

**ILLINOIS LOCAL WORKFORCE AREA 10 – WILL COUNTY
WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT
LOCAL PLAN 4-YEAR PLAN**

March 16, 2020

Revised October 28, 2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter from the Board Chair	3
Introduction and Overview	4
Chapters 1 – 3: Regional Components	
Chapter 4: Operating Systems and Policies	8
Chapter 5: Performance Goals and Evaluation	25
Chapter 6: Technical Requirements	27
Exhibits:	
Appendix A – PY19 MOU with Career Services Matrix	30
Appendix B – Service Integration Next Steps	
Appendix C – Workforce Services Division - Supportive Services Policy	
Appendix D – Career Scholarship - Individual Training Account Policy	
Appendix E – Local Training Provider Certification Policy	
Appendix F – Procurement Policy	

LETTER FROM BOARD CHAIR



203 N. Ottawa Street, Suite 100
Joliet, IL 60432
(815) 727-5670

www.willcountyworkforceboard.com

March, 2020

Mr. Michael Baker
Manager – Strategic Planning & Innovation
Office of Employment & Training
Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity
500 E. Monroe Street, Springfield, IL 62701

Re: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Local Plan for LWIA 10 and Regional Plan for the Northeast Economic Development Region (NEEDR)

Mr. Baker:

In accordance with the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) which requires the creation of comprehensive regional and local workforce development strategic plans for the period of July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2024, please accept this letter as submittal of the WIOA Local Plan for Will County and the WIOA Regional Plan for the Northeast Economic Development Region. These plans were approved by the local Workforce Investment Board Executive Committee at their meeting on March 30, 2020.

The plans were developed in collaboration with regional and local partners and align with existing economic development priorities.

The members of the Board understand and stress the vital importance of workforce development as a key component for the economic growth of the NEEDR and endorse the WIOA Regional Plan to improve and enhance the economic development for both job seekers and employers. The WIOA Local plan for Will County was developed and coordinated with the information and strategies laid-out in the WIOA Regional Plan.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Sallay
WIB Chair

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

Local Workforce Area 10 (LWA 10) – Will County, has built a local workforce development system that meets the specific needs of Will County employers, provides opportunities for its residents, and leverages the resources of partners to maximize services. Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), LWA 10 - Will County is poised to not only continue, but strengthen those guiding principles. Through this Local Plan, LWA 10 – Will County will be a partner in implementing the vision, goals, and strategies of Illinois’ WIOA Unified State Plan and the Northeast Economic Development Region’s Regional Plan and in growing Will County’s economy.

The Workforce Investment Board of Will County has developed a strong labor market analysis process to assist in the determination of local and future needs. This analysis uses data to analyze trends, make projections, identify demand occupations, and assist in the development of programming for both businesses and job seekers.

The graphic below provides a clear picture of the three strategies that drive the work of the Board. Data and analysis are critical to ensuring that the focus of all programs has a strong connection to enhancing the outcomes of these strategies.

Workforce Investment Board of Will County Strategies for Success: System Improvement Strategy, Employer Strategy, and Human Capital Strategy



In line with state priorities, LWA 10 is building upon current success in developing business-driven programs, services, and partnerships to meet Will County’s workforce challenges. The Local Plan was developed around three major concepts in alignment with the State and Regional Plans: ensuring that we are Data-Driven; Business-Led; and Integrated and Aligned.

Trends

Demographics –

- The 2019 population in Will County, Illinois is 694,814.
- The median household income is \$86,108.
- Of individuals 25 and older in Will County, Illinois, 34% have a bachelor’s degree or higher which ranks 39th (out of 102 counties) in the State of Illinois.

People & Income Overview	Value	State Ranking
Population (2019) ¹	694,814	4
Households (2018)	227,848	4
Per Capita Personal Income (2018)	\$52,953	9
Median Household Income (2018)	\$86,108	6
Poverty Rate (2018)	6.4%	98
Education Attainment	Value	State Ranking
H.S. Diploma or More - % of Adults 25+ (2018 ACS 5yr)	90.9%	37
Bachelor’s Deg. or More - % of Adults 25+ (2018 ACS 5yr)	34.0%	39
Industry Overview (2018) - (By place of work)	Value	State Ranking
Manufacturing - % all jobs in County	9.3%	56
Transportation & Warehousing - % all jobs in County	10.2%	6
Health Care, Social Assistance - % all jobs in County	10.8%	47
Source: ¹ EMSI 2020.1; STATS America State Ranking based on 102 Counties		

The unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted) for Will County, Illinois was 3.0% as of December 2019 compared to 4.5% in December 2017. While unemployment rates are lower than in 2018, the current indicators reflect less people employed, less people engaged in the labor force, less people unemployed.

Unemployment Rates			
Geographic Area	December 2017	December 2018	December 2019
National	4.2%	3.6%	3.4%
Illinois	4.5%	4.4%	3.5%
Will County	4.5%	3.8%	3.0%
Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security - Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS), Bureau of Labor Statistics			

Employment –

Will County employers added 350 net new jobs in 2019 compared to the same timeframe in 2018 which the largest growth coming from Transportation and Warehousing. The Transportation Distribution Logistics industry experienced a 22% increase in jobs in the 2017-2018 and added an additional 2% in 2018-2019 timeframe. (Source: EMSI - QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, and Self-Employed)

An overview of the top five industries when looking at forecasted growth is below.

Description	2008 Jobs	2018 Jobs	2008 - 2018 Change	2008 - 2018 % Change	Avg. Earnings Per Job	2018 Jobs	2028 Jobs	2018 - 2028 Change	2018 - 2028 % Change
Transportation and Warehousing	10,568	26,997	16,429	155%	\$56,739	26,997	38,857	11,860	44%
Accommodation/Food Services	16,214	22,216	6,002	37%	\$20,244	22,216	27,324	5,108	23%
Health Care /Social Assistance	21,188	28,041	6,853	32%	\$61,152	28,041	32,279	4,238	15%
Administrative and Support	11,310	18,529	7,219	64%	\$41,377	18,529	21,550	3,021	16%
Professional, Scientific, Technical Svcs	8,821	12,629	3,808	43%	\$71,335	12,629	15,132	2,503	20%

(Source CIU, LAUS, BLS, CPS, Census, C2ER and EMSI-QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees and Self-Employed)

Wages –

Sectors in Will County with the highest average wages per worker for 4Q2019 were Mining, Quarrying, Oil and Gas Extraction (\$7,803), followed by Construction (\$6,646) and Wholesale Trade (\$6,673).

Average Monthly and New Hire Wages 2016 - 2018

Geographic Area	Average Monthly Wages			Average Monthly Wages – New Hires		
	2016	2017	2018	2016	2017	2018
Will County	\$4,359	\$4,493	\$4,599	\$2,575	\$2,606	\$2,755
Chicago Metro Region	\$5,361	\$5,523	\$5,727	\$3,112	\$3,192	\$3,409
State of Illinois	\$4,955	\$5,112	\$5,295	\$2,865	\$2,961	\$3,139

Source: U.S. Census. Local Employment Dynamics

The Workforce Investment Board will continue to produce its quarterly Workforce Update and annual Service Analysis Report, both of which provide information to further discussion between local employers, workforce development, economic development, and education and training partners.

The Workforce Investment Board along with our local partners are committed to follow the State and Region’s lead in developing and implementing programs and services that address trends in local workforce and population data, with particular emphasis on key growth industries, in-demand occupations, and needed skills.

Key Industry Sectors

One of the primary activities in the recent local labor market analysis was to identify the key industry sectors which will drive the programs and activities of LWIA 10. The Workforce Investment Board of Will County has long been implementing programs and initiatives based on industry sector analysis. Focusing on industry sectors has provided the Workforce Investment Board with a targeted approach to program development and a strong connection to economic development activities in the County.

Sector strategies are considered highly responsive to industry demand when compared to traditional job-matching and training services because they are:

- **Problem-oriented, not program-oriented;**
- **Address needs interdependently, not independently; and**
- **Work with industries collectively, not as individual firms.**

Sector initiatives meet the skill, recruitment, and retention needs of employers and the training, employment, and career advancement needs of workers. By meeting the needs of regional industry on behalf of a region’s jobseekers and workers, sector initiatives strengthen a region’s overall economic vitality. Sector initiatives:

- **Address the needs of employers by focusing intensively on the workforce needs of a specific industry sector over a sustained period, often concentrating on a specific occupation or set of occupations within that industry;**
- **Address the needs of workers by creating formal career paths to good jobs, reducing barriers to employment, and sustaining or increasing middle-class jobs;**
- **Bolster regional economic competitiveness by engaging economic development experts in workforce issues and aligning education, economic, and workforce development planning;**
- **Engage a broader array of key stakeholders through partnerships organized by workforce intermediaries; and**
- **Promote systemic change that achieves ongoing benefits for the industry, workers, and community.**

The Workforce Investment Board did an analysis of key industries that are workforce drivers in the County. Based on the analysis, the following will be the key industry sectors for the next two years:

- **Healthcare**
- **Manufacturing**
- **Professional/Financial/Information Technology Services**
- **Transportation/Distribution/Logistics**

The identification of these sectors was the result of labor market analysis that began with an examination of all major industry sectors and used a ranking system to narrow down the sectors based on employment, wage, growth, and skill indicators. These key sectors are in line with the sectors identified in the Northeast Economic Development Region’s most critical sectors of Healthcare, Manufacturing, TDL, and acknowledging that Information Technology is an underlying component in all three of these sectors.

These four sectors are the industry drivers in Will County. They will be used to focus service programs, including incumbent worker and on-the-job training programs, modify and update the Will County Demand Occupation list, and to identify business service priorities in the County.

CHAPTER 4: OPERATING SYSTEMS AND POLICIES

- A. *Coordination of Planning Requirements: The plan will incorporate the Memorandum of Understanding and Service Integration Action Plan and include the following statements in this chapter:*
- *The Local Workforce Innovation Area (10) **Memorandum of Understanding** provides a description of the one-stop delivery system, and other information that is essential to the establishment and operation of effective local workforce development systems as required by the WIOA Rule (20 CFR Part 678.705). The Memorandum of Understanding and any subsequent modifications is incorporated by reference into this plan*
 - *The Local Workforce Innovation Area (10) **Service Integration Action Plan** provides a description of how local workforce partners will align and coordinate services as required by the State of Illinois Service Integration Policy (WIOA Policy Chapter 1, Section 13). Information from the initial Service Integration Action Plan is included below. The Service Integration Action Plan and any subsequent modifications is incorporated by reference into this plan.*

The Workforce Investment Board of Will County (WIB) works to ensure that all planning documents required are completed with all partners involved to be as comprehensive as possible. These documents, including the Memorandum of Understanding and Service Integration Plan, are incorporated by reference into Will County’s WIOA Four-Year Plan so that the planning requirements of each is coordinated.

The WIB also participates in other planning projects including the Will County Center for Economic Development’s (CED) Shaping the Economy strategic plan as well as the regional strategic planning which encompasses the 10-county Northeast Economic Development Region (NEEDR). This region covers seven local workforce areas and is an ongoing process with priorities updated annually (<http://www.workforcepartnersmetrochicago.com>).

- B. *Provide information regarding the use of technology in the one-stop delivery system, including a description of:*
- *How the workforce centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA (§ 679.560(b)(20)).*

Though each partner uses their own system(s) for their service delivery and tracking, the Workforce Investment Board has used G*Stars to manage, develop, and improve programs and services offered to customers of the One Stop system. Enhancements to the G*Stars system now allow partner specific data analysis as well as utilizing the system as a customer management system (CMS) with business customers.

Given the diversity of data systems between partners in the system, it will be necessary to have leadership from the state to allow for comprehensive integration.

All required career services are available in the Workforce Center of Will County, either in person by staff who are housed at the Center, or via direct linkage technology. Adults, dislocated workers and youth, and employers will be provided with services by the Workforce Services Division of Will County, Illinois Department of Employment Security, Illinois Department of Human Services – Division of Rehabilitation Services and Joliet Junior College onsite.

All partners who do not have staff working in the Center will provide their required career services via direct linkage technology. Center customers who desire career services from an off-site partner will be assisted by Resource Room staff to connect with that partner via direct linkage in order to connect in real time to partner staff who can assist them.

Currently, direct linkage connections are available for Joliet Junior College’s Division of Adult Education and Literacy, Division of Rehabilitation Services, ILDHS TANF, Joliet Junior College’s Career and Technical Education Department, Will County Center for Community Concerns, Kankakee County Community Services, Inc., National Able, and Joliet Job Corp.

As part of the Service Integration roll-out, the Will County partners met to discuss the State-required self-assessment for the Workforce Center of Will County in fall 2019. This self-assessment process involved partners discussing levels of service integration, and identifying areas of interest for shared efforts toward improved levels of service integration. One area identified is the level of communication that occurs across partners. Meeting topics include program and service information, sharing of successes and challenges as well as presentations from partners and other local organizations. Though Center meetings are held monthly and all partners are encouraged to attend, not all partners participate. Discussions to improve included sending the meeting dates and times to all members electronically and for all partners to send a representative if the primary participant is not available and reporting back to the partner. Improving on this goal will mean that partners will have a better understanding of all of the programs and services available through the partners and the community as well as any updates that involve the overall Center.

How the Local Board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and other means (§ 679.560(b)(5)(ii)).

Will County has a Mobile Workforce Center (MWC) which travels to 5 different locations in the more remote areas of the county, including libraries and Village/City Halls. The MWC allows for customers, both job-seeking and employer, to access the same services available in the resource room of the Comprehensive Center. Customer tracking and usage are tracked on the MWC in the same way as the Comprehensive Center.

Various workshops held throughout the month are livestreamed on social media and archived for a user to view at their convenience.

In addition, many workforce services are available online through, Illinois WorkNet, and JobLink.

Workforce Services Division of Will County maintains an electronic Job Board which is linked to their website, and the Center’s website as well as Joliet Junior College and the local community Chambers.

Our Business Services Team, which includes our partner agencies, spends a great deal of time meeting with employers to better understand their needs and connect them with services. The Team developed a one-sheet, describing the business solutions and contact information for each area as well as a booklet of details listing the services available through each partner. The Business Services Team has also made presentations to various business-led organizations and held webinars describing the services available and answering questions from participating businesses.

C. Describe how the Local Board will support the strategies identified in the Unified State Plan and work with entities carrying out core programs, including a description of (§ 679.560(b)(1)(ii)):

The Workforce Investment Board of Will County will lead a system that promotes business driven talent solutions that integrate education, workforce, and economic development resources across systems to provide businesses, individuals, and communities with the opportunity to prosper and contribute to growing the economy of Will County.

The WIB and our One-Stop Operator (Workforce Services Division of Will County) are involved in:

- **Demand-driven strategic planning at the regional level for many years with the six other LWAs in the North East Economic Development Region (Region 4);**
- **Supporting employer-driven local and regional sector initiatives such as apprenticeships, incumbent worker trainings and specific regional initiatives around manufacturing; healthcare; and transportation, distribution and logistics (TDL);**
- **Educating all clients on career pathways and the steps needed to advance within a given occupation or industry sector;**
- **Expanding service integration even further as a result of the One-Stop self-assessment and improvement planning across the One-Stop partner agencies;**
- **Utilizing multiple sources of data for the purpose of data-driven decision-making. These sources include Jobs-EQ, EMSI, IDES, and Illinois workNet; and**
- **Frequently exploring the options available for utilizing as much data as possible and appropriate to understanding what is happening, changing and trending in the local economy. WIB shares information and data with the local economic development agencies and municipal departments to support attraction and retention efforts throughout the County.**

The Board has charged the One-Stop Operator with continuing to review and coordinate programming in the Center. Core partners have cataloged all services, workshops, and programs provided both in the One-Stop Center and at other locations. Through this process, the Core partners have identified services that are similar and have begun to provide those services in a joint fashion. An example of this is the job fairs that were previously hosted for individual employers by both IDES and WSD. Currently, these partners host joint events that include multiple employers in order to recruit for employees. In addition, Core partners continue to identify gaps in services at the Center and will initiate plans to eliminate those gaps.

Expanding access to employment, training, education and supportive services for eligible individuals,

particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment (§ 679.560(b)(2)(i));

Our Workforce Center of Will County has a website (will.works) which outlines programs and services available both at the Workforce Center and offsite. Additionally, the referral system among partner agencies ensures that applicants are directed to supportive service programs and are made aware of employment, training, and education offerings.

At the core of all Board programs is the identification and focus on the four key industry sectors: Healthcare, Manufacturing, Professional/Financial Services, and Transportation/Distribution/Logistics. The Board developed industry and occupational materials around each of these four sectors and the demand occupations in each sector. In addition to overview materials, an orientation Power Point and Career Advisor Guide was developed to ensure that customers of the One-Stop Center have a wide berth of information about the four sectors, including career pathways in each sector.

Coordinated by our One-Stop Operator, partners meet monthly to provide staff the opportunity to understand each partner’s programs and services so they can make appropriate connections for individuals and employers. These meetings are especially useful to expand services at the Center to people with disabilities (presence of VR representative), with limited English speaking abilities (presence of Adult Education representative), recipients of public assistance (offering TANF orientation at Center), Low Income older workers (coordination with SCSEP partner) and Veterans (specialized non-WIOA funded training and location of Will County Veterans Assistance Commission across the hall from the Center).

Workforce Services Division works closely with the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) which provides the Illinois JobLink job posting service, as well as programs to assist long-term unemployed, returning citizens, veterans, migrant workers, and others. Illinois Department Human Services staff (DRS & TANF) are onsite at the Workforce Center to provide information and conduct intake. Their programs include:

- **Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), which provides cash assistance to families and pregnant women to help pay for food, shelter, utilities, and expense other than medical.**
- **Aid to the Aged, Blind and Disabled (AABD), which helps those who qualify and need cash assistance.**
- **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits for low-income households to buy the food they need for a nutritionally adequate diet.**
- **Medical Assistance Programs for aged, blind, and disabled; and for families with dependent children. There is also assistance with obtaining Affordable Care Act coverage.**

Scaling up the use of Integrated Education and Training models to help adults get their GED and work on other basic skills and English language acquisition while earning credentials and industry-recognized credentials that lead to in-demand occupations;

The Adult Education partner has focused bridge and ICAPs programming on two of these sectors (Healthcare and TDL) to allow customers to obtain both basic skill and occupational training in a coordinated fashion. JJC’s Adult Education and Literacy division offers programs such as bridge and Integrated Education and Training (IET) programs which are developed to create opportunities for adult education students interested in a specific career pathway/field to co-enroll in high school equivalency or credit and/or English Language Acquisition/ESL classes and college-level courses in their area of interest (i.e. health care, transportation/distribution/logistics, etc.). IET programs are closely coordinated with JJC’s CTE departments and Perkins and lead to an industry recognized and stackable certificate/credential.

Joliet Junior College Adult Education continues to expand and scale up their Integrated Education and Training (IET) models. The adult education program currently offers a hybrid (online and face to face) transportation, warehousing, and logistics IET program. Students are concurrently enrolled in ESL or GED courses while pursuing the TWL certification. Additionally, the adult education program offers process operator and certified nursing assistant IET’S. Expanding the availability of these programs has significantly increased the number of adult education students earning industry-recognized credentials and obtaining gainful employment.

Using the insights and lessons learned from successful dual credit programs to scale up similar efforts in other sectors and regions;

Through the community college system, our local workforce area has dual credit programs with all of the high schools and career centers. The types and extent of classes offered varies by school. The community college, high schools, and career centers meet frequently to strategize and implement the best strategies including dual credit programs to ensure the future success of the student.

In addition, Joliet Junior College and Workforce Investment Board of Will County are part of the Northern Illinois Workforce Coalition (NIWC). NIWC is made of the community college, workforce professionals to discuss best practices and create strategies to work as a region. Thus, as a participant of NIWC, the discussion and implementation of dual credit becomes a regional approach and provides more opportunities for the student and consistency among community college implementation.

Determining the most effective marketing methods and messages for informing college and university students about Prior Learning Assessments;

Joliet Junior College has received a grant to build capacity for faculty to implement Prior Learning Assessments (PLA) to evaluate students entering CTE pathways who have workforce training, education, or credentials. The project will consist of training faculty and administrators on designing and implementing PLA and then institutionalizing PLA at JJC. This project will develop the assessment process for PLA in multiple CTE fields including Industrial Maintenance Technician, Electrical/Electronic Automated Systems, Management

& Supervision, Computer Information and Office Systems, Horticultural Sciences, Law Enforcement, Construction Management, and Logistics.

Investigating how targeted marketing can identify segments of the labor force, such as mature workers and the underemployed, who may not require extensive education or training to qualify for jobs in high demand occupations;

The Center partners coordinate efforts between their agencies to target different segments of the workforce population.

IDES is able to target market to job-seekers through email blasts. The Workforce Center also uses social media, such as Facebook and LinkedIn, to promote various outreach events to targeted segments, depending on the skills required or the employer positions available. The Center also uses Contestant Contact to send out event announcements as well as a quarterly newsletter.

Facilitating the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs (§ 679.560(b)(2)(ii)); and

The identification of co-enrollment opportunities has significantly improved due to two specific activities. The first is the presence of multiple partners in the Center. Having a wider range of services and staff available encourages coordination and discussion. The second is ongoing meetings and planning sessions between the partners and their staff to share information, discuss opportunities, and plan strategies to ensure customers have access to all services necessary for them to obtain gainful employment.

As stated above, the Board developed industry and occupational materials around each of these four sectors and the demand occupations in each sector. In addition to overview materials, an orientation Power Point and Career Advisor Guide was developed to ensure that customers of the One-Stop Center have a wide berth of information about the four sectors, including career pathways in each sector.

Improving access to activities leading to a recognized post-secondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable) (§ 679.560(b)(2)(iii)).

A general assessment questionnaire has been developed that all customers to the Center complete. This assessment will ensure that any and all services that would be appropriate for each customer are identified. The assessment is the tool that will aid in identifying and addressing any barriers to employment the customer may have. This assessment will be the basis for each customer's career plan.

The career plan process will strengthen the development for career pathway planning even in instances where the customer may be seeking what they believe is a terminal path to employment. The process provides an opportunity for Center staff to discuss future pathway options, identify important credentials and certifications for future occupational growth, and ensure that customers have a strong understanding of the path to their desired goals.

After enrollment in WIOA, career planners work with clients to explain stackable credentials and focus on helping customers enroll and complete at least one credential in their pathway. During this process, staff assist clients in understanding their options (e.g. educational institutions, length of program, cost, etc.) for training to receive credentials.

D. Provide information regarding the local coordination strategies with state (including the Unified State Plan), regional and local partners to enhance services and avoid duplication of activities, including a description of each partner.

The partners of the Workforce Center of Will County coordinate efforts in various ways, including:

- **The development and use of an electronic intake information form that is shared for the purposes of general client information and referral purposes.**
- **Participation in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the partner agencies laying out the contributions and activities delivered in the Workforce Center.**
- **Participation in the self-assessment of the Service Integration process to identify opportunities for collaboration.**
- **Monthly meetings to share information about services and activities in the Workforce Center.**
- **Coordinated job fairs and outreach efforts.**

Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth employment and training activities under WIOA Title I (§ 679.560(b)(6)).

The Workforce Investment Board has Workforce Services Division serve as both the One-Stop Operator and as Workforce Services (Title 1B) provider for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth employment and training activities under Title I. This role will continue and be enhanced with the provisions outlined in the WIOA. Workforce Services (Title 1B) offered by Workforce Services Division of Will County include:

- 1) **Adult/Dislocated Worker/Youth training services (Title 1B), such as:**
 - **Career scholarships (ITAs) for eligible adults and dislocated workers to attend training that leads to jobs that are in-demand in Will County;**
 - **Resume reviews by Certified Professional Resume Writers;**
 - **Mobile Workforce Center that travels to locations throughout Will County to assist job seekers (internet access for job searches/online applications, resume development/review, printer/copier) and businesses with targeted recruiting assistance;**
 - **Job Board for Will County businesses to list their openings, and a Resume Gallery where job seekers may post their resumes for consideration by local businesses;**
 - **Weekly job fairs for job seekers to meet with multiple businesses and for businesses to recruit/interact with potential job applicants;**
 - **Job search workshops (resume writing, interviewing, networking, social media, Microsoft Word/Excel;**

- **On-the-Job Training opportunities, where employees can earn while they are being trained on the job.**
- **Connect to your Future for eligible out-of-school youth ages 17-24 – services include GED preparation and work readiness classes, paid internships, tuition and supportive service assistance to attend post-secondary training that leads to jobs that are in-demand in Will County.**

2) Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)

Coordination through the Business Services Team, which includes partner representatives, connecting employer to recruitment, retention, training, and labor data services.

Adult education and literacy activities under WIOA Title II. This description must include how the Local Board will carry out the review of local applications submitted under Title II consistent with WIOA Secs. 107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and WIOA Sec. 232 (§ 679.560(b)(12)).

Joliet Junior College Adult Education is the provider of adult education and literacy activities under WIOA Title II. In addition to providing staff at the Center, classes are also taught on-site. JJC also provides classes at its campuses as well as at other off-site locations throughout the County. A representative of the Adult Education and Literacy department serves on the local board and participates in policy and program discussions. The WIB serves on the Adult Education Area Plan committee and reviews the submissions for Title II funding.

Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) services (§ 679.560(b)(11)).

Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) is the primary provider of Wagner-Peyser Act. A member of their staff is at the Center on a full-time basis which has significantly decreased any duplication of services. Their services include:

- **Illinois JobLink job postings website, which is the Labor Exchange System;**
- **Re-Employment Service Program (RES), which helps unemployed clients with a high likelihood of remaining unemployed;**
- **Re-Entry Employment Service Program (RESP) for returning citizens;**
- **Veterans Employment and Training Services (VETS);**
- **Migrant Seasonal Farmworker Program, in partnership with the Illinois Migrant Council.**

In addition, the Board is working with Wagner-Peyser staff on coordination of employer services and is including several departments within Joliet Junior College, the Will County Center for Economic Development (CED), and the provider of OJT services in the effort. Utilizing G*Stars as our client management system for business services developed by our Business Services Team.

Vocational rehabilitation service activities under WIOA Title IV (§ 679.560(b)(13)).

An IDHS Division of Rehabilitation Services staff person is located in the One Stop Center one day per week. To ensure coordination, a representative from IDHS Division of Rehabilitation Services is on the Board and participates in policy and program discussions. Services provided by DRS include:

- **one-on-one counseling and guidance, and information and referral services for each customer;**
- **helping high school students plan for their futures after high school through our Transition and STEP programs;**
- **working closely with state, regional, and local employers, to offer individualized placement services that bring employers and qualified employees together;**
- **assisting customers through the Work Incentive Planning and Assistance Program to ensure they understand how working will affect their SSDI/SSI benefits; and**
- **providing Supported Employment Program services to eligible individuals with significant disabilities who want to go to work and need ongoing support services to succeed on the job.**

Relevant secondary and post-secondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities (§ 679.560(b)(9)).

Members of both the secondary and post-secondary education systems serve on the Workforce Investment Board, providing input and assistance in coordinating services and strategies. The Board partners with Joliet Junior College as well as the three four-year colleges located in the county on various programs. In addition, the Director of the Adult Education program from Joliet Junior College serves on the Workforce Investment Board and the Youth Council of the Board.

The Workforce Investment Board has always had a strong and effective partnership with both secondary and post-secondary institutions in the County. The development of new programming and services is done through the Board Committee structure which includes several members of each of these groups.

How the Local Board will support the state strategies identified under § 676.105 and work with the entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs, including programs of study and career pathway programs under the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.) to support service alignment and needs identified in regional or local level assessments including the Perkins Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (§ 679.560(b)(1)(ii)).

The provider of Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education programs has been a participant in the MOU discussions in Will County. The provider provides services in the One-Stop Center via webcam technology. In addition, the CTE program services are available on a part-time basis through a staff person from Joliet Junior College’s Workforce Development Division who is housed in the One-Stop Center.

Through the 2020 Perkins V process, community colleges will prepare a Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) determining how well their CTE programs are aligned with workforce and economic development and if they are addressing the equity gaps in student access and success, particularly in special populations. This process will allow Joliet Junior College to assess and improve their current programming.

Provide a copy of the local supportive service policies and describe how the Local Board will

coordinate the provision of transportation and other appropriate supportive services in the local area (§ 679.560(b)(10)) and include information on the supportive services by each local program as appropriate.

The Board works with the Title 1 provider, Workforce Services Division of Will County (WSD), on coordinating appropriate supportive services. WSD provides supportive services (as determined appropriate by a career planner) to enable WIOA customers to participate in approved training activities.

A copy of the WSD’s Supportive Service Policies is attached to this plan as Appendix C

E. Provide a description of how the local area will provide adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities including:

A description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area (§ 679.560(b)(6)).

In addition to the services available through our Workforce Services (Title 1) provider as stated above, a wide range of employment and training activities occur at the One-Stop Center. The resource room includes computers with resume development software, internet access for job searches and career information, books, DVDs and other materials on various job search topics, an open computer lab to gain knowledge of basic computer skills, access to job search websites, copier and fax machine for job search activities, assistance with cover letters and employment applications, keyboarding software, and staff assistance. Workshops include: Networking Tools for Today’s Market, Creating/Uploading a Resume in Illinois JobLink, Getting to Know Excel, Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint, Master Your Job Search, Stand-Out Resumes, and LinkedIn-Maximize Your Profile, to name a few.

The One Stop also provides assessment, guidance and career planning, access to labor market information, and assistance with job searches. The Center also hosts networking events and job clubs for sharing leads and ideas and learning job search techniques at the One Stop.

In Program Year 2018, over 4,765 clients used the Workforce System of Will County for job search and training-related services totaling 17,723. The Mobile Workforce Center made 907 visits to locations throughout the county, providing over 925 services and serving over 185 clients. The Resume Gallery hosted over 130 job-seeker resumes for employers to review. In addition, 9,665 businesses placed job orders on the WCWC electronic job board.

The One Stop provides Individual Training Account vouchers for those registrants in need of training in the identified demand occupations. Nearly 400 customers utilized ITAs in Program Year 2018. The Board provides funding for on-the-job training (OJT) for adults and dislocated workers and plans for more than 40 OJT participants next year. The Board is also working to expand the program to provide OJT services for out-of-school youth and persons with disabilities. The Board subcontracts this service to Employment

and Employer Services, Inc.

Employment and Employer Services, Inc. has two staff people located in the Workforce Center who conduct orientation sessions for job seekers and do outreach to employers. All clients seeking training must successfully complete a two-week Career Certified course. The course provides soft skills training as well as math, reading, locating information, computer skills, and communication skills. The Board has also partnered with an employer with a registered apprenticeship program for incumbent worker training.

A description of how the Local Board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities (§ 679.560(b)(7)).

WSD has assigned a single staff person to coordinate with the Illinois Department of Commerce (DOC) on all rapid response activities. WSD and IDES attend all rapid response meetings and coordinates closely on all activities. Both staff will provide individual services, as necessary, to customers and employers who are in need of more specialized services. In addition, WSD works closely with local employers and the OJT contractor to match dislocated workers with current job openings when there is transferability of skills.

F. Provide a description of how the local area will provide youth activities including:

A description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local area, including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities, which must include an identification of successful models of such activities (§ 679.560(b)(8)).

The GED preparation/attainment and occupational skill training youth programs are offered year-round on an open-entry, open-exit basis. Youth programs include a GED preparation/attainment program and an Occupational Skill Training program for out-of-school youth between the ages of 17 and 24 years old. All youth enrolled in WIOA programs in Will County are required to attend work readiness/leadership training and take the National Career Readiness Certification (NCRC) assessment, scoring a bronze certificate or higher, as part of their service strategy. The program provides the preparation necessary for participating youth to successfully attain their GED.

Joliet Junior College's Adult Education and Literacy division is the WIOA Title II provider, and has a 60+ year history of providing education and support services to adults (16 years and older) and out of school youth, and is the primary provider of high school equivalency, basic skills, English Language Acquisition (ESL), high school diploma completion, career exploration, and bridge/Integrated Education and Training (IET) programs and services in the local area. JJC DAEL provides over 100 classes per semester at 15 locations throughout the district, and serves approximately 2,000 students annually. They also administer the STAR program (Student Achievement in Reading), which is an evidence based reading program that provides youth with reading skills to prepare them for post-secondary education and the workforce.

The Community College Initiative through IDHS-DRS also provides services for youth with disabilities. Youth with a disability who are interested in furthering their education at an Illinois Community College may participate in this program that can defray the cost of tuition.

The IDHS-DRS also implements a youth employment initiative, STEP, designed to provide pre-employment transition services to youth with disabilities. Services include job exploration counseling, work-based learning experiences, counseling on post-secondary education, and workplace readiness training. Youth programming also includes supportive employment for youth to provide work-based learning opportunities for youth with disabilities.

In addition, youth who already have their High School diploma or GED can obtain occupational training to prepare them for entry into a demand occupation. Youth participating in these programs may need additional supports to ensure that they are successful in completing the program and becoming gainfully employed. Supportive services are provided to youth as needed. The program is based on a foundation of strict guidelines that result in a highly structured program that promotes the success of the enrolled individuals. Joliet Junior College Workforce Development Division is the current contractor for this program.

The Illinois Department of Employment Security provides the Hire the Future Program for youth ages 16 to 24. The program provides assistance with employment, job readiness, and career development services. Another IDES program that has assisted with work-based learning opportunities for youth is the Fidelity Bonding program. The program designed to protect employers against employee dishonesty is being used with hard-to-serve youth populations.

A description of how local areas will meet the minimum expenditure rate for out-of-school youth.

Since 2005, it has been the policy of the Board to only fund programs for out-of-school youth. It was determined that youth who are not in school, either because they dropped out or completed and aren't engaged in work or post-secondary education, are at the highest risk of not obtaining gainful employment in the future. This target population is where 100% of all WIOA Title 1 youth funds have been spent and will continue to be spent. All programs funded by the Board must be for out-of-school youth, they must be open-entry/open-exit, and they must provide services on a year-round basis.

G. Provide a description of how the local area will provide services to individuals with barriers to employment⁸ as outlined in the Unified State Plan:

Provide information on how priority will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals and individuals who are basic skills deficient consistent with WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(E) (§ 679.560(b)(21)).

Workforce Center partners are committed to giving priority for individualized career services and training services to veterans, recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient, in accordance with Illinois DCEO's WIOA Policy 16-WIOA-4.2. As several core partners provide specific service to low-income or skills deficient individuals, they will focus their resources on those in need.

Joliet Junior College's Adult Education and Literacy division serves all adults (16 years and older) who fall within their eligible populations, including any adult who has not obtained a high school diploma or recognized equivalent, whose reading, writing, and/or math skills are below high school

level (basic skills deficient), and those for whom English is not their native language and who require assistance in reading, writing, speaking, and/or listening in English. Although income is not a factor in determining eligibility for Adult Education services, public assistance recipients, low income and basic skills deficient adults and out of school youth are majority populations among the 2,000 students served by JJC's Adult Education and Literacy division annually. DAEL will continue to accept all referrals and will provide appropriate services to all individuals requesting Adult Education. Basic Skills (reading, writing, math) are among the primary services offered by the JJC Adult Education program, serving hundreds of adults each year.

When customers enter the Workforce Center they complete an application form for a G*Stars customer tracking system card. This application asks the customer to indicate if they have a High School diploma or High School Equivalency certificate. Customers who indicate they do not have either of these credentials are counseled on the importance of obtaining the credential to increase their ability to obtain long-term employment. Customers who are willing to discuss this further are immediately connected with a staff person from Joliet Junior College's Adult Education and Literacy Division for further counseling and assistance.

Under the Connect to Your Future youth program, staff work with all local high schools to identify youth at risk of or who recently have dropped out of school. These students are contacted and encouraged to enroll in the program to work on obtaining their High School Equivalency certificate. In addition, significant outreach is done in the County to identify older youth who are in need of these services. Some examples of outreach initiatives are:

Describe how the local workforce areas will ensure equitable access to workforce and educational services through the following actions:

Though the Workforce Investment Board of Will County and Workforce Services Division of Will County has not had to address equitably access to workforce and educational services in any previous planning, we do review the demographics of those who utilize programs and services. We will continue to monitor the results and, by working closely with our partners and local organizations, will develop actions where and when needed.

Disaggregating data by race, gender and target population to reveal where disparities and inequities exist in policies and programs.

As part of our annual monitoring, the EO reviews data related to the usage of the center and advises on gaps. The Center partners use this data to develop action steps to increase awareness of the services available to the identified target populations. To the extent where it is possible for WIB to disaggregate data to review disparities and inequities exist in our policies and programming. WIB will also work with the partners to gain more knowledge and a comprehensive view of the people utilizing services.

Developing equity goals in conjunction with the education system and prepare action plans to achieve them.

Working closely with our CTE partner, we will participate in the Perkins V process which will help identify any inequities in the education system. Once identified, a plan can be developed and

implemented to decrease any such inequities.

Exposing more high school students, particularly young women and minorities, to careers in science, technology, engineering and math fields.

Working with our local high schools, employers and community college will help the Workforce Investment Board identify opportunities to expose more students to careers in STEM field. WIB currently participates in a group specifically charged with increasing awareness of careers available in the Petrochemical Industry. This project is being led by ExxonMobil and supported by local schools and career centers.

Exploring how effective mentor programs can be expanded to adults, particularly those who are displaced and moving to a new career.

Increasing awareness of the benefits of mentorship programs, particularly with dislocated workers looking to make a career change will help staff and Center partners better understand and develop a program for the Workforce Center of Will County. Identifying internal and community resources will be key to the success of any program developed.

Providing training to workforce program staff on data-driven approaches to address equity gaps.

Learning about gaps and how to utilize data to drive strategies will help staff understand how to better use to address any equity gaps. Thus, these topics will be presented to staff at various Center meetings and Workforce Services staff meetings.

Ensuring workforce services are strategically located in relation to the populations in most need.

The Workforce Center facility is located on the edge of the St. Joseph Medical Center complex and is in a high traffic area bordered by several main thoroughfares. Pace, the suburban public transportation provider, stops three blocks from the Workforce Center and will provide door-to-door service to/from numerous locations.

The physical layout and design of the Workforce Center of Will County supports a culture of inclusiveness and accessibility. The Center is on the first floor of a physically accessible building. The exterior doors to the building have electronic sensors to open and close. All parts of the building and the Center, doors, hallways, restrooms, etc. are ADA compliant.

The Resource Room of the Center is a large, open space that provides ample space for customer movement and supports a culture of inclusiveness. With specialized assistance from the Illinois Department of Human Services-Vocational Rehabilitation, assistive technology and services are available and supported in the Center.

The Workforce Board and Workforce Services continuously reviews the demographic information and adjusts the route and stops of the Mobil Workforce Center when necessary.

Description of how the Local Board will determine priority populations and how to best serve them, along with any other state requirements

The Workforce Investment Board determines priority populations based on their concentration in Will County and counsel from social support agencies. Partner agencies in the Workforce Center have identified services specific to those populations.

H. Provide a description of training policies and activities in the local area, including:

How local areas will meet the annual Training Expenditure Requirement (WIOA Policy Chapter 8, Section 4⁹);

Our local area has historically met the annual Training Expenditure Requirement and will continue to do so. The Board has allocated more than the required percentage of the WIOA budget for training activities. Training activities are split between on-the-job training and individual training accounts. Expenditures are monitored on a monthly basis and adjustments made accordingly. In the past several years, there has been an increase of Adult customers and a decrease in Dislocated Worker customers seeking direct training. As a result of this trend, the Workforce Investment Board has moved funds to the Adult program to ensure that all customers seeking direct training are able to access it in a timely fashion.

How local areas will encourage the use of work-based learning strategies, including the local area goals for specific work-based learning activities and proposed outcomes related to these activities;

The Board prioritizes on-the-job training for adults. All youth contracts have a work experience component that is either funded in a subsidized manner or through direct employment opportunities. In addition, the Board has approved the use of OJT for older youth and persons with disabilities to expand work-based learning activities for these populations. The Board is also funding Department of Labor-approved apprenticeships via incumbent worker training through an employer partnership.

Our local area subcontracts the OJT Program as well as part of our Youth Services. In these contracts goals are stated as follows:

- **OJT – 40 participants**
- **Youth – 100 participants**

A reporting process is currently in place to review and manage outcomes of work-based learning activities related to OJTs, youth work experience, and incumbent worker training. We work with our subcontractors on progress made as well as addressing any challenges in meeting their goals. In addition, the staff responsible for OJT, youth work-based learning and incumbent worker programs are part of our Business Services Team. Their involvement in BST ensures we are sharing best practices across programs to engage businesses and job-seekers.

The desired outcomes for work-based learning programs is a work-ready workforce that has added qualifications and skills, earned an income while learning said skills and meeting the needs of local employers.

The Illinois Department of Human Services – DRS offers a program that provides supportive employment for youth which develops employment skills on-the-job for youth with disabilities. This program is complimentary to the DRS Youth Employment Initiative program detailed earlier in this plan.

Through an IDHS TANF grant the Adult Education partner provides pre-employment training and assistance in obtaining work experience to TANF participants with limited work experience.

The local SCSEP partner engages older workers in their program to allow them to obtain work experience and necessary skills to move into unsubsidized employment.

Provide a copy of the local Individual Training Account Policy and describe how training services outlined in WIOA Sec. 134 will be provided through the use of individual training accounts, including, if contracts for training services will be used, how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of individual training accounts under that chapter, and how the Local Board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided (§ 679.560(b)(18)); and

The local **Individual Training Account Policy** (aka Career Scholarship Policy) **is included as Appendix D**. The Board does not currently utilize contract training. The Board has developed a sector-based approach in assisting customers with choice of training. Information sessions are held for each sector to assist customers in making an informed choice on industry, occupation, and career path activities. The industry sector training approach is outlined below.

The Workforce Investment Board of Will County has long been implementing programs and initiatives based on industry sector analysis. Focusing on industry sectors has provided the Board with a targeted approach to program development and a strong connection to economic development activities in the County.

Sector initiatives meet the skill, recruitment, and retention needs of employers and the training, employment, and career advancement needs of workers. By meeting the needs of regional industry on behalf of a region’s jobseekers and workers, sector initiatives strengthen a region’s overall economic vitality.

The Workforce Investment Board did an analysis of key industries that are workforce drivers in the County. Based on the analysis, the following will be the key industry sectors for the next two years:

- Healthcare
- Manufacturing
- Professional/Financial/Information Technology Services
- Transportation/Distribution/Logistics

Provide a copy of the local training provider approval policy and procedures. Describe how the

Local Board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and that the providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers and jobseekers.

Appendix E the local training provider approval policy. Annually, the Board produces a “Career Scholarship” report that provides information on the performance of training providers who received local WIOA Title 1 training dollars. In addition to this review, annual monitoring of both program and fiscal systems is conducted. Programs on the Illinois Training Provider List (ITPL) are reviewed every two years, per DCEO policy. Any changes to programs are identified and program outcomes are reviewed.

Describe if the local workforce board will authorize the transfer of WIOA Title IB workforce funds, including the maximum dollar amount and/or percentage that is authorized to be transferred on an annual basis:

To transfer funds between the adult and dislocated worker funding streams.

The Board reviews and approves transfers on a programmatic need basis. Currently, there has been an increasing need for adult funding and a decreasing need for dislocated worker funding. In PY19, the Board approved the transfer of funds to address this need.

To use funds for incumbent worker training as outlined in WIOA Sec. 134(d)(4)(A)(i).

The Board reviews and approves allocations for incumbent worker training. The maximum allocation is 20% of WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker funds.

To use funds for transitional jobs as outlined in WIOA Sec. 134(d)(5).

Based on local workforce needs, LWA 10 has determined not to spend funds on transitional jobs as the greatest need is in Adult and Dislocated Worker programs.

To use funds for pay for performance contracts as outlined in WIOA Sec. 133(b)(2-3).

LWA 10 does not currently fund pay for performance contracts.

CHAPTER 5: PERFORMANCE GOALS AND EVALUATION

The plan must include information on the actions the Local Board will take toward becoming or remaining a high performing board, consistent with the factors developed by the State Board (WIOA Sec. 101(d)(6)) and (§ 679.560(b)(17)).

- A. *Provide information regarding the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official consistent with WIOA Sec. 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the Local Board for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under WIOA Title I Subtitle B and the one-stop delivery system (core and required partners as applicable) in the local area (§ 679.560(b)(16)).*

WIOA Performance Measures

The negotiated performance goals for PY18/19 are:

Performance Measure	PY18/19 Goal
Adult	
Adult Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit	74%
Adult Employment Rate 4th Quarter after Exit	74%
Adult Median Earnings	\$7,000
Adult Credential Attainment	50%
Dislocated Worker	
DW Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit	79%
DW Employment Rate 4th Quarter after Exit	79%
DW Median Earnings	\$11,200
DW Credential Attainment	84%
Youth	
Youth Employment/Placement in Education Rate 2nd Quarter after Exit	77%
Youth Employment/Placement in Education Rate 4th Quarter after Exit	74%
Youth Credential Attainment	60%

Additional State Performance Measures

There are no additional State Performance Measures.

- B. *Provide a description of the current and planned evaluation activities and how this information will be provided to the local board and program administrators as appropriate.*

What existing service delivery strategies will be expanded based on promising return on investment?

Working with our partners through the Business Services Team, the Workforce Investment Board is interested in expanding our outreach, both in the number of

businesses contacted throughout the year, as well as the number of businesses that become engaged with partners at the Center. For example, the Business Services Team hosts a workshop for employers to learn more about programs and services available to help with their recruiting and retention efforts. This workshop has been done both in person at the Workforce Center and online and recorded for employers to view at a later date. The last workshop held provided additional information for employers from IDES and unemployment claims. Employers are able to ask questions and answers are shared as part of the presentation. The workshop was promoted by the Workforce Center partners as well as the local Chamber of Commerce.

We would also like to expand the Team to include other community partners such as economic development organizations and PACE. *What existing service delivery strategies will be curtailed or eliminated based on minimal return on investment?*

Identifying any strategies that may be curtailed and/or eliminated will likely come from our service integration process. Once all partners have a sense of the programs and services that each offer, duplicated strategies may surface, at such time, the Center partners will determine the fate of said strategies.

Keeping in mind that based on a partner’s particular charge, not all strategies determined to be duplicate can be eliminated, the Center partners will view efficiency of services or cost of services rendered to be a way to determine ROI.

What new service strategies will be used to address regional educational and training needs based on promising return on investment?

New industry sector training strategies are planned for the region based on the ATIM model used in a prior grant demonstration. The workforce areas within the region believe the ATIM model was a regional best practice. They are planning new regional activities based on expanding this model. The region is also modifying their Apprenticeship Navigator activities if grant funds are continued to focus on a sector strategy where it is believed greater industry inroads and partnerships on apprenticeship programs are possible.

What return on investment and qualitative outcome data for various education and training programs will be collected to identify barriers to enrollment?

The Workforce Investment Board and Workforce Services Division gather feedback from the individuals and businesses who utilize our services through customer satisfaction surveys, follow-up services and evaluations. Additional information will be added as the Workforce Center partners develop action plans as part of our service integration process. As a result the partners will review the information to identify and better understand any barriers to enrollment.

What are the most cost-effective approaches to taking down those barriers or helping residents overcome them?

Once the barriers to enrollment are better identified/defined, the Workforce Board along with Workforce Center partners can develop action steps to eliminate barriers to enrollment. For

example, if a resident has a difficult time visiting the Workforce Center in person, a virtual meeting can be arranged. If the barrier is that person does not have access to a computer or internet, working with our location schedule, we can arrange to have that person utilize our Mobil Workforce Center which is equipped with computers and a secure wifi connection. Utilizing existing equipment and partner relationships are the most cost-effective approaches to helping residents overcome barriers.

CHAPTER 6: TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS AND ASSURANCES

This chapter includes the technical requirements and assurances that are required by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA Sec. 121 (c)(2)(iv)).

A. Fiscal Management

Identify the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in WIOA Sec. 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III) as determined by the chief elected official or the Governor under WIOA Sec. 107(d)(12)(B)(i) (§ 679.560(b)(14)).

The Workforce Services Division of Will County is responsible for the disbursement of grant funds under the direction of the Workforce Investment Board. The County of Will is the fiscal agent for the WIOA Title I funds.

Provide a copy of the local procurement policies and procedures and describe the competitive procurement process that will be used to award the subgrants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities (§ 679.560(b)(15)).

The Board utilizes a request-for-proposals process to procure contractors for WIOA Title I services.

See attached Procurement and Purchasing Policy in Exhibits as Appendix F.

B. Physical and Programmatic Accessibility

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

The physical layout and design of the Workforce Center of Will County supports a culture of inclusiveness and accessibility. Located on the edge of the Presence St. Joseph Medical Center complex, the Workforce Center is in a high traffic area bordered by several main thoroughfares. PACE, the suburban public transportation provider, stops three blocks from the Workforce Center and will provide door-to-door service to/from numerous locations. The Workforce Center also provides ample parking for customers and staff, with a total of 292 dedicated parking spaces adjacent to the building, 19 of which are marked for individuals with disabilities.

All required career services are made available in the One Stop Center, either in person by staff who work in the One Stop or via technology. Adults, dislocated workers and youth are provided with services by WSD, IDHS, IDHS Division of Rehabilitation Services and Joliet Junior College onsite. All partners who do not have staff working in the One Stop provide their required career services via technology. All customers accessing services will be provided with the following accommodations as needed/requested:

- **Language Line**
- **Illinois Relay**
- **Sign language interpreter**
- **Braille keyboard/trackball mouse**
- **Intellikeys keyboard**
- **Dragon Speech Recognition software**
- **Braille printer**
- **Headphones**
- **Computer screen magnifiers**
- **29 inch computer monitor**

The One Stop Resource Room is connected to all partners that do not have onsite staff via a webcam. One Stop customers who desire career services from an off-site partner are assisted by Resource Room staff to connect with that partner via the webcams in order to connect in real time to partner staff who can assist them.

Provide copies of executed cooperative agreements (as applicable) which define how all local service providers, including additional providers, will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the local one-stop system, with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities (§679.560(b)(13)). This may include cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration and coordination.

All partners are trained on using the adaptive equipment as well as how to address the needs of individuals with disabilities. Information is also provided and additional training is done at monthly Center meetings throughout the year.

The CEO of a local social service agency, Cornerstone Services, sits on the Workforce Investment Board and on our Youth Council. He provides information on resources available to job-seekers with disabilities as well as insights into employer expectations and accommodations.

There are no executed cooperative agreements – just the required Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the partner agencies.

C. Plan Development and Public Comment

Describe the process used by the Local Board, consistent with WIOA Sec. 108(d), to provide a 30-day public comment period prior to submission of the plan, including an opportunity to have input into the development of the local plan, particularly for representatives of businesses, education and labor organizations (§ 679.560(b)(19)).

The Board will post the plan at www.willcountyworkforceboard.com (the website of the Workforce Investment Board of Will County) where there will be instructions on how to comment over the 30-day public comment period. The Board will publish a notice in the *Joliet Herald-News* newspaper for three days indicating the plan is on the website.

In addition, once the partners developed, the draft plan was distributed to the Local Workforce Board for review and a request for input. The local board which has representatives from business, education and labor organizations, reviewed the plan and forwarded comments and questions to the board staff director. Any comments received from these stakeholders was incorporated into the final plan.

Provide a summary of the public comments received and how this information was addressed by the CEO, partners and the Local Board in the final plan.

The plan was available for public viewing and comment at www.willcountyworkforceboard.com from February 13, 2020 to March 16, 2020. No comments or questions were received.

Provide information regarding the regional and local plan modification procedures.

The plan was sent to all Board members, partners, and the CEO for comment. No comments received via the website. Comments made by the Board, partners and the CEO were incorporated into the plan before final submission.

Any modifications requested or required will be shared with the Local Board, partners and CEO then incorporated into the plan for implementation. These modifications will be presented at the Local Board's Executive Committee meeting, sent via email to the partners and CEO, and then presented to the Local Board at their next regularly scheduled meeting.