; and to facilitate the match between job seekers and employers. Self-services are available to all job seekers and employers at the center or remotely. In addition to accessing information electronically, customers can choose to receive information in more traditional forms such as printed materials, which are available at Montgomery County Job Centers.

Montgomery County Job Center staff (both WIOA and Wagner-Peyser staff) provide services to the employer community as well as to job seekers. Multiple employer services include assistance with screening qualified applicants, assessing/testing applicants, and assistance with application processing. These activities can be conducted at the employer's location or at the center. Specialized services to employers include on-site visits, employed worker training, federal bonding services, tax incentives, mass recruitments, and job fairs.

At the comprehensive Montgomery County Job Center, WIOA staff work side-by-side with Wagner-Peyser staff, particularly in the center's resource area. The Job Center Consortium is currently working to develop a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities to provide for the elimination of duplication of service and promote easier access for all job seekers.

B. Wagner-Peyser Services for Unemployment Insurance (UI) Claimants

Every UI claimant that comes to the center is invited to attend an orientation on all the workforce services to which they have access. Working in a fully co-located facility allows Wagner-Peyser, WIOA, and partner staff to develop processes and workflows to identify and promote workforce services to UI claimants using an integrated approach.

Wagner-Peyser staff provide Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) and Reemployment Opportunity Workshop (ROW) seminars in the Montgomery County Job Centers per regulation. Staff will be trained by the state on correct information and services they can provide to UI claimants and will be trained on how to support individuals applying for a claim.

Montgomery County Job Center partners will develop an intake and referral process for individuals attending RESEA and ROW seminars to effectively connect them to other Montgomery County Job Center and WIOA offerings. The instructor works with WSM staff to ensure promotion of WIOA service offerings and begins basic eligibility review for WIOA services.

C. Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers

There are currently no migrant or seasonal farm workers in Montgomery County. However, anecdotal evidence collected by DLLR suggests that Maryland's agricultural employers are

challenged by the scarcity of workers interested in the agricultural field. Historically family-owned farms often struggle to remain in business or resort to hiring via the H2A Program.

If Montgomery County farms hire migrant and seasonal farm workers, the WDB will ensure that such workers receive the same employment services where they live and work that non-migrant seasonal farm workers receive at the Montgomery County Job Centers. DLLR and WSM staff would work together to conduct outreach to migrant and seasonal farm workers, and would connect with the state's National Farm Workers Jobs Program recipient, currently Telamon Corporation, and the State Monitor Advocate to gain technical assistance in providing relevant services. State experience has shown that many migrant and seasonal farmworkers are either undocumented and therefore ineligible for WIOA services or are only "passing through" the state and not interested in receiving workforce services offered in Maryland.

The migrant and seasonal worker population in Maryland is almost exclusively Latino and Spanish speaking, according to the Maryland State Plan. Montgomery County staff would ensure any outreach or services would include a bilingual component. In addition, WSM would work with agricultural employers to ensure support for their migrant and seasonal farm workers.

SECTION 6: TITLE II – ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY FUNCTIONS

A. Coordination of Adult Education and Literacy Activities

The WDB has a formal MOU and informal partnerships with both Title II funded programs at Montgomery College and the Literacy Council of Montgomery County. The Adult Education programs at Montgomery College and the Literacy Council provides the English language skills, adult basic education, and GED preparation that adults need to further their education at the post-secondary level, obtain employment, play positive roles in the education of their children, and become involved community members.

Montgomery College has the highest volume of adult education participants in the state of Maryland, serving over 5,800 students annually, with an additional 500-1,000 individuals on the waitlist at any given time. The program is student centered with classes designed to maximize student access through excellence in teaching, individualized student success plans, access to technology, and flexibility of locations and schedules. Staff emphasizes "classroom into the community and community into the classroom" to increase relevancy in learning.

The Literacy Council provides English language instruction classes to adult learners at various sites throughout the county. The standards- based curriculum is taught by professionals and incorporates College and Career Readiness Standards and workplace readiness skills at all levels of instruction. Learners are taught skills to further their education, succeed in the workforce, and engage in the community.

In addition to classes, the Literacy Council provides the largest tutoring program in the county with over 600 volunteers. The Literacy Council's tutoring programs are volunteer based, and work with low level non-native English speakers as well as with native English speakers who read and write at a basic level. Over 1,700 students, and 85 nationalities are served annually. The Literacy Council also provides additional services and programs for adult learners, including testing for the Maryland I-Pathways program, the online learning program for GED® test preparation, and workplace literacy classes for local companies.

Montgomery County has a significantly higher need for English language skills than for adult basic education. Within Montgomery College's Title II funded programs, 81% of students were enrolled in English language classes, and over 60% of Adult Basic Skills participants were co-enrolled in English language classes. In general, Montgomery College's English language learners tend to be more educated. Of those who went to school outside of the U.S., 49% of students completed 13 years of education or above. In addition, many the English language learners are employed in some capacity.

Not all English language learners are accessing language services, however. In total, of the 130,000 individuals that speak English less than very well, only 13,000-15,000 (or 10%) attend English language learning courses through MCAEL's network of providers (which includes Title II funded programs). MCAEL shows that 11% of Spanish limited-English speakers are being served through their network, but only 2% of speakers of Asian and Pacific languages are accessing services. These adult education demographics create a unique landscape for potential collaboration in Montgomery County. The WDB is committed to working with Title II grantees

and core American Job Center partners, in addition to a rich local ESOL delivery system, to create a viable delivery system that is inclusive of the Adult Basic Skills learner and addresses their needs effectively.

WSM, Montgomery College, and the Literacy Council are working together to provide better coordination of services between Title I and Title II services. Coordination efforts will occur around the following opportunities:

- Cross-staff Training – A key first step in improved coordination is assuring that staff of all three entities understand each other's programs and processes. This will occur as part of the Job Center Consortium's efforts to improve understanding of each partner.
- Stronger Referral Processes – As part of the Job Center Consortium, WSM, the Title I sub-contractors, and the Title II providers will devise better referral processes to ensure customers gain the best access to services. This could include presentations to each other's customer base, formal referral processes, and increased co-enrollment.
- Braided Funding – the Title I and Title II partners will explore braided funding options and consultation around industry-led occupational trainings, transitioning to credentialing from Title II services, internships and work experiences, and occupational contextualized classes.
- English for the Workplace – The partners are committed to ensuring English language learners gain the English skills that are necessary for the workplace and connected to targeted industry needs. WSM will work with the Literacy Council to explore contextualized opportunities. WSM will promote and support workplace literacy instruction where feasible and market workplace literacy to employers. WSM will also consider the use of incumbent worker training funds to support workplace adult education activities as part of industry strategies.

The WDB will adhere to all the requirements set forth by the state in reviewing local RFP applications submitted under Title II. Currently, the WDB is considering this a responsibility of the Program Planning Committee which will then submit its recommendations and review to the full WDB for approval to comply with the required DLLR WIOA Title II proposal process.

B. Alignment of Basic Skills and English Language Assessments

WSM will work with partners to align the basic education skills and English language assessments to provide a coordinated approach to assessments under Title II. A unique consideration in Montgomery County is that there are numerous non-profits within the community that provide English language learning outside of the Title II funded system. Many of these providers are members of the Montgomery Coalition for Adult English Literacy (MCAEL). Both Title II programs, Montgomery College and the Literacy Council are members of the coalition. WSM, in cooperation with the local Title II partners, will collaborate with other MCAEL members to provide guidance in assessment best practices to promote consistency among English language learning providers in the county.

Steps to Align Basic Education Skills and English Language Assessments in Montgomery County

To align assessments, the WDB has encouraged the use of CASAS for its providers to ensure

that a common standardized assessment for basic academic skills is being used to facilitate accurate information sharing and to match what Title II providers are using for assessments. WSM's contracted WIOA service providers have agreed through their scope of services to consistently administer the CASAS. WSM recognizes that Adult Education and some workforce partners may also administer the TABE or other National Reporting System (NRS) assessments that are approved by Federal regulations and state guidance for reading and math skills, as well as English skills. To ensure comprehensive and consistent assessments, the specific assessments and standards will be identified in policies with Title II partners' input in Montgomery County. Partners will administer the CASAS and other National Reporting System (NRS) approved assessments that are approved by Federal regulations, state guidance, and WDB preference to participants in need of English language proficiency.

Coordinated Assessment Delivery

WSM, Montgomery College, the Literacy Council of Montgomery County, and other community providers are committed to developing an appropriate referral process for shared customers and individuals interested in pursuing services from the core partners. Title I and Title II representatives will work together to develop a referral process. The partners will ensure that any referral process protects the rights and privacy of individuals as outlined in the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Workforce development and adult education providers will coordinate testing services. Each entity will conduct assessments for their respective populations and additional partnership conversations will explore further coordination of testing to reduce duplication of services and enhance service delivery across entities.

Training of Test Administrators

Montgomery workforce development and adult education providers recognize the requirement to comply with testing protocols and data quality procedures as outlined in the state assessment policy. Title II Adult Education partners will work with WSM to implement consistent assessment training procedures for test administrators.

C. Uniform Title II Services in Montgomery County

The President of Montgomery College and the Executive Director of the Literacy Council of Montgomery County both sit on the WDB to represent both local Title II providers in the county. Representatives of the staff of Montgomery College and the Literacy Council participate on the Job Center Consortium to coordinate partner services throughout the workforce ecosystem, which meets monthly. In addition, the WSM CEO and the President of Montgomery College have monthly meetings across topics, including Title II service delivery. Through board discussions and Job Center Consortium meetings, WSM will support Title II activities in the county and ensure Title II interests are met as part of the workforce delivery system. These collaboration activities will be documented through meeting notes.

D. Adult Education Services in the American Job Centers

The WDB and the Title II partners are currently exploring how to bring adult education services on site within the Montgomery County Job Centers, and have outlined virtual and onsite services from Title II providers in the MOU. The WDB is exploring obtaining additional space to create a dedicated education and training lab. Dedicated resources will be explored among the partners regarding the development of the MOU and RSA.

The WDB is committed to creating job centers that is welcoming and supportive of the needs of the English language learner through cultural sensitivity, multilingual staffing and outreach to trusted community-based organizations. Revision and expansion of services could include expanded hours to meet the scheduling needs of adult education learners, review of technology needs for individuals with low computer literacy skills, and better promotion of services targeted to English language learners. Implementation oversight is conducted through the Job Center Consortium (as the operator) and tracked through customer feedback surveys.

"Many English language learners want to improve literacy in order to learn to fill out a job application, improve their job trajectory, or pursue a career path or entrepreneurial goal."
- Kathy Stevens, Executive Director
MCAEL

WSM and the local Title II programs will also work together to connect workforce development activities for adult learning customers, such as integrated learning. Finally, planning is underway to implement staff training modules around cultural sensitivity and additional barriers foreign-born individuals may face. The first training will be conducted in March 2017 and will include cultural competency and language access considerations.

SECTION 7: VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION FUNCTIONS

A. Cooperative Agreements

WSM has a formal local partnership with the Division of Rehabilitative Services (DORS). This partnership provides information and assistance to center staff in training and placing individuals with disabilities, including individuals with significant disabilities, blind and low vision, hearing and sensory impaired and emotionally fragile job seekers in employment. Assistive technology, located at each center, is tested on a regular basis to ensure proper functionality.

With input from DORS, the Job Center Consortium is updating a training plan for all staff that includes cross training to ensure that Montgomery County Job Center staff have both the awareness and 'cultural competence' to effectively serve and refer individuals who may have a physical and/or processing disability.

To further address the needs of job seekers with disabilities, WSM is a subgrantee to DLLR on their Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) grant through the Department of Labor and is developing a Cohesive Resource Committee (CRC) with representatives from core Job Center partners, workforce providers, DLLR, DORS, Adult Basic Education providers, Behavioral Health Administration (BHA), Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD), and Development Disabilities Administration (DDA) to more effectively support the workforce needs of individuals with disabilities. This team will be facilitated by a Disability Resource Coordinator. Through the DEI grant, WSM and program operators will engage in cross-agency training, expand the capacity of the Montgomery County Job Centers to more effectively serve individuals with disabilities, and conduct outreach to businesses. In addition, WSM will become a Ticket to Work site to further support individuals receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI).

The Board's Strategic Goal 1 is to engineer a comprehensive system of talent development, including for individuals with disabilities. This goal will be achieved through:

- Working with the Vocational Rehabilitation and DEI program partners with expertise in serving individuals with disabilities to seek advice on improving service access and service delivery in Montgomery County Job Centers and all workforce programs.
- Gain technical assistance through the DEI grant and local partners to ensures all Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) assistive technology and software is up to date and meeting the needs of customers with disabilities.
- Plans to operate as Employer Network for the Social Security Administration's Ticket to Work program will provide increased opportunities to engage the disabled population with a plan for self-sufficiency.
- Improve employment outcomes for individuals with barriers to employment through subcontracts to community organizations that specialize in employment and placement services to individuals with disabilities.
- Complying with USDOL's WIOA Section 188 Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Regulations by training program staff in its requirements and conducting continuous compliance monitoring.

B. Services for Individuals with Disabilities in the Montgomery County Job Centers

The partners are committed to providing services to individuals with disabilities through the Montgomery County Job Centers and larger workforce system. To that end, many strategies are in place and will be continually improved, including:

- Making each center and affiliate site more welcoming to individuals with disabilities through training all staff who work in the centers.
- Ensuring that reasonable accommodations are always provided at on-site orientations, training programs, recruitments, etc.
- Conducting a regular and ongoing program of disability awareness for all staff within the system.
- Creating more education and training programs and pathways to employment for a wider range of learners along a spectrum.

DORS will serve all individuals with disabilities who are both eligible to receive services and meet the Division's Order of Selection criteria through referrals from other partners or self-directed. Collaboration plans include working together for joint planning efforts, leveraging funding streams, and incorporating greater integration with employers through a job development network.

DORS has agreed to provide disability awareness and sensitivity training for staff, and will work with WSM on sharing DORS eligibility results and providing a warm referral for individuals deemed Tier II (Significant Disabilities) and Tier III (Non-Severe Disabilities) to WSM contracted staff. Additional collaborations are underway around work-based learning for youth and adults, data sharing, and coordination of training activities.

SECTION 8: TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES FUNCTIONS

A. Coordination of Services for TANF Recipients

The partners, including the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services, have been working together over the past year to develop implementation strategies under WIOA. WSM is committed to positive customer service and continues to seek ways to improve customer intake, service coordination, client monitoring and tracking, targeted employment, and resource sharing for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients. Workforce services through Health and Human Services are primarily contracted out. Local sub-contractors for TANF and WIOA services are currently collaborating to offer more integrated services. Although Montgomery County is considered in the third phase of the state's alignment implementation plan, local partners have already begun the process of closer alignment.

B. Service Enhancements for TANF Recipients

TANF providers are a new mandated partner in the America Job Center system under WIOA. In Montgomery County, TANF (also known as Temporary Cash Assistance) has been a long-standing Montgomery County Job Center partner. Staff members work to ensure that public assistance recipients are enrolled in programs and are receiving services they need. WIOA provides an opportunity to enhance this partnership and explore additional coordination of services to better serve individuals receiving TANF.

Continued work needs to be done to ensure a referral system among all the partners that includes a 'warm hand-off' of customers from one agency to another. The Job Center Consortium has begun to engage in a conversation about how to develop a common referral and screening system. WSM and Health and Human Services envision a seamless, integrated customer flow facilitated through a dedicated technical platform that would reduce duplicative data entry. The partners will ensure that this seamless system is based on a two-generation poverty strategy—integrating referrals to Head Start, Early Childhood Services and the Child Care Subsidy program.

The partners are committed to creating an integrated system that addresses:
- Customer Intake – The TANF workforce sub-contractor through Health and Human Services has been and continues to be included in partner discussions to develop a common customer flow that will be aligned across WIOA partners.
- Referrals – All WIOA workforce partners will have access to a full mapping of workforce services and WSM will facilitate a comprehensive training and understanding of referrals across partners.
- Service Coordination – Once shared customers are identified, there will be ongoing understanding of case management capacity and coordination of shared case management for the client so that outcomes can be effectively tracked.
- Data Matching/Client Tracking – Partners will work together to create a holistic approach to data matching and client tracking. WSM anticipates continued conversations around data matching and shared goal outcomes.

- Targeted Services for Hardest to Serve Clients – WIOA partners are committed to targeting comprehensive services for the hardest to serve customer that include coordinated programmatic elements. WSM and Health and Human Services plan to work together to pilot interventions for shared clients, focused on educational attainment and stackable credentials, career-driven placements, and long-term retention that ultimately leads to self-sufficiency.
- Two-Generation Approaches – WSM and Health and Human Services have partnered on a 2Gen grant to develop and pilot two-generational approaches to better align workforce and early childhood education services, engaging Early Head Start and Head Start grantees.

Co-Location of Services

Currently, Neighborhood Opportunity Network staff provides customers at the Wheaton Job Center with TANF, SNAP and other Health and Human Services screening and referrals two days a week. WSM and Health and Human Services will engage in discussions to explore potential co-location and collaboration opportunities to best meet collective needs.

Leverage of Resources

Health and Human Services currently dedicates staff on site through leveraged resources. Health and Human Services is open to determining what concrete in-kind contributions would be beneficial—including and not limited to educational/marketing resources/materials and access to facilities/space. WSM and Health and Human Services will collectively strategize to explore how best to leverage respective federal funding streams and grant opportunities.

Staff Development

Staff development and training is key to successful delivery of service. Health and Human Services is committed to attending Job Center Consortium meetings and providing relevant subject matter expertise on the TANF program, and updates on Health and Human Service programs. They will ensure that their TANF contractor fully engages in partnership opportunities and appropriate staff trainings to align staff knowledge. WSM and Health and Human Services will explore other ways to cross-train and provide technical assistance to ensure a seamless delivery of service for TANF and WIOA customers.

Work Participation Rate Considerations

Currently, TANF customers are mandated to provide weekly timesheets to track their work participation. Health and Human Services and WSM will coordinate to ensure that any TANF recipients receiving WIOA services submit their timesheets to be tracked by the TANF contractor. The partners will explore other options to improve the usability and accountability of work participation rate tracking.

Employer Initiatives

As the single point of entry and the broker between employer demand and qualified job seekers, WSM has launched a strong outreach program utilizing multiple communication strategies.

Lead by the Communication Committee, communication and outreach efforts target employer engagement in pipeline development and employability initiatives. WSM, sub-contractors, and Health and Human Services will work together to implement these initiatives.

Outreach activities include but are not limited to:
- Meet and Greet sessions for the chambers of commerce and area businesses associations
- Development of various collateral materials
- Quarterly newsletters
- Website enhancements
- Active presence on social media outlets

These efforts will compliment what the Consortium is currently doing by targeting employers to commit to career-specific placements and developing training aligned to career pathways. TANF representation will also be incorporated as part of the new Business Solutions Team efforts.

Coordination of Data

The WIOA and Health and Human Services partners will work with their respective state entities to provide baseline data and develop coordinated strategies for program reporting. Core partners are currently reviewing opportunities to share data more effectively across programs.

C. Representation on the Workforce Development Board

The Director of Health and Human Services is an active member of the WDB. In addition, she has been part of the WDB's Strategic Planning Team to ensure that the strategies address the needs of this population. She was part of the local planning group that has been involved in the development of this plan. Health and Human Services has strong representation on the Job Center Consortium that evaluates and continuously improves access and services for all individuals at the centers.

SECTION 9: JOBS FOR VETERANS AND STATE GRANTS FUNCTIONS

Please note the County's State Plan Section 9 is written and adhered to in accordance with Maryland's WIOA State Plan Section 9 established by Title 38, Chapters 41 & 42 United States Code; Veteran Program Letters (VPLs) 03-14 & 07-10

A. Veteran Priority of Service

WSM provides "Priority of Service" to veterans and their eligible spouses in accordance with the Jobs for Veterans Act of 2002 and the Veterans' Benefits, Health Care, and Information Technology Act of 2006. The purpose of Priority of Service is to give first consideration for program participation to covered Veterans and eligible spouses who also meet the eligibility criteria of a federal Department of Labor training, employment, or placement service in any workforce preparation program. WSM will ensure all sub-contractors follow Priority of Service provisions.

To receive Veterans Priority of Service for a specific program, a Veteran or eligible spouse must meet the statutory definition of a "covered person" and must also meet any other statutory eligibility requirement applicable to the program. For all U.S. DOL-funded programs, Priority of Service means access to services or resources earlier than others, or if resources are limited, it may mean access to services and resources instead of general service individuals.

Veterans Priority of Service will take precedence before applying WIOA Priority of Service for recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient. Programs with specific eligibility criteria, such as the WIOA Title I Adult program, will ensure covered persons meet all statutory eligibility requirements for the program before receiving Priority of Service.

Montgomery County Job Center staff will follow provision of core services and initial assessments to veterans as outlined in the customer service flow in Section 3. Any individual self-identifying as a veteran or eligible spouse will be provided immediate priority in the delivery of employment and training services. Similarly, a covered person will not be denied access on a priority basis to any services provided by program staff to verify covered person status. Rather, an individual self-identifying as a veteran or eligible spouse will be enrolled and provided immediate priority and then be permitted to follow-up subsequently with any required verification of his or her status as a Veteran or eligible spouse. For services that require eligibility verification, such as classroom training, verification only needs to occur at the point at which a decision is made to commit the use of outside resources. Details of implementation of veteran priority of service will be outlined in local Eligibility and Veteran policies to be completed by May 2017.

WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker Funds can help veterans, separating service members, and eligible spouses to enter or reenter the civilian labor force. To receive services under the WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker Program, a Veteran or eligible spouse must be a dislocated worker. Generally, service members exiting the military, including, but not limited to, recipients of Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Military members (UCX), qualify as dislocated workers. Active duty service members who separate by retirement may also qualify as dislocated workers.

However, an active duty service member taking early retirement as an incentive must be taken on a case by case basis. In some cases, this type of separation may be the only choice a service member may have. Thus, the service member's retirement could be considered a dislocation. However, if the service member's separation is voluntary, then the service member would not qualify as a dislocated worker.

If a veteran meets the definition of a dislocated worker, then he/she may also be eligible to receive Priority of Service. For WIOA Title I programs, Priority of Service is available to any veteran who has served at least one day in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable. AJCs may consider documentation of a service member's release from active duty on a specific date as equivalent to a layoff notice for WIOA Dislocated Worker Program eligibility. However, service members are not eligible for Priority of Service until they leave active duty.

In the case of separating service members, because they may be on a terminal leave from the military, a separating service member may begin to receive career services while the service member may still be part of the Active Duty military, but has an imminent separation date. It is appropriate to provide career services to separating service members who will be imminently separating from the military, provided their discharge will be anything other than dishonorable.

Jobs for Veterans State Grant funds are provided in the Montgomery County Job Center to fund two veteran-focused staff positions:

> *Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialists* -- Under 38 U.S.C. 4103A(a), a DVOP specialist provides intensive services5 and facilitates placements to meet the employment needs of veterans, prioritizing service to special disabled veterans, other disabled veterans, and other categories of veterans in accordance with priorities determined by the Secretary of Labor (Secretary); and

> *Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER)* -- Under 38 U.S.C. 4104(b), the LVER's principal duties are to: (1) conduct outreach to employers in the area to assist veterans in gaining employment, including conducting seminars for employers and, in conjunction with employers, conducting job search workshops and establishing job search groups; and (2) facilitate employment, training, and placement services furnished to veterans in a State under the applicable State employment service delivery systems.

> ***To ensure priority of service is implemented and operating correctly it will be monitored by the Regional Local Veterans Employment Representative (RLVER) and by the Labor Exchange Administrator or whomever they designate***

B. Coordination of Services to Local Employers

Established as a priority, WSM will ensure that diverse and multiple employment opportunities are available to our Veterans. Currently, Veteran staff is available at our Job Centers. Through the WSM website and social media, outreach and communication is provided to ensure that our veterans are aware of all opportunities. Further, WSM is committed to promoting greater

collaboration between our business solutions and veteran staff. The Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER) for Montgomery County is represented on both the Job Center Consortium and the Business Solutions Team to ensure alignment and collaboration.

SECTION 10 – FISCAL, PERFORMANCE AND OTHER FUNCTIONS

A. Fiscal Authorization

WorkSource Montgomery, Inc. has been designated as the fiscal agent for grant funds by all required elected officials as described in Section 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III) of WIOA. WSM is committed to equitable and responsible fiscal practices and will comply with fiscal and administrative requirements as mandated by WIOA.

B. Financial Sustainability of American Job Center Services

A financial procedure document is currently under development to describe fiscal sustainability and fiscal practices as guided by DLLR issuances. WSM also utilizes braided funding practices and other resources to sustain quality service delivery in the Montgomery County Job Centers. The CEO and financial contractor regularly review funding levels to forecast significant changes in WIOA funding. WSM monitors the base costs of Job Center operation to be able to quickly develop a reduction plan in the event of reduced WIOA funding. In the event of a reduction of funding WSM will adjust the following as appropriate modify service provider contract, modify programs, or modify operation costs to ensure alignment with budget. New infrastructure and resource share discussions with our mandated partners are underway to be completed by June 2017. The framework for our financial procedures document has been developed and will be revised to align with the development of our new structure. WSM remains committed to innovative and creative ways to sustain our Job Centers A financial procedures document will be completed by April 30, 2017.

C. Competitive Bid Process

WSM is committed to following all federal, state, and local procurement policies and processes. WSM has established procurement policies and procedures which have been approved by the board. Services are announced for bid or proposal and evaluated by an independent team of either staff, board members and/or community members based on procurement thresholds. Contracts are awarded based on pre-established qualifications and scoring protocols.

The WDB issued an RFP to procure six areas of services to build the workforce system infrastructure in Montgomery County. The RFP invited proposers to:
- Deliver Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Services,
- Help build a business solutions system,
- Help build a career pathways system, and
- Act as the one stop operator.

The RFP process involved a set of rules to safeguard fair and objective decision-making when awarding grant funds. The rules comply with applicable federal, state and local requirements, i.e., Title 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 200. Notice of the RFP was sent to entities on WSM Bidders List (a list of local non and for profit entities interested in conducting business with WSM which numbered over 50 organizations). Additionally, information regarding the RFP was legally noticed, i.e. published in local newspapers and on the WDB's website.

Multiple proposals were received in each category making it a competitive process, except for the One Stop Operator. No proposals were received. Previously, the one stop operator was a consortium made up of the Department of Economic Development, the Department of Social Services, and the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation. This met the requirement under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of a consortium of three mandatory partners.

Given that there were no responses to the One-Stop Operator portion of the solicitation, and given that the other parts of the solicitation received a total of 17 responses, the WDB assessed that it met all the requirements for a well-advertised, open and fair competitive process. In the absence of any responses, the WDB, as allowed in our procurement procedures, voted to sole source the function of one stop operator to the current consortium. Given WIOA's focus on new populations, representatives from DORS and other core partners were added as permanent members. All mandated partners and signatories on the WIOA MOU are part of the consortium and play a vital role on guiding integrated service delivery.

D. Negotiated Performance Measures

For the WIOA Title I Adult & Dislocated Worker Programs, Title II Adult Education and Literacy programs, Title III Wagner-Peyser employment services, and Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation, the primary indicators of performance are, as follows:

WIOA Adult
- Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit – 80%
- Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit – 70%
- Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit - $8,000
- Credential Attainment Within 4 Quarters After Exit – 72%

WIOA Dislocated Worker
- Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit – 85%
- Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit – 80%
- Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit - $10,000
- Credential Attainment Within 4 Quarters After Exit – 71%

WIOA Youth
- Employment or Placement Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit – 60%
- Employment or Placement Rate 4th Quarter After Exit – 60%
- Credential Attainment Within 4 Quarters After Exit – 60%

Wagner-Peyser
- Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit – 55%
- Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit – 55%
- Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit - $6,500

E. A High-Performing Board

The WDB Quality Assurance Committee will be responsible for reviewing and evaluating the performance of the Montgomery County Job Centers and the One-Stop Operator. The Committee will review and evaluate quarterly reporting for WIOA performance indicators and conduct on-going analysis of programs and outcomes to identify trends and ensure data-led decision making. In addition, WSM is currently developing a data dashboard that includes key performance indicators of Montgomery County Job Centers and the economic impact of the workforce development system.

WSM will ensure appropriate staff attend all trainings provided by the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulations and U.S. Department of Labor relating to meeting performance standards. Staff will provide periodic trainings for all sub-contractors on performance standards and data integrity.

F. Individual Training Account Policy

An updated Individual Training Accounts (ITA) policy that will reflect WIOA regulations is under development. It will be the policy of the WDB to deliver occupational skills training to adults through the Montgomery County Job Center System using a combination of ITAs, work and learn strategies, and cohort trainings.

Current guidance for the development and approval of ITAs is as follows: WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(G)(iii) states that "[t]raining services provided under this paragraph shall be directly linked to an in-demand industry sector or occupation in the local area or the planning region."

As such, the Board limits individual training to those industries and occupations that the Local Workforce Development Board deems in-demand. Those industries and occupations are identified on the documentation that clients received at intake.

The Board seeks to provide training opportunities within high-demand industries or occupations such as:

- Bioscience/Life Science
- Hospitality, Retail, & Tourism
- Information Technology & Professional Services
- Construction, Trades, & Manufacturing
- Healthcare & Social Assistance
-

The Board has set a spending cap on all ITAs of $3,000.00. This cap is reviewed on an annual basis. In all cases, the Board seeks to provide high-value training solutions by operating cohort trainings in the most in-demand and popular occupations and industries in the local area.

To be eligible for an ITA, an eligible customer must be enrolled in WIOA and, at a minimum:
- have the necessary educational pre-requisites for the selected training,
- be unable to find suitable employment with existing skills and/or academic credentials,

- through assessment be determined to be appropriate for and able to complete the chosen employment training program,
- select a training program in line with their individual career goals as outlined in the Individual Employment Plan,
- select a training program as defined by the parameters of the training policy and linked to a demand occupation within the WDB's targeted industries in the local area, and
- make a commitment to seek employment in the field once trained.

It will further be the policy of the WDB that when funds are severely limited (defined as 20% or less of the WIA training funds are remaining) training services will be prioritized to:
1. Intensive service customers who have already met one of the eligibility criteria above, and
2. Those who are most in need, and best able to benefit from training.

Most in need includes individuals with lower educational attainment and who have not received training or certification within in the past 2 years. Further details will be outlined in the training policy.

G. Training Service Delivery

WSM works with industries to identify and facilitate industry-led training. Core partners will target ITAs and cohort training approaches towards these targeted industries. If key training demanded by industry is not yet available through Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) approved training providers within Montgomery County, the WDB can provide a waiver for training. The WDB can provide a waiver under the following circumstances:
- There is an insufficient number of eligible training provider services to use ITAs;
- There is a training service program of demonstrated effectiveness that is offered by a community-based organization, a private organization, or an EARN Maryland program;
- The most appropriate training could be provided by an institution of higher education to train multiple individuals for jobs in in-demand sectors or occupations'
- A pay-for-performance contract is the most effective means of providing training services; or
- Providing training through a combination of ITAs and contracts is the most effective approach to placing a participant in a program.

Career Specialists will work with individuals and cohorts to identify training opportunities that match their abilities, career interests, and labor market information. The Career Specialist will complete the training contract with the individual and training provider and submit the documentation to the training coordinator. The Training Coordinator will review the documentation and submit to the Director for budgetary and programmatic approval before training begins.

H. Opportunity for Public Comment

The WDB has developed the local plan with continued input from key partners and stakeholders. The WDB posted the draft plan on the website for public comment August 15 through September 15, 2016. WSM requested the Montgomery Chambers, Non-profit Montgomery and Montgomery County Council post the draft local plan on their website as well. WSM used multiple media outlets and press releases to encourage extensive community input.

Utilizing an electronic comment form, WSM categorize all comments for consideration. WSM staff and the planning committee discussed all community comments received and responded to all contributors.

I. Use of the Maryland Workforce Exchange

WSM and Montgomery American Job Centers will utilize the Maryland Workforce Exchange as the primary case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA and job center activities.

All information on activities, compliance, attendance, and case notes will be entered real-time by adult and youth sub-contractors. Sub-contractor staff will monitor performance and compliance in the system on a regular basis. The WDB staff will run reports monthly to provide data integrity and compliance oversight to include predictive reporting and data analysis for continuous improvement purposes.

The core partners will work together to effectively collaborate on Maryland Workforce Exchange utilization across WIOA, Wagner-Peyser and general program functions for employers' and job seekers' benefit. Enhanced utilization of the Maryland Workforce Exchange will include workshop registration through the system, improved use of the Virtual Recruiter functions, and business solutions activities. Staff will also encourage customer use of the mobile application and PIRL system to support job matching activities within the Maryland Workforce Exchange.

J. Oversight and Monitoring of WIOA Activities

WSM will provide overall oversight and monitoring of WIOA activities. Independent, internal, state, and federal audits will be used to improve service delivery and fiscal accountability. In compliance with 2CRF 200.300-SUBRECIPIENT AND CONTRACTOR DETERMINATIONS

Staff Roles and Responsibilities

WSM staff will provide overall oversight and monitoring for WIOA activities. Each sub-contractor will be responsible for identifying staff to conduct internal monitoring on a regular basis. The WDB expects internal monitoring to include periodic comparisons of information entered into the Maryland Workforce Exchange and information kept in the physical case files for compliance purposes. In addition, the WDB expects that sub-contractors will monitor data

integrity in the Maryland Workforce Exchange to include assurance that case notes and activities are entered in a timely manner and that outcomes and soft exits are monitored properly.

WDB staff will conduct periodic desk audits of information entered into the Maryland Workforce Exchange and monitor data entered into the system. In addition, WSM will engage an independent auditor to ensure compliance and positive procedures.

Compliance Monitoring

The WDB will work closely with DLLR and will comply with the requirement for all subcontractor agreements and contracts be monitored annually. WSM staff will monitor sub-contractors regarding both programmatic and fiscal compliance. As part of this process, WSM provides technical assistance to subcontractors as needed on all aspects of compliance and monitoring. A Monitoring Manual outlining these procedures is in development and will be completed by June 2017.

Programmatically, WSM reviews the intake and enrollment processes, display of federal signs, case files, accessibility for all customers, and programmatic specific compliance for WIOA, Priority of Services, and training services.

Fiscally, WSM ensures subcontractors follow all procedures as indicated in federal, state, and local policies and WIOA regulations and ensure costs are allowable. Expenditures are tracked monthly to assure correct cost categories and that expenses are within contracted cost limitations. Frequent desk reviews are conducted on each WIOA contract.

Management of Findings

The Quality Assurance Committee and the Job Center Consortium reviews any findings. This consortium members will be responsible for recording all monitor findings, forwarding such findings and ensuring positive responses and corrective actions as needed. WSM is committed to providing technical assistance or seeking the proper expertise to rapidly remedy all issues and ensure positive practices and will ensure subcontractors take correction action pertaining to WIOA case file monitoring and data validation findings as indicated in our Monitoring Manual to be completed by June 2017.

Development of Local Policies

Local polices addressing the oversight of the Montgomery County Job Centers, youth programs and WIOA Title I programs are developed in response to DOL or DLLR issuances, or internal needs. The WDB Quality Assurance Committee established a Policy Development Procedure for policy development based on DLLR's policy process.

The procedure outlines key components required in policies and a six-step process for policy development:
1. Identify Need for Policy
2. Policy Drafting
3. Policy Review by Subject Matter Experts and Committees

4. Review and Comment Period
5. Final Approval
6. Policy Dissemination

In alignment with WIOA, current policies are being updated to reflect comprehensive programing and ensure WIOA compliance. The local plan provides the roadmap for development of additional local policies. All current and archived policies are posted the WSM's website to ensure transparency.

K. Protection of Personally Identifiable and Confidential Information

The WDB is committed to protecting the privacy of both job seekers and employers through secure handling of personally identifiable and confidential information in compliance with TEGL 39-11. All staff and representatives are required to take aggressive measures to mitigate the risks associated with the collection, storage, and dissemination of sensitive data including personally identifiable information (PII).

Access to any PII is restricted to only those staff and representatives who need it in their official capacity to perform duties pertaining to the scope of work in the grant or contract agreement. WSM requires all sub-contractors to securely store customer information. Sub-contractors keep all personally identifiable and confidential information files in locked file cabinets, and reduce risk associated with electronically shared information. Both staff and customers sign confidentiality agreements, and customers are informed of their rights and protection of information. Specific measures are taken to further secure medical and disability records, as well as social security numbers. Procedures and policies are in place and updated regularly to secure customer information electronically and in the Montgomery County Job Centers.

In the Maryland Workforce Exchange, only WIOA staff with selective privileges can access social security numbers to protect individuals. The system utilizes unique identifiers that link back to social security numbers for tracking purposes.

L. Grievances and Complaints

WSM maintains a grievance and complaint policy, which is one of many being revised.

Discrimination on the Grounds of Federally Protected Rights

The WDB provides policies and procedures for all sub-contractors on informing customers of their rights under WIOA Title I and detailing the complaint process. WSM has a zero-tolerance policy on discrimination on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, gender identity, political affiliation or belief for any workforce or education program or activity. All WIOA enrollees receive a copy of their federally protected rights. Customers and staff have the right to report alleged discrimination to the EEO Officer at WSM, who is not in direct line of program oversight.

Other Complaints and Grievances

The current policy to address all grievances and complaints includes:

A. After receipt of a formal grievance, the deciding official shall consider and attempt to resolve the grievance, to the extent resolution is, in the deciding official's judgment, warranted. If, within 14 days of receipt of the formal grievance, the grievance cannot be resolved in a manner acceptable to the aggrieved, the deciding official shall refer the grievance to the CEO for his/her consideration and final decision.

B. The deciding official, or the Director in the event of referral to him/her for final decision, shall conduct a hearing of the nature and scope appropriate to the issues involved in the grievance, within 30 calendar days of the filing of the formal grievance.

C. For programs funded through DLLR, if the grieving party does not receive a decision within 60 days of filing the formal grievance, or receives an unsatisfactory decision, the aggrieved then has a right to request a review by the Maryland Department of Labor Licensing and Regulation.

D. For programs other than those funded by DLLR, the grievance procedures and appeal process shall be those specific to the funding source. If there are no specific grievance procedures or appeal process required by a funding source, then the procedures to be followed shall be the same as those listed in the grievance policy.

Violations to WIOA Title I Rights

Remedies that may be imposed for a violation of any requirement under WIOA Title I, include but are not limited to, suspension or termination of payments under the title; prohibition of placement of a participant with an employer that has violated any requirement under WIOA Title I; reinstatement of an employee, payment of lost wages and benefits, and reestablishment of other relevant terms, conditions, and privileges of employment (where applicable); and other equitable relief as appropriate.

M. Reasonable Accommodation to Qualified Individuals with Disabilities

Montgomery County Job Centers are required to provide reasonable accommodation for individuals with disabilities to ensure equal access and opportunity. The term "reasonable accommodation" is defined by the state as "modifications or adjustments to an application/registration process that enables a qualified applicant/registrant with a disability to be considered for the aid, benefits, services, training or employment that the qualified applicant/registrant desires;" or "modifications or adjustments that enable a qualified individual with a disability to perform the essential functions of a job, or receive aid, benefits, services, or training equal to that provided to qualified individuals without disabilities," or "modifications or adjustments that enable a qualified individual with a disability to enjoy the same benefits and privileges of the aid."

To afford individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in and enjoy the benefits of the WIOA Title I or Title III program or activity, WSM will ensure that the Montgomery County Job Centers and program operators furnish appropriate auxiliary aids or services, including effective means of communication, where necessary. In determining what type of auxiliary aid or service is appropriate and necessary, staff will give primary consideration

to the requests of the individual with a disability. Primary consideration means honoring the choice unless the agency can demonstrate that another equally effective accommodation is available, or that using the means chosen would result in a fundamental alteration in the service, program, activity, or undue financial and administrative burdens. Further details are explained in WSM's policy on accessibility and reasonable accommodations.

N. Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act

WSM monitors compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) in all Montgomery County Job Centers and WIOA services offered through program operators. Montgomery County Job Centers will make visible to participants that the centers are ADA compliant and are equipped with auxiliary aids and accommodations to serve individuals with disabilities. Within the centers, assistive technology is available for use, including ADA-compliant computers in the resource rooms and classrooms.

In addition, the following actions will be taken to ensure nondiscrimination of individuals with disabilities:

- Ensure Job Centers are American with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant and equipped with auxiliary aids and accommodations. This should include a list of currently available assistive technology devices and services within the centers available for individuals.
- Ensure individuals are aware of compliance through use of signs or other means of visibility. "Equal Opportunity is the Law" must be prominently displayed within the Job Centers and made available in other formats as requested.
- Rejection of all job orders from any employer that specifies it will not accept applications from individuals with disabilities or from applicants with a certain disability. Under the law, individuals with disabilities must be referred for the same range of positions as any other qualified customer.
- Maintain confidentiality and not disclose disability-related or other medical information about an individual to an employer or partnering organization unless the job seeker has requested the disclosure on their behalf.
- Incorporate information on accommodations and rights of all individuals, including individuals with disabilities, in orientations.
- Refrain from stereotyping individuals with disabilities when evaluating their skills, abilities, interests and needs.
- Periodically review eligibility criteria for services or training to eliminate elements that may screen out individuals with disabilities (unless criteria is directly related to specific training or services and is essential).

Staff will also receive ADA compliance training to ensure compliance is met at all levels of engagement.

O. Effective Communication with Individuals with Disabilities

Assistive technology is available in all centers and affiliate sites. This technology ensures effective methods for individuals with disabilities to access all services. Additional accommodations, equipment, and interpreters can be accessed as needed.

A non-exhaustive list of auxiliary aids and services can be found in 29 CFR § 38.4, and includes:

- Qualified interpreters, note-takers, transcription services, written materials, telephone handset amplifiers, assistive listening systems, telephones compatible with hearing aids, closed caption decoders, open and closed captioning, telecommunications devices for deaf persons (TDDs/TTYs, video telephones, or video remote interpreting devices), videotext displays, or other effective means of making aurally delivered materials available to individuals with hearing impairments;
- Qualified readers, taped texts, audio recordings, brailed materials, large print materials, or other effective means of making visually delivered materials available to individuals with visual impairments;
- Acquisition or modification of equipment or devices; and
- Other similar services and actions.

The WDB is committed to raising awareness and 'cultural competence' of all staff working in our centers and programs. The Job Center Consortium has a training plan in place that promotes cross training of staff to build awareness and skills.

P. Language Needs of Limited English Speaking Individuals

Immigrant populations make up approximately 17% of Maryland's workforce system. They provide substantial contributions to Montgomery County's economy every day. In turn, WSM will strive to customize services for this population through the Montgomery County Job Center system.

Currently in the system, a wide range of individuals speaking other languages is prevalent. Over 500 individuals registered in the Maryland Workforce Exchange in Montgomery County classify themselves as foreign professionals. Over 500 individuals speak Spanish, 471 speak French, 174 speak Amharic, and 159 speak Chinese.[20] Montgomery County's CountyStat shows that Spanish Limited English Proficiency (LEP) individuals dominate the mid-County and Silver Spring regions, with 21,954 and 10,701 individuals respectively. While there is a strong Spanish speaking population in UpCounty (23,008 individuals), there are more LEP residents who are non-Spanish speaking (25,609) individuals. These individuals largely speak Chinese, French, and Korean. WSM recognizes this racial and cultural diversity within the county and works to address diversity by being inclusive in its programming

Graphic 12: Foreign-Born Individuals by Region County.

- Upcounty 35%
- Mid-County 23%
- Bethesda - Chevy Chase 21%
- Silver Spring 11%
- Eastern County 10%

---
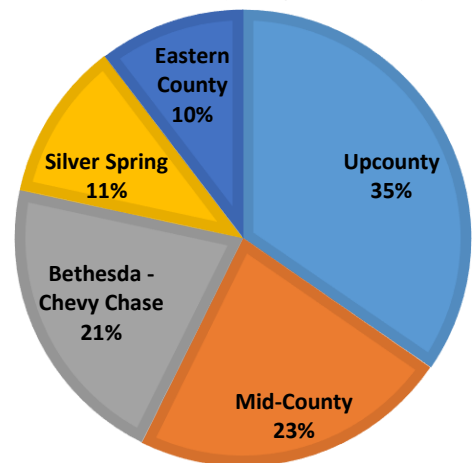
[20] Pulled from individuals registered in the Maryland Workforce Exchange Wagner-Peyser program. Sept. 15, 2016.

and outreach, and addressing the cultural and linguistic barriers that may exist.

Montgomery County's Executive Order 046-10, "Access to Government Services for Individuals with LEP" shows the county's commitment to serving limited English speaking individuals. WSM is committed to following the tenets of this executive order to build linguistically accessible and culturally competent services. WSM is working to expand access to services and translation of documents into the six major languages spoken in Montgomery County: Spanish, Mandarin, French, Amharic, Korean, and Vietnamese. WSM staff members coordinate with the county's Language Access Coordinator to stay up-to-date on county resources and capabilities for serving the county's LEP population.

WSM disseminates information to limited-English speaking individuals through both oral and written means. Each Montgomery County Job Centers has at least one staff member that is bilingual in English and Spanish. Over 18% of staff are bilingual and are able to provide services in 4 different languages. Bilingual brochures specifically designed for this community are also available and periodically updated. Recognizing that English language learners may have difficulty communicating their needs, available brochures will provide pictorial representations to ensure the message is effectively received. In addition, Wagner-Peyser staff provide ROW and RESEA workshops in Spanish regularly to support the needs of limited English speaking individuals.

Q. WorkSource Montgomery's Procurement System

WSM assures that all procedures will comply with WIOA and WIOA Final Rules, as well as state and Montgomery County standards. WSM has a procurement process developed by the WDB for expenditures that adheres to the most stringent funding standards for procurements. In addition, WSM has a policy in place for vendor procurement guidelines.

R. Property Management

A procedure for all property management has been developed to adhere with DOL standards and regulations set forth in 29 CFR Parts 95 and 97, as well as in 2 CFR 200. Asset management will adhere to Property Management Procedures taken from the Office of Management and Budget, OMB Circular 2 CFR 200 Uniform Administrative Guidance. As part of the property management policy, all equipment and significant assets are tagged and inventories with a biennial review. Equipment that is not working, fully depreciated, and/or no longer needed are disposed of according to federal regulations and removed from inventory.

S. Conflicts of Interest

A Conflict of Interest policy has been approved by the WDB. As part of the policy, no individual in a decision-making capacity shall engage in any activity, including participation in the selection, award, or administration of a subgrant or contract supported by WIOA funds, if a conflict of interest (real, implied, or apparent) would be involved. All WDB members sign a Conflict of Interest form and attend yearly ethics training. In addition, conflict of interest training materials are posted on the WSM website for easy reference.

T. Accounting Procedures

WSM has developed a system for accounting oversight that includes in-house procedures, in addition to financial management by contractors and a third-party financial firm. All financial transactions will be recorded and reported in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).

Fiscal System

WSM uses a fiscal system combining QuickBooks and Bill.com, and supplemented by Excel spreadsheets. Each grant and each cost pool is assigned a 'Class' in the QuickBooks accounting system with budget values input by Class. The QuickBooks accounting system has the functionality to report periodic budget to actual results as needed. All vendor invoices are routed through the Director of Operations and coded by expense account and Class, with appropriate programmatic review and approval routing through Bill.com. A third-party fiscal agent (Cordia Partners) reviews each expense posting to the accounting system and the CEO/President reviews and approves each invoice prior to when the cash is disbursed. Summary reports of expenses by grant are reviewed by the fiscal agent, CEO and Board Finance Committee, and programmatic staff to ensure costs are properly assigned and within budgetary limits. Contractual obligations are tracked and tied to programmatic goals to monitor contractual obligations and expenditures. Capitalized assets are recorded in QuickBooks separately and depreciation is calculated and recorded on a monthly basis.

Tracking Revenue

WSM's QuickBooks classifies revenues first by type (e.g., federal, state or local), and second by a Class unique to each program or grant in order to track program income and other revenue sources. Incoming funds are assigned to the appropriate class for funder reporting purposes. The system allows for leveraged and stand-in costs and procedures for tracking revenue will be further outlined in the WSM Financial Policies and Procedures Manual.

State Reporting

State fiscal reporting requires tracking costs on the bases of budgets, cash disbursements, accruals, and obligations. WSM's chart of accounts is organized in such a way as to crosswalk with state reporting categories.

WSM is working with a financial firm to establish a new fiscal policy to appropriately describe the methods and factors that WSM uses in distributing funds under the WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs. This policy will incorporate accounting procedures to track funding types, funding amounts, obligations, expenditures and assets. In addition, the procedures will allow for the tracking of program income, stand-in costs, and leveraged funds.

WSM is prepared to provide fiscal reporting per state requirements to include tracking costs on the bases of budgets, cash disbursements, accruals, and obligations. Internal budgeting processes allow for cross-walks to align with state reporting categories.

The Finance Committee will provide initial review of accounting procedures and will provide continued review of significant procedural changes in accounting procedures.

WSM will engage an Independent Certified Public Accountant (through an RFP process) to conduct an annual independent Audit to examine all financial records, business transactions, accounting practices, and internal controls, providing an audit report, opinion and required communications to WSM's Board. The audit report will be made available to all key stakeholders.

U. Staff Working with WIOA Funds

All WIOA funds are managed collaboratively with checks and balances by the President & CEO, the Joint Board Finance Committee, a third-party financial vendor, the Director of Operations, key programmatic staff, and financial contractors that oversee and maintain financial records.

WIOA funds are expended primarily by the adult services and youth services sub-contractors. The VP of Industry Engagement and Job Services monitors programmatic spending, in addition to internal expenses associated with WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth funding.

V. Tracing of Funds to Services

WSM's system can trace funds down to, and report from the transactional level by class (grant) and by account (line item). Financial documents are retained for at least three years after closeout or resolving findings, allowing auditors and monitors to trace use of funds from the state reports to the accounting system to the approved source document. The financial contractor, WSM staff, and sub-contractor staff maintain adequate documentation of programmatic approval and costs in order to be able to trace expenditures to specific services.

W. Financial Systems

Through a competitive RFQ system, WSM has engaged Cordia Partners to provide outsourced accounting and reporting functions through its financial systems (i.e., QuickBooks and Bill.com). In collaboration with the Finance Committee and CEO, Cordia Partners will provide consultation and develop fiscal procedures for all financial systems including fiscal reporting, obligation control system, ITA payment system, chart of accounts, accounts payable system, staff and participant payroll, and participant stipend, cash management, cost allocations, cost pools, distribution of staff costs between cost categories, cost pool description and distribution of funds, Job Center cost allocation plan, and WIOA fund debt collection (as needed).

The Finance Committee provides initial review of accounting procedures and continued review of significant procedural changes in accounting procedures. Corresponding procedures and policies are developed which document the current practices. WSM continues to grow and increase our capacity.

Financial Reporting System

The financial reporting system combines a multi-user QuickBooks accounting system and Bill.com, supplemented by Excel spreadsheets and a third-party payroll processor (ADP) providing payroll reports, and related reporting services. All costs and expenditure reports are produced from data in QuickBooks.

Obligation Control System

Obligations for training and participant costs are tracked and reported by the adult and youth sub-contractors. Sub-contract obligations are tracked by internal staff and the VP of Industry Engagement and Job Services who oversees the WIOA contracts. An internal contract tracking document matches expenses to budget for each contractor and is reconciled on a monthly basis.

Chart of Account System

WSM has designated a Chart of Accounts specific to its operational needs and the needs of its financial statements. The Chart of Accounts is structured so that financial statements can be shown by natural classification (expense type) as well as by program/funding source classification. Cordia is responsible for maintaining the Chart of Accounts and revising as necessary.

Accounts Payable System

WSM uses Bill.com to facilitate accounts payable procedures and ensure timely payments. Invoices are sent by vendors to the WSM office where they are validated, programmatically approved, and matched to the appropriate class and line item. The invoice is then entered into Bill.com for payment. Bill.com interfaces with and enters data into QuickBooks, recorded invoices directly into the appropriate expense account and Class. Cordia reviews all input data for proper accounting verification and distribution within QuickBooks. The CEO approves the payment and Bill.com creates a check for payment or transfers funds to the appropriate vendor.

Staff Payroll System

Staff payroll services are managed by the accounting firm using a commercial third-party payroll service provider, ADP. The ADP system contains payroll data (backed up by employee files) and provides: the calculation of wages, taxes, and leave payments; creation of appropriate reports; and payment and filing of all necessary employer taxes and quarterly reports. All payroll is direct deposited to a financial institution of staff choice. Times of attendance, hours worked and grant/program served are submitted monthly via an Excel spreadsheet that is signed by the employee and approved by the CEO. The Director of Operations and the accounting firm verifies that all hours are submitted appropriately and charged to the appropriate grant.

Participant Payroll and Stipend System

All participant payroll and stipends under WIOA funding is managed by WSM program operators. WSM reviews participant payroll and stipends in its fiscal monitoring to ensure sound financial processes.

X. Cash Management System

Cash reimbursement requests are submitted to DLLR twice each month on a reimbursable basis and the receivable recorded in the accounting system, grant tracker and Excel cash forecast (as developed by outsourced accounting firm) . WIOA formula funds are received from the County approximately 30 days after the request and non-formula funds are received from DLLR approximately 21 days after the request. Knowing this, cost projections for the expected time to receive requested funds are made for payroll and for other recurring costs (rent, utilities, etc.) based on a trailing three month burn rate. These projections are added to the cash disbursements for the grant and aged invoices associated with the grant so that negative cash on hand (reimbursable disbursements in excess of cash receipts) does not become too great. Aged payables are flagged according to the cash request that includes them so that checks can be written within three business days of receipt of the funds. The majority of cash receipts are received electronically from the remitter. WSM does not accept payments in cash. Cash is disbursed either via ADP for payment of compensation or Bill.com for payment of vendor invoices.

Y. Cost Allocation Procedures

Whenever possible, costs are charged directly to the appropriate grant program. Specific transactions are directly split between grants/programs when more than one program benefits. For cases where direct charging is not possible, there are three cost pools to capture costs that are subsequently allocated out to the programs. The Program Cost Pool captures costs that benefit both the WIOA Adult and WIOA Dislocated Worker Programs and is primarily costs related to the management of the Career Center, which benefits everyone who walks in the door regardless of how they are enrolled. The Youth Cost Pool captures costs that either benefit both In-School and Out-of-School youth or where we cannot determine the direct benefit to In-School versus Out-of-School Youth. The Executive and Administrative Cost Pool captures costs that benefit all programs, such as the corporate administration function including Accounting, Human Resources, and the office of the President & CEO. Procedures for distribution of staff costs between cost categories (Administrative cost, program cost and indirect cost). Cost Pools Whenever possible, costs are direct charged to the appropriate class and funding stream. Specific transactions are directly split between grants/programs when more than one program benefits. WSM has an Indirect Overhead Cost Pool to capture costs that benefit all programs.

Distribution of Staff Costs

Staff charge their time on the bi-weekly timesheets to the grant(s)/program(s) on which they work or to the indirect pool. The payroll system generates a labor distribution report that subtotals costs per grant and pool. Costs are entered into the accounting system by grant/cost pool according to the share of their actual labor cost based on their timesheets.

Cost Pools

The program cost pool is allocated on a quarterly basis to the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker grants based on the percentage of new clients enrolled as Adults and Dislocated Workers during

the same quarter. The WIOA Youth Cost Pool is distributed between In-School and Out-of-School Youth on the basis of direct costs in each category. The Executive and Administrative Cost Pool is allocated equally to all programs based on direct costs, to the limit of the lesser of the grant approved rate or our Federal approved indirect rate.

Indirect and Overhead Costs ("IOC") are expenses (e.g., compensation and fringe benefits not charged to a specific program or grant, proportional shares of the OPC and COC allocations, other indirect costs and professional fees, etc.) not directly charged to specific program or grant Classes. The total monthly activity recorded to the IOC Class will be allocated to all programs and grants based on the ratio of each Class's total non-compensation direct expenses to the total non-compensation direct expenses of all program and grant Classes. WSM organizational operations are supplemented through other funding streams and unrestricted funds are utilized for costs not attributable to grants, as outlined in our cost allocation plan.

Cost Allocation Plans

WSM has a cost allocation plan matrix that outlines all chart of account categories and class categories and the recordation and allocation of each category of costs.

- Program Cost Pool – The operations of the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker grants are closely related and share a number of resources including staff, facilities, equipment, and supplies. In the cases where these costs cannot be easily identified as associated with one or the other grant, they are included in this pool.
- WIOA Youth Cost Pool – All WIOA Youth program costs must be categorized as either In School or Out of School costs. Any costs identified as program costs belonging to the WIOA Youth grant that cannot be easily identified as In School or Out of School are included in this pool. This will mostly include costs for facilities, staff, equipment, and supplies used for all Youth activities.
- Executive and Administrative Cost Pool – The cost of operating the corporate headquarters, including facilities, certain executive salaries, all fiscal costs and human resources costs are included in this pool and shared as indirect by all programs.

Facilities and shared staff (per the RSA) costs for Career Centers are first divided amongst participating partners on the basis of square footage, and then between WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker based on the Program Cost Pool plan described above. If any other grant programs worked out of the Career Centers, their facilities costs would be allocated to that program based on square feet directly used. Supplies and personnel-driven charges would be allocated based on headcount.

Z. Procedure for Collecting Debts Involving WIOA Funds

In the majority of cases, WSM functions on a reimbursement basis to avoid debt issues. All invoices are reviewed prior to payment to ensure allowable costs. However, if an unresolved debt occurs due to overpayment, disallowed costs, or an unanticipated circumstance. The following procedures are enacted:

- Within 30 days of invoice development, a demand letter is sent specifying the pertinent debt information and accompanying legal rights information.
- If no contact has been established with Debtor after 30 days, a follow-up demand letter is sent.
- If no resolution has occurred after an additional 14 days, legal action is commenced

2016-2020 Local Plan Assurances

Check the following boxes to accept the assurances listed below.

		Assurance	References
☑	1.	The Local Board has processes and timelines, consistent with WIOA Section 108(d), to obtain input into the development of the local plan and provide the opportunity for comment by representatives of business, labor organizations, education, other key stakeholders, and the general public for a period that is no less than 30 days.	WIOA Sections 108(d); proposed 20 CFR 679.550(b)
☑	2.	The final Local Plan is available and accessible to the general public.	Proposed 20 CFR 679.550(b)(5)
☑	3.	The Local Board has established procedures to ensure public access (including people with disabilities) to board meetings and information regarding board activities, such as board membership and minutes.	WIOA Section 107(e); proposed 20 CFR 679.390 and 679.550
☑	4.	The Local Board makes publicly-available any local requirements for the Local Area, such as policies, including policies for the use of WIOA Title I funds.	Proposed 20 CFR 679.390
☑	5.	The Local Board has established a written policy or procedure that identifies circumstances that might present conflict of interest for any local workforce investment board or entity that they represent, and provides for the resolution of conflicts	WIOA Section 107(h); proposed 20 CFR 679.410(a)-(c)
☑	6.	The Local Board has copies of memoranda of understanding between the Local Board and each American Job Center partner concerning the operation of the American Job Center delivery system in the Local Area, and has provided the State with the latest versions of its memoranda of understanding.	WIOA Section 121(c); proposed 20 CFR 678.500-510
☑	7.	The Local Board has written policy or procedures that ensure American Job Center operator agreements are reviewed and updated no less than once every three years.	WIOA Section 121(c)(v)
☑	8.	The Local Board has procurement policies and procedures for selecting One-Stop operators, awarding contracts under WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker funding provisions, and awarding contracts for Youth service provision under WIOA Title I in accordance with applicable state and local laws, rules, and regulations, provided no conflict exists with WIOA.	WIOA Sections 121(d) and 123; proposed 20 CFR 678.600-615 and 681.400
☑	9.	The Local Board has procedures for identifying and determining the eligibility of training providers and their programs to receive WIOA Title I individual training accounts.	WIOA Sections 107(d)(10), 122(b)(3), and 123; Proposed 20 CFR 679.370(l)-(m) and 680.410-430
☑	10.	The Local Board has written procedures for resolving grievances and complaints alleging violations of WIOA Title I regulations, grants, or other agreements under WIOA and written policies or procedures for assisting customers who express interest in filing complaints at any point of service, including, at a minimum, a requirement that all partners can identify appropriate staff contacts and refer customers to those contacts.	WIOA Section 181(c); proposed 20 CFR 683.600
☑	11.	The Local Board has established at least one comprehensive, full-service American Job Center and has a written process for	WIOA Section 121(e)(2)(A); proposed 20 CFR 678.305;

		the local Chief Elected Official and Local Board to determine that the center conforms to the definition therein.	
☑	12.	All partners in the local workforce and education system described in this plan ensure the physical, programmatic and communications accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology and materials in the Local Area's American Job Centers for individuals with disabilities.	WIOA Section 188; 29 CFR parts 37.7-37.9; 20 CFR 652.8(j)
☑	13.	The Local Board ensures that outreach is provided to populations and sub-populations who can benefit from American Job Center services.	WIOA Section 188; 29 CFR 37.42
☑	14.	The Local Board implements universal access to programs and activities to individuals through reasonable recruitment targeting, outreach efforts, assessments, service delivery, partner development, and numeric goals.	WIOA Section 188; 29 CFR 37.42
☑	15.	The Local Board complies with the nondiscrimination provisions of Section 188, and assures that Methods of Administration were developed and implemented.	WIOA Section 188; 29 CFR 37.54(a)(1)
☑	16.	The Local Board collects and maintains data necessary to show compliance with nondiscrimination provisions of Section 188 of WIOA.	WIOA Section 185; 29 CFR 37.37
☑	17.	The Local Board complies with restrictions governing the use of federal funds for political activities, the use of the American Job Center environment for political activities, and the Local Board complies with the applicable certification and disclosure requirements.	CFR Part 230 Appendix B; 48 CFR 31.205-22; RCW 42.52.180; TEGL 2-12; 29 CFR Part 93.100
☑	18.	The Local Board ensures that American Job Center staff, along with the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker program partner agency, will continue to provide services to agricultural employers and MSFWs that are demand-driven and consistent with ESD's mission.	WIOA Section 167
☑	19.	The Local Board follows confidentiality requirements for wage and education records as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), as amended, WIOA, and applicable Departmental regulations.	WIOA Sections 116(i)(3) and 185(a)(4); 20 USC 1232g; proposed 20 CFR 677.175 and 20 CFR part 603
☑	20.	The Local Board has a written policy and procedures to competitively award grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities (or applicable federal waiver), including a process to be used to procure training services made as exceptions to the Individual Training Account process.	WIOA Section 108(b)(16); proposed 20 CFR 679.560(a)(15); WIOA Title I Policy 5601; WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(G); proposed 20 CFR 680.300-310
☑	21.	The Local Board has accounting systems that follow current Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and written fiscal-controls and fund-accounting procedures and ensures such procedures are followed to insure proper disbursement and accounting of WIOA adult, dislocated worker, and youth program and the Wagner-Peyser Act funds.	WIOA Section 108(b)(15), WIOA Title I Policy 5230; WIOA Title I Policy 5250
☑	22.	The Local Board ensures compliance with the uniform administrative requirements under WIOA through annual, on-site monitoring of each local sub-recipient.	WIOA Section 184(a)(3); proposed 20 CFR 683.200, 683.300, and 683.400-410
☑	23.	The Local Board has a written debt collection policy and procedures that conforms with state and federal requirements and a process for maintaining a permanent record of all debt	WIOA Section 184(c); 20 CFR Part 652; proposed 20

		collection cases that supports the decisions made and documents the actions taken with respect to debt collection, restoration, or other debt resolution activities.	CFR 683.410(a), 683.420(a), 683.750
☑	24.	The Local Board has a written policy and procedures for ensuring management and inventory of all properties obtained using WIOA funds, including property purchased with JTPA or WIA funds and transferred to WIOA, and that comply with WIOA, and, in the cases of local government, Local Government Property Acquisition policies.	WIOA Section 184(a)(2)(A); proposed 20 CFR 683.200 and 683.220; OMB Uniform Administrative Guidance; Generally Accepted Accounting Procedures (GAAP)
☑	25.	The Local Board will not use funds received under WIOA to assist, promote, or deter union organizing.	WIOA Section 181(b)(7); proposed 20 CFR 680.850
☑	26.	The Local Board has a written policy and procedures that ensure adequate and correct determinations of eligibility for WIOA-funded basic career services and qualifications for enrollment of adults, dislocated workers, and youth in WIOA-funded individualized career services and training services, consistent with state policy on eligibility and priority of service.	Proposed 20 CFR Part 680 Subparts A and B; proposed 20 CFR Part 681 Subpart A
☑	27.	The Local Board has a written policy and procedures for awarding Individual Training Accounts to eligible adults, dislocated workers, and youth receiving WIOA Title I training services, including dollar and/or duration limit(s), limits on the number of times an individual may modify an ITA, and how ITAs will be obligated and authorized.	WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(G); Proposed 20 CFR 680.300-320
☑	28.	The Local Board has a written policy and procedures that establish internal controls, documentation requirements, and leveraging and coordination of other community resources when providing supportive services and, as applicable, needs-related payments to eligible adult, dislocated workers, and youth enrolled in WIOA Title I programs.	WIOA Sections 129(c)(2)(G) and 134(d)(2); proposed 20 CFR 680.900-970; proposed 20 CFR 681.570
☑	29.	The Local Board has a written policy for priority of service at its American Job Centers and, as applicable, affiliate sites and for local workforce providers that ensures veterans and eligible spouses are identified at the point of entry, made aware of their entitlement to priority of service, and provided information on the array of employment, training and placement services and eligibility requirements for those programs or services.	Jobs for Veterans Act; Veterans' Benefits, Health Care, and Information Technology Act; 20 CFR 1010; TEGL 10-09; Veterans Program Letter 07-09
☑	30.	The Local Board has developed plans and strategies for maximizing coordination of services provided by the State employment service under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) and services provided in the Local Area through the American Job Center delivery system, to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services.	
☑	31.	The Local Board will provide reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals with disabilities unless providing the accommodation would cause undue hardship.	

The Local Workforce Development Board for Montgomery County Maryland certifies that it complies with all required components and assurances of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act plan development guidelines issued by the State of Maryland. The Local Board also assures that funds will be spent in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Wagner-Peyser Act, and their regulations, written U.S. Department of Labor guidance implementing these laws, Office of Management and Budget circulars, and all other applicable federal and state laws, regulations, and policies.
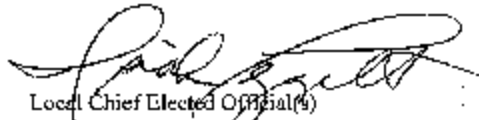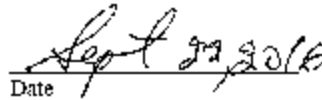

_____   _____

Local Chief Elected Official(s)   Date

_____   _____

Local Workforce Development Board Chair   Date
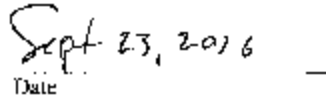
The Local Workforce Development Board for Montgomery County Maryland certifies that it complies with all required components and assurances of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act plan development guidelines issued by the State of Maryland. The Local Board also assures that funds will be spent in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Wagner-Peyser Act, and their regulations, written U.S. Department of Labor guidance implementing these laws, Office of Management and Budget circulars, and all other applicable federal and state laws, regulations, and policies.

_____
Local Chief Elected Official(s)

_____
Date   Sept 22, 2016

_____
Local Workforce Development Board Chair

_____
Date   Sept 23, 2016