

**WIA TITLE I  
STRATEGIC PLAN MODIFICATION**

**for**

**Local Workforce Investment Area II**

**July 1, 2005 – June 30, 2007**

**Tri-County Workforce Investment Board  
Serving Penobscot, Piscataquis and Hancock Counties  
May 16, 2005**

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**Tri-County Workforce Investment Board**  
**Workforce Investment Act Local Plan**  
**July 1, 2005 to June 30, 2007**

**A. Identify the Local Board's key workforce investment priorities for the regional public workforce system and how each will lead to actualizing the Governor's vision for workforce and economic development. (§§111(d)(2) and 112 (a).)**

**1. Identify the strategic *goals* the Local Board has developed to achieve that vision?**

The Tri-County Workforce Investment Board has developed the following Mission Statement and Vision Statement to support both the Governor's and local economic development organization's vision for workforce and economic development in identifying key workforce investment priorities.

Mission Statement:

The Tri-County Workforce Investment Board will direct the use of employment resources for the benefit of our citizens and current and future employers by:

- Nurturing Partnerships
- Working in conjunction with local economic development initiatives, and
- Being mindful of the needs of the local economy

Vision Statement:

The Tri-County Workforce Investment area will have a skilled and diverse workforce, creating opportunities for employers and employees, and maintaining a high quality of life sustainable over changing economic conditions.

Strategic Goals:

The Tri-County region has adopted the same goals as constituted by the Maine Jobs Council to address over the next two years which are as follows:

1. Position low-income individuals, unemployed and entry-level incumbent workers to more effectively participate in the workforce and benefit from the economy.
2. Promote employment and skills training opportunities that provide livable wages, leading to worker economic security.
3. Build a stronger demand-side involvement through business and industry participation as partners, collaborators, advisors and investors in workforce hiring and training.
4. Provide system support for workforce development through professional practices and capacity building within the CareerCenters.

5. Provide a focus on program alignment among CareerCenter and community partners to increase collaboration through greater levels of service integration.
  6. Insure that CareerCenters and community partners deliver relevant services that are results driven and include a high level of accountability.
- 2. What are the Local Workforce Board's strategies for working collaboratively with local and regional economic development efforts for attracting, retaining and growing business and industry within the State? (§112(a) and (b)(4)(A-C).)**

The Tri-County Workforce Investment Board was strategically positioned as a division within the Eastern Maine Economic Development Corporation to promote a strong collaboration between workforce development and economic development systems. The Board has been strategic in aligning workforce policy to compliment economic development efforts of the various economic development organizations within the region. In this region workforce investments will be focused on various industry sectors including biotechnology, tourism and retail, health care, information technology, manufacturing, mature tradition industries and high-demand, high-growth occupations as they emerge.

The Tri-County region continues to develop active, effective partnerships with regional and state economic development organizations within the service delivery area. CareerCenters work with business advisory groups, trade associations, Adult and Vocational Education providers and Community Colleges to maximize response to training needs of businesses, hiring needs of new businesses, and retention of current workforce. Employer assistance staff work closely with local Chambers and community based organizations to build relationships with community stakeholders. Many CareerCenter staff members have also completed the Career and Workforce Development Certification Course and the Workforce Development Consultation Course.

The CareerCenter employer assistance staff is leveraging resources available at the local and state level. Workforce investment is ongoing through continuous promotion of the Maine Governor's Training Initiative program, Maine Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship program, Trade Adjustment Assistance program, and Workforce Investment Act. Collaborative partnerships with the Community College system's Maine Quality Centers and Business and Industry Centers, Vocational Technical Centers, and Adult and Alternative Education Providers are on-going to meet the needs of area businesses and individuals. Integrated services by programs within the CareerCenter promote various program staff and employer assistance staff to regularly discuss job listing, job matching, job development and OJT opportunities with job seekers and businesses.

- 3. Given that a skilled workforce is a key to the economic success of every business, what is the Local Board's vision for maximizing and leveraging the array of resources available for workforce investment? (§112(a) and (b)(4)(A-C).)**

In times of decreasing federal and state assistance for developing and implementing workforce development programs in this region, the board's vision for maximizing WIA dollars is to form collaborations with other program partners to maximize scarce resources and to promote new

funding opportunities by writing grants, foundation proposals and soliciting private businesses for resources.

First and foremost, the Board in conjunction with CareerCenter staff forms partnerships to addresses training gaps to meet the needs of the business community. This system strives daily to maximize the usage of programs such as the Governor’s Training Initiative, Quality Center funds, Labor Exchange resources, and other funding from partners such as Corrections and Health and Human Services to structure training programs for new and incumbent workers from businesses or to train new workers to meet the business demands. One example of such collaboration was The Highlands Training Initiative where the Tri-County Workforce Board, The Maine Highlands, Bangor Convention and Visitors Bureau and Eastern Maine Community College combined their resources with private employer resources to develop and implement a training program to meet the needs of incumbent workers in the hospitality sector in the region. In the first year of the program \$20,000 WIA funds leveraged an additional \$18,000 from other sources including cash and in-kind. The project is currently in the second year of operations.

The Board also expects to work with other partners to seek new funding sources to meet business demand. The Board recently partnered with the Community Development Division at Eastern Maine Development Corporation, the Maine Marine Trade Association and the Town of Trenton to submit a CDBG grant application to give low-income workers and at-risk youth an immersion in existing job opportunities in the Marine Trades in this region. It is such collaborations that are continuously sought by the Board and expected to meet specific demands of the business community.

**4. What is the vision for the Local Board to ensure a continuum of education and training opportunities that support a skilled workforce? (§112(b)(10).)**

The Tri-County Board has developed a number of initiatives to ensure the continuum of education and training opportunities that support a skilled workforce. One of those initiatives has been the development of The Hospitality Training Initiative to support the skill and career path development for employees in the tourism and retail trades industries. The Tri-County Board will continue to support and assist to develop curriculum and programs that meet the workforce needs of the targeted industries in the region.

Our vision, shared by the Governor, Maine Jobs Council and the U.S. Department of Labor, is to ensure a pipeline of “ready to work” workforce. Over and over we hear from businesses that various “soft-skills” and entry level educational requirements are lacking in their applicant pools. During the next two years we will also work with State agencies, local boards, the business sector, and the CareerCenter system to develop a Work Readiness Certification system in Maine to meet entry level skill certifications that businesses need. Developing this certification will assist businesses to find the skilled workforce that they are seeking.

In addition, this region will continue to promote the increased usage of On-The-Job-Training contracts to respond to business/employer needs and to leverage training funds available either through specific funding streams in WIA, NEG grants, TAA designations, or partnered funds.

One issue here is the way in which traditional programs such as On-the-Job and Apprenticeship models function as viable options for business development; the Board will continue to work with Business Services Teams to develop marketing skills/approaches appropriate as options for stated business needs and how traditional programs such as OJT and Apprenticeship combined with job development are viable options for business retention, expansion and development.

**5. How will the Local Board bring together the key players in workforce development including business and industry, economic development, education, and the public workforce system to continuously identify workforce challenges and develop innovative strategies and solutions that effectively leverage resources to address those challenges? (§112(b)(10).)**

The Tri-County Workforce Board serves three counties approximately the size of the State of Vermont. Although the required partners and businesses are members of the Board, the quarterly meetings do not really allow for the interactions with the business sector and strategic players necessary to continuously identify workforce challenges and develop innovative solutions. In order to accomplish this objective the Board has utilized and will adopt a number of means to continuously be effective in accomplishing this goal.

The Chief Local Elected Officials in this region had a great vision to incorporate the Tri-County Workforce Board within the organizational structure of the Eastern Maine Development Corporation. Eastern Maine Development Corporation serves six counties in Eastern Maine with a wide array of community and business services. As a part of this organization, many individuals and groups with common interests bring together a variety of funding sources to form many and varied collaborative efforts to identify workforce gaps and other gaps in the region and work strategically to address these gaps.

The Board also uses exiting reports compiled by the University System, the Community College System, Trade Associations, the Department of Labor and locally developed survey instruments to convene strategic partners to focus on industry demand. This has been on-going and will continue in the future.

The major investment of time in the next two years will be holding small, informal forums with businesses throughout the three county regions to hear what their needs are now and projected to be in the future so that strategies can be developed to enhance business retention, expansion and attraction in the region. Some of these forums may be developed as local human resources managers groups, may be structured by industry cluster or may be for general business in a defined region. The Board will be proactive in convening these meetings and will also invite partners from economic development, education and the CareerCenter Employer Assistance Division to attend. The Board will report findings and use these forums as a sounding board to structure programs and strategies.

**6. What is the vision for ensuring that every youth has the opportunity for developing and achieving career goals through education and workforce training, including the youth most in need, such as out of school youth, homeless youth, youth in foster**

**care, youth aging out of foster care, youth offenders, children of incarcerated parents, migrant and seasonal farm worker youth, and other youth at risk? (§112(b)(18)(A).)**

The Youth Employability Network (YEN), partially comprised of WIA partners and stakeholders, will be expanded and enriched to ensure ready and appropriate access for youth within the Tri-County area to WIA services. Articulation agreements, memorandums of understanding, and frequent professional presentations to service providers, including faith and community based organizations, will streamline the outreach and referral process. It will reach into networks of youth and adults who influence the decisions of the listed target groups of youth to increase their awareness of and decision to participate in WIA training and employment programs and initiatives.

The CareerCenter system is poised to become the central location for youth and young adults as they seek assistance with their own development and transitions into the labor market. Regardless of specific eligibility for any particular program or initiative, youth and young adults will be invited and welcomed into the CareerCenter for a full assessment discussion of their current life situation, hopes for their future, present capacity to earn a livable wage, and sustainable employability. The interviewer, most often the local Youth Plan Manager or other designated professional, will then offer an initial determination of eligibility for a variety of WIA and Department of Labor programs (e.g., Job Corps, MediaWORKS Enterprise, WIA Work Experience, OJT, training, or education) and help the young person select the initiative that will best meet his or her needs and goals. For those young people who are not eligible for intensive or training services, Labor Exchange Registration and job search assistance will be provided. If the young person is not ready for employment and requires additional services not available through WIA, referrals will be made to members of the Youth Employability Network who provide the necessary services.

As part of the on-going public outreach efforts of the WIA Youth Services program, youth and young adults will be invited to attend public forums at no charge that address some of the issues and opportunities that they encounter as they transition into the labor market.

**B. Local Workforce Board Organization (§112(b)(8)(A).)**

**1. Describe the organization and structure of the Local Board.**

The Chief Local Elected Officials have appointed the Eastern Maine Development Corporation (EMDC) as the grant recipient on behalf of the CLEOs representing Hancock, Penobscot and Piscataquis counties. EMDC is appointed to serve as the grant recipient and administrator in the following manner: administer and serve as staff to the CLEO, keep financial and meeting records, and serve as staff to the LWIB and perform duties assigned by the CLEO and LWIB.

The Eastern Maine Development Corporation is the corporate entity through which the

workforce activities of the Chief Local Elected Officials and the Tri-County Workforce Board of the Tri-County region carry out their statutorily established duties and responsibilities.

The purpose of the Tri-County Workforce Board is to set policy and provide operational oversight of the local workforce system geographically comprised of the counties referenced above. The objective of the Tri-County Board is to carry out the functions and responsibilities according to the Act and its Regulations under WIA, the Maine Department of Labor, and all Federal and State regulations duly promulgated under these acts.

The Local Workforce Investment Board in Area II has 37 members: of these members, 19 represent the Private Sector and 18 represent organizations and entities involved in the Board's work.

## **2. Identify the organizations or entities represented on the Local Board.**

The following businesses are represented on the Board:

- Bangor Region Chamber of Commerce
- Hannaford Incorporated
- Bangor Hydro Electric
- Hampton Inn
- Interface Fabrics
- Jackson Laboratory
- RH Foster – Fill Vacancy
- Bangor Daily News
- Moosehead Manufacturing Company
- Mayo Regional Hospital
- Blue Hill Country Inn
- Grasshopper Shop
- Central City Sheet Metal
- Indian Hill Trading Post
- Bangor Savings Bank – Fill Vacancy
- Ellsworth Chamber of Commerce - Pending
- Auxillar LLC - Pending
- Vacant
- Vacant

The following organizations and entities are represented on the Board:

- Economic Development: Piscataquis County Economic Development Corporation
- Economic Development: Eastern Maine Development Corporation
- Education: United Technology Center
- Eastern Maine Community College
- Penobscot Job Corps Center: Training and Development Corporation

- AFL/CIO [Labor]: Two representatives
- Older Americans Act: National Able Network
- WIA Title I, MSFW: Training and Development Corporation
- MDOL - Bureau of Unemployment Compensation
- MDOL - Wagner-Peyser, TAA, NAFTA, Vets: Manager – Bangor CareerCenter
- MDOL - Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, Vocational Rehabilitation
- MDOL – Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation, DBVI
- Penobscot Indian Nation
- CBOs – Penquis Community Action Program and Brewer Housing Authority
- Maine Department of Corrections
- CLEO Board Members

**3. Describe the process your Local Board used to identify your board members. How did you select board members, including business representatives, who have optimum policy-making authority and who represent diverse regions of the State as required under WIA?**

The Nominations Committee works with the Executive Director and other Staff to solicit nominations to the Local Board from appropriate entities and organizations:

- representatives from the education community are normally nominated by educational agencies, particularly community colleges and secondary schools;
- representatives from the labor community are normally nominated by local labor federations, trade and service unions, and employee associations;
- representatives for economic development are nominated from a variety of sources, including chambers of commerce, local, county, and regional economic development organizations, trade associations, and current Board members;
- DOL nominations are normally made by the Bureau of Employment Services [BES] Maine DOL;
- nominations of community-based organization members are from One-Stop community-based organizations in the region.

The Nominations Committee will also consider nominations from other sources, so long as they are made by appropriate representatives from the nominating organization/entity on letterhead.

Nominations for business sector membership are normally from local business entities, trade associations, or current Board members. The Nominations Committee will consider all nominations of business representatives with policy-making, hiring authority, or management responsibilities. The Committee attempts to establish a balance of business members to represent all three counties in the region.

After nominations are reviewed by the Nominating Committee, they are presented to the Chief Local Elected Officials [CLEO] Board which reviews the nominations, informs those who have been nominated, gathers information about nominees, and makes initial appointments.

**4. Describe how the board's membership enables you to achieve your vision described above.**

The LWIB is constituted to create diversity in membership representing businesses, key workforce partners, stake-holding organizations, and private individuals. With the Board's emphasis on demand-side strategies, business services, and recognizing business as a primary customer, 19 of 37 members are representatives from the private sector. This ratio helps to create a culture on the Board that prioritizes beneficial service intervention for employers. Within this constituency, chambers of commerce, trade associations, not-for-profit businesses, small businesses, and business members who are prominent in economic development organizations are represented.

Members from the education community (including Eastern Maine Community College, Adult & Community Education, and Job Corps) labor unions, economic development members, members from Health and Human Services, Rehabilitation Services, and other primary CareerCenter partners assure that the Board maintains a dual focus on the training and education programs people most need to become better equipped to find employment which will provide them with a sustainable wage and the appropriate benefits to increase both individual and community prosperity and growth.

**5. How will the Local Board ensure that the public (including people with disabilities) has access to board meetings and information regarding Local Board activities, including membership and meeting minutes?**

Notices of Quarterly meetings of the Local Board are provided one year in advance to all members, participating partners, and upon request to people who are added to the Board's distribution list. Members also receive information packets and agenda notices prior to the actual meeting. Quarterly meetings notices are also posted on the Board's web site ([www.tricountywib.org](http://www.tricountywib.org)) and in one local newspaper.

The Board meets Quarterly in a location which has been chosen for relevance to the Board's work, accessibility to the public (including people with disabilities), availability, and costs. At this time, signing is not provided except on request.

Minutes of Local Board Quarterly Meetings are available by e-mail and at the Board web site and are sent automatically to all Board members, to people attending the meeting, and to those on the distribution list or by e-mail and/or hard copy on request.

**6. Identify the circumstances which constitute a conflict of interest for any Local Board member or the entity that s/he represents, and any matter that would provide a financial benefit to that member or his or her immediate family.**

Individuals who serve on the Local Board, Youth Council, and other Committees agree to abide by the following Tri-County LWIB conflict of interest provisions as required by the WIA of 1998.

### **Tri-County Workforce Investment Board Conflict of Interest Policy**

#### **Conflict of Interest**

A conflict of interest would arise when a Tri-County Workforce Investment Board member (hereafter referred to as Board member), any member of that individual's immediate family or the individual's partner, or an organization which employs, or is about to employ any of the above, has a financial or other interest in the firm or organization selected for an award, grant or contract by the Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO) or Board member. No Board member shall cast a vote or attempt to influence the body on any matter that has direct bearing on services to be provided by or which would financially benefit such member or any organization with which such member is affiliated. However, Board members may receive funds for training services rendered such as On-the-Job Training and Customized Training as long as objective criteria are applied in the same manner as applied to other training providers. In addition, members of the Board may vote on the overall Workforce Plan even if that Plan could provide funds to an organization that a member represents. For purposes of this section, "represents" shall include the following types of affiliation: Director, Board member, advisor, paid consultant, immediate family, employer or employee. Tri-County Workforce Board members shall make every attempt to avoid personal conflict of interest in awarding financial assistance and in the conduct of procurement activities involving funds under the Act.

#### **Conflict of Interest Disclosure**

In order to avoid conflict of interest or the appearance of such conflict, each Board member shall disclose any potential conflict of interest to the appropriate committee thereby complying with the By-Laws as adopted by the Tri-County Workforce Investment Board membership. Minutes of meetings shall record the abstentions of members who are prohibited from voting due to conflict of interest. These prohibitions shall apply to regular, special and committee meetings of the Tri-County Workforce Investment Board.

#### **C. Structure/Process for local/regional/state agencies and the Local Board to collaborate and communicate with each other**

- 1. Describe the steps the Local Board will take to improve operational collaboration of the workforce investment activities and other related activities and programs outlined in section 112(b)(8)(A), at the local level (e.g., joint activities, memoranda of understanding, planned mergers, coordinated policies, etc.). How will the Local Board and agencies eliminate any existing barriers to coordination? (§§111(d)(2) and 112(b)(8)(A).)**

Operational collaboration of workforce investment activities and other related activities and programs outlined in the Statute has been facilitated by the collaboration between the Bureau of Employment Services [BES Maine DOL] and the Local Board Executive Directors. A well-established regular meeting schedule and frequent candid interchange between the BES in Maine, Local Board Directors, and others has always been the norm. In addition, the plan to develop a series of “MOUs” to assure program alignment among CareerCenter and community partners to minimize duplication and inefficiencies through services integration has been early endorsed. Although there are—and no doubt will continue to be—discussions focused on roles and responsibilities of the varied parties in a fairly complex system, there is a basic sense of coordinated operations for workforce development in Maine.

**2. Describe any cross-cutting organizations or bodies at the Local Board level designed to guide and inform an integrated vision for serving youth in the State within the context of workforce investment, social services, juvenile justice, and education.**

The Tri-County Workforce Board in collaboration with existing partners has a number of cross-cutting organizational programs in place or proposed for the future to serve youth in an integrated manner. These initiatives are as follows:

*LWIB Youth Council*

The Youth Council of the LWIB is designed to provide guidance and feedback to the youth service providers. The Council’s effectiveness will be enhanced by the recruitment and participation of more business representatives on the Council to address demand-side services. Businesses that consistently employ younger workers will find a mutually beneficial relationship between themselves and the WIA Youth Council once it can be established that the Council is responsive to the needs and concerns of both business and youth workers.

*Maine Reentry Network, Maine Department of Corrections and MDOL/BES/Tri-County WIA Youth Program*

The Tri-County WIA Youth program is a primary partner in the Maine Youth Reentry project. This project is designed to provide comprehensive and integrated services to young people (aged 16 to 24) as they are released from the DOJ Corrections system. The WIA Youth and Adult programs are members of the network of providers to serve this high-risk population. The Youth Plan Manager will meet with a Reentry resident of Mountain View or Charleston prior to or shortly following release in order to conduct initial determinations of WIA eligibility, employability assessment, and probable benefits to the individual of participation in the WIA employment and training programs available.

A new Memorandum of Agreement between DOC and DOL partners is now in place (effective April 1, 2005) that provides specific guidance to the partners in operating this integrated service delivery initiative.

Maine Youth Opportunities Initiative, Maine Department of Health and Human Services Bureau of Child and Family Services (BCFS) and MDOL/BES/WIA Employment and Training

The Tri-County Youth program is a primary partner in the Youth Opportunities Initiative. This initiative is designed to provide coordinated services to youth aged 14 to 21 who are or have been in the foster care system in the areas of employment and training and financial literacy in order to enhance their successful transition to the workforce.

A new Memorandum of Agreement between BCFS and MDOL/BES is now in place to provide guidance and accountability in the provision of identified services to qualified and participating youth. This new initiative is designed to serve one of the ETA target groups (youth in and leaving foster care) with coordinated services that will lead to sustainable employability and adult independent living skills for these young people.

Jobs for Maine's Graduates and Upward Bound

Both Jobs for Maine's Graduates and Upward Bound serve in-school youth. Both programs are designed to encourage students to stay in school until graduation. Both programs encourage the development of basic employability skills, workplace readiness and maturing decision-making skills among their participants. Whether a young person opts to go from high school into the workforce or to post-secondary education, both of these WIA contracting programs connect youth with the importance of education in gaining sustainable employability for a lifetime.

Maine Educational Opportunities Centers (MEOC)

MEOC is a long standing partner of the CareerCenter system in the Tri-County Area. In a partnership emphasizing cross referral and service integration and provision, MEOC and WIA programs endeavor to assist youth and adults (particularly first time college bound individuals) develop an education and employment plan leading to sustainable employability. MEOC provides the following services for mutual customers: Essentials of College Planning, Career Exploration, Study Skills and Financial Aid application assistance. WIA services dovetail nicely within this partnership providing customers with career planning, education financial assistance, case management throughout the duration of the education period, and placement assistance upon graduation from college level programming.

Tri-County Youth Employability Network

The local Tri-County Youth Employability Network (YEN) has as a primary focus on the development of enduring relationships between the WIA Youth program and the supply side and the demand side of employment for young people. On the supply side, the YEN will focus on building relationships with area service providers who serve or influence the youth that are eligible for WIA programming. These providers include State departments of Education and Health and Human Services, local social service providers, schools, alternative and adult education, colleges, occupational training providers, recreation departments, police and probation, and faith and community based organizations that serve youth and/or their families.

On the demand side, the YEN will develop working relationships with area businesses that provide employment to younger workers, businesses in the high growth areas as identified by President Bush and Governor Baldacci, businesses whose corporate citizenship initiatives may include the provision of work-based learning experiences for youth, and other stakeholder businesses or business associations and networks. The YEN will focus on the needs of both youth and business and will seek the advice and feedback from both groups on the ongoing design of YEN partnerships and their strategic goals.

The YEN will work closely with the Tri-County employer assistance team that operates on behalf of all WIA participant groups and businesses. An integrated approach to business outreach and services on behalf of all area businesses and WIA participants will streamline the process for businesses to partner with Workforce Investment activities and initiatives throughout the three - county region.

### Integration of WIA Youth and Job Corps

Training & Development Corporation and the Maine Department of Labor, the State's Four Local Workforce Boards, in partnership with Maine's Job Corps Centers have proposed a national demonstration project to recruit, admit and place Job Corps students in Maine through a statewide Youth Employability Network (YEN). The project will implement a systems design to connect USDOL's two primary youth employability programs—Job Corps and WIA youth—in ways that will improve the performance of both programs. TDC is proposing to prototype the YEN and the connection of WIA and Job Corps programs within the Tri-County area in PY 2005. This design will significantly increase the ability of the Tri-County's WIA Youth programs to recruit disadvantaged youth, develop their employability, and support successful transitions to employment and post-secondary education. *While the proposal has been submitted to USDOL, on-going negotiations between the Training and Development Corporation, Maine DOL and the four Local Boards are on-going to refine the proposal and specify program objectives and outcomes.* Some of the highlights of the project will include several interconnected components:

*Maine's Youth Employability Network*—a new, statewide support framework for youth employability development. The YEN will connect the outreach, recruitment, assessment, intake, work experience and long-term placement activities of the Tri-County's WIA Youth and Job Corps programs to provide seamlessly integrated services for youth in these two programs. The Youth Employability Network will strengthen Outreach, Admissions and Placement of youth in the Tri-County by creating efficiencies through alignment, coordination and integration of services, and by leveraging the efforts of a major new network of youth-serving agencies and organizations and youth-friendly employers. The Youth Employability Network will recruit more students for whom WIA is an effective intervention, provide better support for work-based learning, and support more successful transitions to work and post-secondary education.

*Industry-specific employer networks and Work Opportunities*—targeting businesses in high growth industry sectors as identified by USDOL ETA, and the State of Maine.

The Tri-County youth program will work with CareerCenter Employment Assistance staff, Penobscot Job Corps and other WIA partners to create a specialized business services network that will improve the alignment of occupational and employability content with employers' hiring requirements. The joint efforts of Job Corps, WIA Youth staff, CareerCenter Employer Assistance staff and other partners will support a new, greatly expanded and more targeted work based learning program that: (a) accommodates employers' seasonal fluctuations in demand, (b) increases youth participants' qualifications for training-related employment, and (c) enables youth and their advocates to forge relationships with individual businesses that can lead to subsequent employment for qualified youth and young adults.

**D. Economic and Labor Market Analysis (§112(b)(4).): As a foundation for this strategic plan and to inform the strategic investments and strategies that flow from this plan, provide an analysis of the Local Area's economy, the labor pool, and the labor market context. Elements of the analysis should include the following:**

**1. What is the current makeup of the Local Area's economic base by industry?**

The top employing industries in the Tri County Workforce Investment Area during 2003 were educational services, all three segments of the health services industry, paper manufacturing, eating and drinking places, food and beverage stores, professional and technical services and social services. These major industries accounted for 39,903 jobs or 40 percent of all jobs in the area. The region's major industries include paper manufacturing (the only industry in the goods producing sector), and service industry sectors, each of which have grown over the past 15 years. Most economic growth in the Tri County WIB area has occurred in Southeast Penobscot County (Bangor MSA) and urban Hancock County (Ellsworth-Bar Harbor). The WIB area however is comprised of three separate and distinct regions and the economic base in each is distinct from the others.

Piscataquis County, Southwest and Northern Penobscot County and unorganized Hancock County are rural areas heavily dependent on **natural resources** and the **mature manufacturing** industries they support. This also includes the Moosehead Lake region which is a **seasonal tourist** destination.

Southwest Penobscot County with the Bangor MSA as its center is the economic hub of Northern and Eastern Maine and parts of Maritime Canada. The local labor market is large and the industrial base diverse. **The Bangor MSA is the healthcare, trade and educational center servicing the entire region.**

Hancock County is a major **retirement** and **tourist destination**. Bar Harbor is also home to **Jackson Laboratory**, a world known research facility as well as the **Mount Desert Island Biological Laboratory**, a leader in the field of **marine research**.

The tables in Attachment A provide additional detail.

**2. What industries and occupations are projected to grow and/or decline in the short term and over the next decade?**

Examination of industrial and occupational projections for the Tri County Workforce Investment Board area show that the largest industries as described in Question 1 of this section correspond closely to industries projected to show the most growth to the year 2012. The exception is paper manufacturing which is the only industry among the largest in terms of employment in the goods producing sector and is projected to lose the most jobs between 2002 and 2012. It is important to note the base year of 2002 as most of the projected job loss in paper manufacturing has already occurred early in the projection period due to closures and mass layoffs.

As the industry projections match the list of current largest employers, it follows that if staffing patterns used are correct, occupational projections will also match the list of the current largest occupations. Examination of available data confirms this to be the case.

The tables in Attachment B show the projected trends in detail.

**3. In what industries and occupations is there a demand for skilled workers and available jobs, both today and projected over the next decade? In what numbers?**

As depicted by the spreadsheets in Attachment C, the majority of job growth that exists now and will grow in this region is projected to be those positions requiring less than an Associate's degree and primarily in the health and services industries.

In 2002, 81% of employment in the region required an associate's degree or less (72.6% required only short-term training to work experience). In 2012, these figures decrease slightly to 80.1% and 71% respectively, yet still a majority of the employment that exists. Of the 10 occupations with the fastest projected rate of job growth, only 2 require a Bachelor's degree with the remainder requiring an Associate's degree or less. This also holds true for the occupations with the largest projected net job growth.

The tables in Attachment C detail these numbers.

**4. What jobs/occupations are most critical to the region's economy?**

The jobs/occupations most critical to the Tri County Workforce Investment area's economy both present and future fall in three separate categories:

1. Occupations in the Goods Producing industries, specifically in manufacturing sectors such as paper manufacturing, wood products and the metals and machinery group. While in decline in terms of employment levels, these export industries make large capital expenditures in plant and equipment, provide well above average wages and benefits and have the highest employment and earnings multipliers. The secondary impact of each job far outweighs that of other sectors.

2. As discussed in Questions 2 and 3 of this section, skilled jobs in the largest and fastest growing sectors of the area economy are critical. Among the largest and fastest growing, health services, social services and local government (public education) show not only statistical evidence of skill shortages, but these needs have been expressed publicly by human resource specialists and executives in these industries and cited as inhibiting growth.
3. Emerging industries and occupations and known economic development events. Providing the area workforce with the skills sets that match Governor Baldacci's target industry clusters will enhance the regions ability to attract firms which broaden the industrial base. Reacting quickly to put in place needed skills for economic development prospects is critical to attracting employers seeking a skilled workforce. In both areas, collaborative effort and partnerships will be needed in the current economic climate to succeed.

### **5. What are the skill needs for the available, critical and projected jobs?**

In the Tri-County Workforce Investment Board area, the skill needs for available, critical and projected jobs are those which support occupations that have demonstrated a lack of qualified workers. Skill shortages and replacement demand have been documented by employers in healthcare, social services and professional services, industry segments. Analyzing occupations from these sectors which rank among largest and fastest growing, the following skills, abilities and aptitudes are in demand:

#### **Healthcare Services**

Human anatomy & physiology knowledge  
 Medical lab techniques  
 Nursing practices & procedures  
 Maintain medical records  
 Preparation of patient reports  
 Read/understand operating manuals  
 Use of medical equipment in direct patient care  
 Use of nursing terminology  
 Administer medications/treatments  
 Collect clinical data  
 Compile/maintain medical records  
 Customer service  
 Understand & use medical terminology  
 Advanced technical math (trig, calculus, statistics etc.)  
 Uniform medical tests or procedures  
 Comprehend, apply & communicate technical information

#### **Social Services**

Interpersonal communication techniques  
 Collect client data

Communicate with children and adults  
Manage client assets in institutional or assisted living situations  
Manage detailed case records in a social work setting  
Prepare reports  
Apply emergency management principles

### **General and Operations Management**

Analyze/manage organizations  
Apply advanced business math (accounting, finance, statistics, MIS etc.)  
Apply business management concepts  
Apply financial management principles & theories  
Apply interpersonal communication techniques  
Apply just-in-time system management

#### **6. Is the Local Area experiencing any “in migration” or “out migration” of workers that impact the labor pool?**

Migration patterns in the Tri-County Workforce Investment Board area have had varying affects in the region. Overall from 2000 to 2003, the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census reported population growth in all three counties in the region. Both Penobscot and Hancock Counties showed substantial growth.

Out migration has affected rural areas of Northern Penobscot and Piscataquis Counties. Declining employment in natural resourced based industries has resulted in residents in age cohorts in prime working years relocating to seek employment opportunities elsewhere.

The Bangor MSA being the largest and most diverse economy in the region has benefited as many out migrants from rural areas as far away as Aroostook County in migrate adding workers to the available labor pool.

Hancock County, as a tourism and retirement destination has grown in population in the older age cohorts. While many of these individuals are not in the labor force, they do add additional demand for services. That demand strains the labor supply particularly during peak tourism months as part year residents and summer visitors demand services at a time when the pool of available contingent workers is small.

**See Attachment D for additional details.**

#### **7. Based on an analysis of the economy and the labor market, what workforce development issues has the Local Board identified?**

Based on regional analysis completed by local economic development agencies, Labor Market Information and information from business groups the board has identified a number of issues that it will need to be confronting over the next couple of years. Some of these issues are as

follows: the aging workforce and aging population, the shift from manufacturing to service sector based economy, the work readiness certification need, and the need to retool the workforce to meet future business and economic development demand.

***The Aging Workforce and Aging Population:*** The aging workforce will have an impact on the region in terms of skill shortages and retraining dislocated and incumbent workers to fill these gaps as the exodus of older workers from the labor force in the region occurs over the next 10 year period. Simultaneously as these workers retire and the region becomes a magnet for the retired population, there will be workforce pressures to have adequate workforce staff in mature population services industries primarily in the home health care field.

***The shift from manufacturing to service sector based economy:*** As the mature manufacturing industries have declined over the past few years, many of these jobs have been replaced by those in service sectors industries which often time offer lower pay and fewer benefits. The implications of this movement on local community economies, the ability to offer lifelong learning opportunities that are affordable and offered in non-traditional modalities, and preparing for career path skill development are some of the issues that will need to be discussed and addressed.

***The Work Readiness Certification Need:*** Businesses continually state how ill-prepared entry level workers are for the demands of the businesses from “soft-skills” to basic educational standards in reading, mathematics, writing and communications. Statewide-collaboration with multiple partners will be necessary to tackle this issue in order to assist businesses to survive in the competitive market-place.

***The need to retool the workforce to meet future business and economic development demand:*** Of major importance today is the need to meet with businesses from various industry sectors to not only ask what skills sets are necessary for the workforce today but also the skills that will be needed in a decade so that existing or new emerging industries have a ready-workforce. In addition, the Board must be vigilant in working with economic development agencies to design strategies for business attraction, retention and expansion where the Board can assist to develop a workforce to retain existing businesses or to attract new businesses. Local partnerships will need to continue to strengthen so as to maximize scarce resources to make value-added investments in local workforce training programs.

## **8. What workforce development issues has the Local Board prioritized as being most critical the region’s economic health and growth?**

The Local Boards emphasis will focus on a number of initiatives: (1) Employer-endorsed Work-ready Certification programs across sectors, (2) Business as a primary customer in workforce development, (3) Strengthening business outreach and working with economic development partners to develop and implement awareness and projects to meet existing and future workforce needs, and a (4) Sector-specific approach to the use of training funds.

## **E. Overarching Local Area Strategies**

- 1. Identify how the Local Board will use WIA Title I funds to leverage other Federal, State, local, and private resources in order to maximize the effectiveness of such resources and to expand the participation of business, employees, and individuals in the region's workforce investment system? (§112(b)(10).)**

The Local Board has used and will continue to use WIA funds to leverage Federal, State, local, and private resources in the following ways:

As a member of a 501(c)(3) economic development organization, EMDC has employed a Development Director to search for alternative funding sources to support the organization's mission and vision, including workforce development programs. A portion of the cost of this position is allocated from the WIA administrative funding of the Board. The Board will further support the use of this grant writer with WIA dollars for specific grant requests for collaborative partnering efforts on an as-needed basis.

Additionally, the Board will use Title I funds to promote investments in training programs from new and existing partners. For example, this past year Training and Development Corporation was required to provide a 35% match to sustain a youth project. This will continue to increase so that WIA Title I dollars can be maximized to fund traditional youth programs and new initiatives. In addition, the Board utilized Administrative dollars to partner with three organizations to fund the Hospitality Training Program. In the future, the Board will be asking who can leverage additional resources to contribute to maximizing program dollars.

The Board will also utilize Title I funds to support various modalities of marketing to promote the use of businesses, employers and individuals in the region's workforce investment system. Specifically, the use of funds to develop and market a Business Assistance CD will increase the number of businesses and employers engaged in our system.

Thus, the Board is using and will continue to utilize Title I dollars in a wide variety of means to not only leverage additional resources, but also to expand participation in our system.

- 2. What strategies are in place to address the national strategic direction discussed in Part I of this guidance, the Governor's priorities, and the workforce development issues identified through the analysis of the Statewide and regional economy and labor market? (§112(b)(4)(D), 112(a).)**

The co-location of the Tri-County Workforce Board within the organizational structure of a regional economic development organization addresses the preeminent national goal of workforce development working in tandem with economic development and strengthens the State mandate of regional service sectors to promote efficient and effective governmental services.

Furthermore, the Board has or is developing a demand-side strategy that will focus on a combination of national high-growth, high-demand occupations and State and local industry growth sectors supported by Labor Market Information, trade and educational data, and input from the private sector. It is this blended approach that will meet the identified needs of the local business sector, promoting the State and Regional goals for economic development, promoting strategic partnerships and improving the potential for funding and support opportunities under the DOL ETA High Growth Job Training Initiatives and other funding sources.

**3. Based on the State’s economic and labor market analysis, what strategies has the Local Area implemented or plans to implement to identify and target industries and occupations within the State that are high growth, high demand, and vital to the State and regional economy? (§112(a), 112(b)(4)(A).)**

The Tri-County Workforce Board relies on data at the State, County and regional level to develop strategies that align with the macro-level State goals to micro-level local goals and needs of County-wide and regional communities. As stated in the Board’s Vision Statement, “The Tri-County Workforce Investment Area will have a skilled and diverse workforce, creating opportunities for employers and employees, and maintaining a high quality of life sustainable over changing economic conditions.”

With that said, the Board will develop strategies in concert with our public and private partners to identify high growth, high demand sectors such as those previously discussed in sections A and D of this plan. Some of these that have been developed or are developing are: the focus of programs in the tourism and recreation sector, new partnerships to promote skill and job development for the Marine Trades industries, focusing on traditional and advanced manufacturing strategies to support regional economic development strategies, and partnering with the Community College and health care sectors to develop a workforce to meet the projected labor shortages that exist in this cluster.

The Board and the CareerCenter system will be vigilant and ready to respond and work with partners to take action on opportunities as they arise that support high growth, high demand occupations and promote economic security for the individuals in this region. Thus, while the Board will strategize on how to achieve the largest return on investment of Federal, state and local resources, we will also be flexible to assist with strategies that have value added outcomes and may be narrow in scope but are directly supportive of the local economy.

**4. What strategies are in place to promote and develop ongoing and sustained strategic partnerships that include business and industry, economic development, the public workforce system, and education partners (K-12, community colleges, and others) for the purpose of continuously identifying workforce challenges and developing solutions to targeted industries’ workforce challenges? (§112(b)(8).)**

The Tri-County Workforce Board's strategies that are in place to promote and develop on-going and sustained strategic partnerships have been previously identified in Sections A and B and earlier in Section E.

**5. What Local Board strategies are in place to ensure that sufficient system resources are being spent to support training of individuals in high growth/high demand industries? (§112(b)(17)(A)(i), and 112(b)(4)(A).)**

The Board negotiates with the local service provider prior to the commencement of each program year on the targeted direct training and supportive services expenditure goals for the WIA program. Traditionally, this region has negotiated an expenditure level for training at 30%. For the next two years, with increased operational costs and funding reductions in other programs, the level of expenditures for training will be negotiated between 25 to 30%.

Under WIA of 2000, the Board ensured that training funds were expended for growth occupations as determined by the growth occupations list provided by the Department of Labor (Federal or Maine?). Over the next two years the Board will work with the service providers to target percentages of resources to focus training investments either by industry cluster or training modality such as On-the-Job Training.

**6. What workforce strategies does the Local Board have to support the creation, sustainability, and growth of small businesses and support for the workforce needs of small businesses as part of the State's economic strategy? (§§112(b)(4)(A) and 112(b)(17)(A)(i).)**

One of the benefits of having the Board staff located within an Economic Development Corporation are the close working relationships that are fostered between the Business Development Division of EMDC (includes Business Lending, Maine Procurement Assistance Center, Business Services, Workforce Development and Small Business Development), other economic development regional affiliates and other partners resident in the organization such as the Department of Economic and Community Development, Maine International Trade, Small Business Development Centers, Community Development and Planning programs and the Bangor Convention and Visitation Center to name a few. The Workforce Board has been able to foster collaborative working relationships which have increased partnerships within the CareerCenter, especially with the Employer Assistance Team. Program staff from EMDC have met with EA Team staff to share program offerings and outcomes so that each can market one another's services more effectively and form closer working relationships. In addition, the Community College is an integral partner in the organization and strong ties have been developed with that system especially between the Business and Industry Programs as well as the outreach centers within the region.

Because of these relationships, the workforce development system in this region is aligned and informed of the needs of many small and start-up businesses and offers not only our services but is a premier referral agent of additional services available within the region to assist those companies. Some of the strategies used in this region to assist businesses include: recruitment

and screening assistance; labor market information; use of space for interviewing or meetings; training program opportunities such as Governor's Training Initiative, Quality Center program referrals, Customized Training, On-The-Job Training, Maine Enterprise Option, Project GATE; and referrals to a full array of other programs.

Additionally, the Board has worked diligently in this region to market the skills (both transferable and new) that customers in training programs have developed to assist employers to find that candidate that will allow them to be successful in their business needs. Often times, matches are made on an unsolicited basis because Employer Assistance representatives and Case Managers work in tandem to find the best fit between an individual and a business. This can be as simple as a CareerCenter staff person calling an employer and stating that they may not be looking for a new hire at this time, but that the CareerCenter has a candidate that the business may want to look at because of the skills that candidate could offer to the company. In this region, it's almost back to the basics of assisting the business community whether it be a one-person shop or a major corporation – foster a personal relationship with an employer through an account representative, listen to their needs and try to furnish them with skilled and qualified workers or broker services from other entities to meet their needs.

**7. How are the Local Board funds used to incent the entities that make up the region's workforce system to achieve the Governor's vision and address the national strategic direction identified in Part I of this guidance? (§112(a).)**

Since the inception of the Tri-County Workforce Board, a myriad of data from educational entities, policy groups, State data analyst, local economic development reports and other sources is constantly presented to the Board and to CareerCenter staff so that we are aware of opportunities or gaps within this diverse region to address workforce development issues which often are in alignment with the Governor's vision and national strategic direction.

This region's focus over the next two years will be an ever increasing emphasis on demand-side activities that build upon focusing training and business services on target growth sectors, entrepreneurial strategies to assist small and growing businesses and increased business outreach via forums and the increased usage of OJT's in this region.

This upcoming year, the board received additional WIA funding as a result of the massive amount of dislocations over the last year resulting in high unemployment in the region. Those additional dollars will be used to fund job development and OJT activities for Adult, Youth and Dislocated Workers and will target industry employers in high growth, high demand occupations in the region.

**8. Describe the Local Board's strategies to promote collaboration between the public workforce system, education, human services, juvenile justice, and others to better serve youth that are most in need and have significant barriers to employment, and to successfully connect them to education and training opportunities that lead to successful employment. (§112(b)(18)(A).)**

The WIA Youth program has three basic strategies to promote collaboration and successful employment. First, the Youth Employment Network (YEN) is specifically designed to promote collaboration between all youth-serving organizations and agencies. Offering to provide a single point of entry through the CareerCenter into a variety of youth programs geared toward workforce development will benefit all WIA partners. The WIA Youth Plan Manager or designated professional will conduct an interview with each young person to obtain an initial determination of eligibility and suitability for one or more of the various programs and initiatives represented by the YEN membership. Stakeholders become partners in this approach and specific Memorandums of Agreement will be completed to detail the integration of services and the referral of eligible participants. The YEN will include education and training providers as full partners. The YEN will include business members who are enthusiastic about assisting youth to make the transition to adult workers. These businesses will provide incentives such as work experience, internships, summer or seasonal employment, mentoring, leadership/citizenship training and financial support for WIA Youth outreach and community-building events and systems. Additionally, the WIA Youth program staff will work more closely with CareerCenter Employer Assistance staff to increase apprenticeship, OJT and employment opportunities for youth.

The second strategy is simply to expand the Youth Council membership to include stakeholders and potential YEN partners from the communities that represent youth in most need of assistance to overcome barriers to employment, education and training vendors, and business. As the Youth Council members work together to advise and guide the WIA Youth programs, they will understand and support our youth as they work to gain their own sustainable employability.

The third strategy is to refine the process of “co-case management” of plans for young people who are engaged/enrolled with numerous organizations and agencies devoted to their development as workforce participants. Following the example of Maine’s Family Support Teams (formerly Integrated Case Management System), the WIA Youth program will identify with each youth the various organizations with whom she or he is involved or will be involved and a primary case management system will be selected. Other organizations and agencies will remain keenly invested in the youth’s progress toward goal attainment, but will allow for a primary case manager to coordinate the services and schedule of the youth. An integrated approach to co-case management is already working between WIA and Job Corps. The newly established memoranda of agreements DHHS for foster care youth and with DOC for young offenders are also based on this approach to co-case management and sharing of common goals. JMG and Upward Bound are examples of co-case management between WIA and educational partners. These kinds of co-case management arrangements will be duplicated in as many areas with as many partners or stakeholders as our customers need.

**F. Describe major Local Board policies and requirements that have been established to direct and support the development of a regional workforce investment system not described elsewhere in this Plan as outlined below. (§112(b)(2).)**

**1. What Local Board policies and systems are in place to support common data collection and reporting processes, information management, integrated service delivery, and performance management? (§§111(d)(2) and 112(b)(8)(B).)**

In order to control administrative costs, the Tri-County Board has endorsed the MDOL's One-Stop Operating System [OSOS] as the management Information System that WIA service providers within the Area use to capture client information flow and performance outcomes. To facilitate the flow of information among the Wagner-Peyser, Rehabilitation Services, and WIA partners, this computerized database tracks the individuals served under Title I and Wagner-Peyser. The Board and/or Staff collect and reviews outcome information, as does the MDOL, from this integrated information management system. OSOS is fully operational as the primary WIA customer information system of Maine's four Local Areas.

The Board also reviews a number of Quarterly reports, generated directly through the OSOS system, including Quarterlies from the Rapid Response Representative and fiscal data assembled on request for its Quarterly Meeting.

**2. What Local Board policies are in place that promote efficient use of administrative resources at the local level to avoid duplicative administrative costs that could otherwise be used for service delivery and training? (§§111(d)(2) and 112(b)(8)(A).)**

In the Tri-County Workforce region the Board has undertaken a number of initiatives or actions that have promoted efficiencies in the use of administrative dollars. The Board actively markets the resources of the CareerCenter through television ad campaigns, the Tri-County LWIB brochure promoting the services of the CareerCenters, and paying for print ads for job fairs and recruitment assistance ads in the local newspapers on behalf of the CareerCenters. The Board has also paid for tables and table skirts for the CareerCenter, giving local job fairs a professional appearance. A professional "first impression" entices prospective employers as well as door prizes from participating employers for individuals attending the job fairs. The Tri-County Board also partners with the Coastal Counties Workforce Board and the Central/Western Workforce Board to place an annual weekly running ad in the Employment Times. These efforts add up to thousands of dollars annually that allow more resources to be focused on training activities in the system.

The Board also uses some of its administrative resources to fund training initiatives such as The Highlands Training Initiative as well as a partnership with the State of Maine and the United Technologies Center to encourage Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship opportunities in the area. In addition, the Tri-County Board helps to fund a number of functions at EMDC such as the services of an in-house grant-writer to assist in preparing grants and proposals for other funding opportunities. This past year the Board was also a major underwriter of the Business Assistance

CD for the Tri-County region. These are many of the on-going functions supported by Board administrative funds that allow more program dollars to be expended on training services.

The Tri-County region has annually negotiated that a certain percentage of WIA funds be expended of direct occupational training and supportive services. Normally this figure is set at 30% annually and have normally achieved this goal or close to it. For the next year, the goal may be decreased as other funding sources end but will be negotiated to between 25 to 30%.

**3. What policies support a demand-driven approach, to workforce development – such as training on the economy and labor market data for local Board and CareerCenter staff? (§§ 112(b)(4) and 112(b)(17)(A)(iv).)**

The Local Board supports an integrated and seamless demand-driven service design. As such, local workforce development systems are working collectively to further integrate and thereby reduce duplication of business service efforts of one-stop partners by participating in joint education and training for workforce development staff. Focus of this education and training initiative for local CareerCenter staff, partners and board staff is on:

- labor market information-high growth and high wage occupations
- local economic development initiatives-business expansion and start-ups
- assessing and communicating the workforce needs of local business and,
- coordinating workforce development initiatives among partners.

In June 2004, the Division of Labor Market Services (DLMIS) and BES launched a joint venture to emphasize a fuller integration of DLMIS and the CareerCenter system, and to standardize the instruction that DLMIS Local Analysts provide to CareerCenter staff, making it a more professional-quality training. The Labor Market Information Systems Academy is currently in the developmental stages and will be launched during PY 2005.

**4. Describe the actions the Local Board has taken to ensure that CareerCenter activities and services are integrated.**

**a. What Local Board policies and procedures are in place to ensure the quality of service delivery such as development of minimum guidelines for operating CareerCenters, competencies for CareerCenter staff or development of a certification process for CareerCenters? (§112(b)(14).)**

The CareerCenter system in Maine is a comprehensive delivery system combining a wide range of workforce development services and labor market information under one roof within a community, reducing administrative duplication, and increasing convenience for customers. CareerCenter offers expanded options for both members of the workforce and businesses to access a full array of employment resources and the providers available to them; it also offers an option for consultation on development of customized solutions to individual issues to the extent allowed by its resources.

The Tri-County Board has worked diligently with the Maine Department of Labor and One-Stop partners to progressively ensure that local area CareerCenters are focused on exemplary customer service, are well grounded in standard operational guidelines and functional service delivery teams are well versed and educated in their area of service expertise.

The four Tri-County One-Stop service centers currently offer a common array of core CareerCenter partner services. All core services are geared to meeting or exceeding the employment needs of employers and people in transition from one job to a better job. Tri-County CareerCenter partners are dedicated to participation in and delivery of services based on a set of CareerCenter operating procedures and staff competencies that lead to the certification of local one stop facilities.

The Tri-County Workforce Board and One-Stop partners continue to work towards meeting Maine DOL's interest to operate CareerCenters that carry a common "brand" or "look" for business operations. All Centers in the local area provide the full menu of core employer and job seeker services with partner staff collaborating on the sharing of staff resources to meet common service objectives.

For example, currently efforts are underway to establish a core set of standards for assessing the skill sets of workers in transition as well as a similar system of assessing the workforce needs of local business. Ideally, the assessment results yield a common language and process for efficient and effective "matching" of workers to business and business to workers.

We are also working diligently to organize and train CareerCenter staff according to functional service capacities as a first tier of expanding Center capacity through staff development and education. Training, in part, is focused on the common service competencies of the work, career counseling and reemployment planning, assessment techniques, strategies and tools, and business services.

Over the next two years, the Board plans to establish a local certification process for One-Stop career centers in the Local Area. This certification process and final product will be built upon the research and review of better practices in One-Stops nationally, local and state partnerships vested in employment and training services and business and industry demand and supply side service needs.

**b. What policies or guidance has the Local Board developed to support maximum integration of service delivery for both business customers and individual customers? (§112(b)(14).)**

The Local Board, in conjunction with the Maine Department of Labor, has promoted the integration of services between WIA funded programs, the MDOL Bureau of Employment Services programs and the MDOL Bureau of Rehabilitation and Division of the Blind and Visually Impaired programs through the One-Stop CareerCenter system. In addition, the Board supports and fosters relationships among "required partners" as stated under the Workforce

Investment Act of 1998 as well as other partners to deliver integrated services to individuals and business partners.

The Board also supports service strategies that focus on demand-side activities and ask all programs to work with the local Employer Assistance representatives to assist in innovative strategies to meet the job placement needs of the individual and employer. Over the past two years the Training and Development Corporation has been able to manipulate data from the OSOS system to more proactively promote individuals for job placement to employers based on skill set and credentials obtained as well as utilize this data to fill job postings from employers. This meets the needs of both the individual and business in a very strategic and focused manner.

**c. What actions has the Local Board taken to promote identifying CareerCenter infrastructure costs and developing models or strategies for local use that support integration? (§112(b)(14).)**

The Board, in conjunction with the Maine Department of Labor and the service providers, has established CareerCenter One-Stop locations and systems that support integrated systems and services, and promote integration. The Board continuously monitors these costs and systems annually at budget preparation time to ensure maximum use of existing systems. Other systems may need to be sought after or developed to ensure workforce development services are maximized for the business and individual consumers.

With the need to promote balanced and focused services, the CareerCenters in this region will promote scheduled services and as many group services as possible to maximize resources. While self-assisted services will be available, staff-assisted services will be done more often than not on a scheduled basis. The CareerCenter staff will work to develop an integrated plan throughout this upcoming year to adopt policies and protocols that will articulate a plan to accomplish this goal.

In addition, see Section F2.

**5. Provider Selection Policies (§§112(b)(17)(A)(iii), 122, 134(d)(2)(F).)**

**a. Identify the Local Area policies and procedures, for determining eligibility of local level training providers, how performance information will be used to determine continuing eligibility and the agency responsible for carrying out these activities.**

The Tri-County region will adopt the Maine Department of Labor guidance on the certification process for Eligible training Providers Initial Certification. In accordance with WIA, eligible providers of training services are those entities eligible to receive WIA funds pursuant to Section 134(d)(4)(C) of the Act. To be initially eligible to receive funds, providers must apply for program certification under the following categories.

- A post-secondary educational institution that is (1) eligible to receive Federal funds under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 and (2) provides a program that leads to an associate degree, baccalaureate degree or certificate; or,
- An entity that carries out programs under the Act commonly known as the National Apprenticeship Act; or
- As specified in the Maine WIA Plan these entities including universities, colleges, community colleges, some proprietary schools and apprenticeship programs registered with the Maine State Apprenticeship Council or the Bureau of Apprenticeship Training within the U.S. Department of Labor will have automatic initial eligibility.
- The LWIB will also consider other providers of training services including:
  - Other public or private provider of a program of training services;
  - A post secondary educational institution wishing to receive training funds for a program not described in WIA Section 122(a)92)(A);
  - An apprenticeship program wishing to receive training funds for a program not registered with the Maine State Apprenticeship Council or Bureau of Apprenticeship Training; or
  - A community based organization and other private organizations providing programs under WIA regulations 20 CFR 663.430.
- The Workforce Investment Board will define the criteria and procedures for certifying local training providers incorporating ETP eligibility guidance from the Maine Department of Labor. The Tri-County WIB will use the following basic definitions for training:
  - The LWIB defines a program of training services as one or more courses or classes that, upon successful completion, leads to a certificate of licensure, an associate degree, or a baccalaureate degree. The goal of the training program would be to secure relevant employment in an occupation in high-demand or high-growth occupations for the Tri-County area.
  - A short course, not designed to provide immediate employment but to provide skills to enhance employability, may be designated by the LWIB as an Intensive Service. Included in this category are those one course work seminars that provide instruction in specific computer software packages. The certification process is not required to secure providers of Intensive Services.

All present Providers of Training will be contacted in writing, alerting them to the requirements of WIA and the LWIB for program certification. This will be done only for those training

providers within the geographic area of the Tri-County. The providers will be required to submit the following information via application to the Internet Based Maine Employment Information Guide which is accessed through the CareerCenter website ([www.mainecareercenter.com](http://www.mainecareercenter.com)):

- Applicant Information including name and mailing address, contact name, telephone number, fax number, e-mail address, Web Site address and documentation of financial stability;
- A program description that includes at minimum the program name, prerequisites, training location(s), program length and training hours. Minimum hiring qualifications of the training instructors, and a program synopsis;
- Program costs including a breakout of tuition, fees, insurances;
- Information on financial aid;
- Statistical program information including completion rates for all individuals, percentages of individuals who obtain unsubsidized employment in an occupation related to the training, and wages at placement; and
- Information on length and hours of training, course start and end dates, course certifications, admission criteria, job placement performance and opportunities, fee schedules, financial aid, and any other program requirements;
- Providers who have not been providing training services for 12 months or more or who are not listed on the Statewide Provider List must supply the following information to the LWIB:
  - A list of all programs of training that the organization is requesting to appear on the LWIB's WIA eligible provider list;
  - A description of programs of training, refund policy and general cost information including tuition, associated fees and supplies for each of the programs;
  - Evidence that the training provided is in a demand occupation as determined by the Tri-County WIB;
  - Documentation from the Maine State Department of Education indicating that the Provider is certified to offer training in the State of Maine; and
  - Data for each program of training based on participants in the program for the most recent period available including the number of participants, the number of exiters, the number of completers, the number of completers employed, and wage levels obtained by completers.

- The institution/organization will be required to sign a Training Provider Agreement that sets forth the roles and responsibilities of the Training Provider and the LWIB in providing WIA customers – and other CareerCenter program customers including NAFTA/TAA, MSFW – training services.

Should any provider want to create a new program or add an existing program to the Tri-County Approved Training Provider List after the initial set of programs have been certified they must supply the required application information. The LWIB reserves the right to waive the requirements for performance data on the initial application upon showing of good cause as specified in the Maine WIA Plan. Upon certification the program may be added to the list. All potential training providers must make application through the on-line Consumer Data Collection System (CDCS) component of MEIG. Those training providers that do not currently have data entry access to the CDCS component of MEIG contact the BES ETPL Coordinator to obtain the necessary security access.

Upon determination by BES that a complete application meets the eligibility requirements, the BES ETPL Coordinator will record its approval or disapproval of the application including the reasons it was rejected. This information will be electronically transmitted to training provider no later than 60 days from receipt of the information by the BES. Training programs/providers will appear on the statewide list after MDOL verifies the eligibility, or 30 days have elapsed, whichever occurs first. MDOL will certify, compile and publish the statewide list through MEIG. Training providers will be eligible to apply throughout the year. As new programs are submitted and approved throughout the year, the statewide list will be updated on an ongoing basis. If the program is found to be ineligible for the statewide list, the LWIB will cease to approve additional Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for that program until the program meets minimum eligibility requirements.

The local Training Provider List will be maintained by BES and made available to users throughout the system electronically, and in written form at all locations throughout the One-Stop system.

- b. Describe the competitive and non-competitive processes that will be used at the local level to award grants and contracts for activities under title I of WIA, including how potential bidders are being made aware of the availability of grants and contracts. (§112(b)(16).)**

When the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 was implemented in Maine in July 2000, the existing service providers of Adult and Dislocated-Worker services were grandfathered as the service providers under the new law unless performance measures were not met. The Board reviews performance by means of regular Quarterly Reports submitted by the service providers and developed by LWIB Staff. The Reports are regularly discussed and evaluated and the Board works with the Bureau of Employment Services to review performance levels and to develop corrective action as necessary. In the next two years in this region this will remain as true unless performance is not being met or new regulatory changes happen at the Federal or State level that may promote a formal RFP process for these two services. Within these funding programs in this

region, the Local Board is continually looking at additional providers of adult and dislocated-worker services that can become partners to provide a full array of services.

Youth services were the exception under the new Act that required a formal RFP process which is described in section c. below. The formal RFP document is available in **Attachment E**. In PY06 the Board will remain with the current providers but will plan a formal RFP process to retain youth services that promote employability and placement in high-growth, high-demand occupations in the region.

- c. Identify the criteria to be used by local boards in awarding grants for youth activities, including criteria that the Governor and local boards will use to identify effective and ineffective youth activities and providers of such activities. (§112(b)(18)(B).)**

For the Program Year 2000, the State of Maine asked local areas to complete a Request for Vendors of Youth Services to promote more collaborative efforts and to not disrupt youth services in the regions due to timing of the establishment of the local boards. For Program Years 2001 to 2002, the Tri-County region did a formal RFP process for Youth services requiring a consortia of a minimum of three partners submitting a proposal to administer youth services in the region. This resulted in one consortia of eight partners submitting a proposal to administer youth services in the region. For Program Years 2003-2005, the State of Maine stated that Local Boards did not need to RFP for Youth Services again. Because of the initial low turnout of prospective bidders in the first RFP Process, the Tri-County Youth Council instituted a more evaluative approach with the local youth service providers where each submitted an annual proposal for funding each year and did an oral presentation to the council detailing the request for the next year and discussing the current years results against planned goals. The process became more collaborative which entailed negotiation and agreed upon funding and outcomes for the ensuing year.

Additionally, the Youth Council promoted the development of the Youth Employability Network described earlier to attract more youth partners in the region to addressing the workforce development needs of youth in this region and the Board believed that an RFP might be counter-productive at this time to the continued development of this process.

Federal Reauthorization of WIA will dictate if an RFP for Youth Services is necessary or not in PY 2006. If not required, the Youth Council will still discuss this option for the procurement of youth program providers. If required, the process will most likely be similar to the initial approach taken for PY 01-02 with required changes and a focus on employability and placement in high-growth, high demand occupations in the region to meet the needs of local businesses. In Attachment E is a copy of the original RFP document.

## **6. CareerCenter Policies (§112(D)(14).)**

- a. Describe how the Local Board helps CareerCenters and service providers identify areas needing improvement and how technical assistance will be provided.**

The Tri-County Board uses the quarterly review process and the annual monitoring process to identify areas needing improvement and to request technical assistance. Additionally, a review of the customer and employer satisfaction surveys are reviewed periodically with local staff to identify areas needing improvement. Each quarter, performance results are analyzed and improvement measures are discussed with the local manager. If some areas of performance have on-going non-performance, the Local Board Director will request technical assistance from the MDOL Bureau of Employment Services. Additionally, the Board in conjunction with MDOL BES conducts a series of monitoring visits each year of the CareerCenter programs.

**b. Describe the monitoring and oversight criteria and procedures the Local Board utilizes to move the CareerCenters and service providers toward the Local Area and State's vision and achieve the goals identified above.**

The formal monitoring process includes a series of scheduled monitoring by BES Staff jointly with CareerCenter Managers/Staff and the Local Board Director of all of the following programs:

- WIA Title I Adult
- WIA Title I Youth
- WIA Title I Dislocated Worker Programs
- National Emergency Grants
- Local Workforce Board Administration

Program monitoring has two primary purposes: (1) to ensure that the CareerCenter system is in compliance with the intent and substance of the rules governing funding streams, and (2) to provide an understanding of the systems operating to achieve state and local area vision and goals for workforce investment.

Monitoring tools have been designed to explore the working relationships that make a difference to customers in terms of the breadth and depth of services. The objective of monitoring programs is to learn how the partners are working together for seamless integration of services, not to make a determination of whether the level of integration is above or below an arbitrary level. Monitoring therefore ideally has a formative rather than a summative function.

**G. Service Delivery -- Describe the approaches the Local Board will use to provide direction and support to the CareerCenters on the strategic priorities to guide investments, structure business engagement, and inform service delivery approaches for all customers. (§§112(b)(17)(A) Activities could include:**

**1. How will the services provided by each of the required and optional partners be coordinated and made available through the CareerCenters? (§112(b)(8)(A).)**

The Tri-County's goal is to create an inclusive workforce investment system that integrates all public workforce development resources into an easily accessible network to benefit area

families, businesses and the regional economy. The workforce investment system will be built on demand-side strategies. The core of the local workforce investment system is a network of One-Stop Centers which is designed to:

- Improve Customer Service
- Expand Customer Choice
- Share Credit for Joint Outcomes
- Share Costs for Joint Clients
- Share Costs for One-Stop System

The One-Stop system is built on the concept of tiered services. Three tiers are defined in the Workforce Investment Act: Core, Intensive and Training. The Tri-County Region CareerCenters will form the basis of the one-stop center system for the three county area that will be:

- integrated, in that it combines and focuses education, employment, training and support services from many different programs to meet customer needs;
- comprehensive, in that it provides access to a broad array of services and information;
- performance-based, in that it will be focused on clear and measurable outcomes and customer satisfaction indicators;
- innovative, in that it will incorporate best practices from other regions and states and emphasize continuous improvement
- responsive to local and regional (Labor Market Areas) economies, in that it will adjust to meet changing local and regional needs and reflect industry standards and economic development strategies; and
- dedicated to promoting continuous skills development, in that it will encourage all workers to pursue lifelong learning.
- customer-focused, in that customer needs will drive the development of the individual plan

The driving principles for the design of Tri-County One-Stop System are:

- universal access for all customers
- customer choice and demand-driven so that each customer may choose from a wide range of services and information
- integrated service delivery in which partner agencies work together to provide customers with easy access to services and information; and
- outcome-based performance which provides a benchmark for success and the basis for continuous improvement.

The CareerCenter will provide universal access to customers through a network of physical sites and electronic access points. All of the WIA partners are fully committed to providing specialized assistance to those who need it. An extensive menu of services and information is currently available at four (4) comprehensive/full-service centers strategically located in the region. In addition, the one-stop system will ensure that customers with special needs, particularly veterans, individuals with limited English proficiency and individuals with

disabilities, have full access to the one-stop system and supportive services. In the next two years, universality of services should not be mistaken for all services available five days per week, all day. With the need to promote balanced and focused services, the CareerCenters in this region will promote scheduled services and as many group services as possible to maximize resources. While self-assisted services will be available, staff-assisted services will be done more often than not on a scheduled basis.

Partnerships are the foundation of the Tri-County One-Stop system. The marketplace for education, employment and training services contains many individual providers, both public and private, who can offer similar services and information of high quality to customers. The strength of the Tri-County design is the unique combination of services and information available from multiple partners.

These partners are:

- Maine Employment Commission (Wagner-Peyser, Veterans, TAA, NAFTA, Unemployment Insurance, Veterans Employment programs)
- Department of Education (Adult Education, Secondary Vocational Education, School-to-Work),
- Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services
- Community College System (Post-secondary Vocational Education)
- Training and Development Corporation (WIA Title I Adult, WIA Title I Dislocated Workers)
- Department of Labor (Apprenticeship)
- Title V Older Americans, Community Services Block Grant
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (Employment & Training Activities)
- Department of Human Services and related employment and training programs

Using agreed upon planning structures, the One-Stop partners will work together to develop an integrated service delivery system for customers. This will be accomplished through increased co-location of staff from different partners, scheduling of service strategies, cross training of staff, and the provision of appropriate technology and linkages to partner services. Partners will also establish a mechanism for referring customers to additional services provided either on-site or off-site. Each partner's role, and a description of its connection to the one-stop system will be spelled out in the MOU. Summary some - but not all - of the program's connection to the One-Stop System is depicted in the chart below:

Program	How Services Are To Be Made Available
Wagner-Peyser Act	Employment Service staff will be located in each CareerCenter comprehensive/full service one-stop career center. In addition, labor market information staff will generate, maintain and disseminate labor market information.

Trade Act Programs	ES staff will be located in each CareerCenter one-stop center on a full-time or part-time basis. These staff will provide information on TAA as well as NAFTA-TAA benefits and services on an as needed basis.
Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFW)	Training and Development Corporation as the statewide MSFW Grant Recipient will conduct outreach to the agricultural community and provide services as needed for area residents who qualify under MSFW eligibility criteria. MSFW staff will be stationed at each of the Tri-County CareerCenters on an as needed basis.
Veterans Program	LVERs and DVOPS will work exclusively with veterans and will provide them with a range of core and intensive services. In addition, Wagner-Peyser staff will also provide specialized assistance to veterans. Training will be provided by referral to approved providers.
WIA Disadvantaged Adult	The CareerCenters will be staffed by Training and Development Corporation who will have full-time staff available in each of the region's one-stop CareerCenters. TDC CareerCenter staff will provide core and intensive services to disadvantaged adult individuals. Training will be provided by referral to approved providers.
WIA Dislocated Worker	TDC will have full-time staff available in all each of the region's one-stop CareerCenters. These CareerCenter staff will provide core and intensive services to dislocated workers. Training will be provided by referral to approved providers.
WIA Youth	Youth eligible for WIA Title I will have access to the one-stop centers and related services. Youth under the age of 18 will be assessed by the CareerCenter youth services staff at the one-stop center and referred to youth group training programs identified on the consumer report or to appropriate funding streams for services, such as Adult Basic Education for GED or literacy assistance.
Title V Older Workers	Local SCSEP providers will have a part-time presence at each of the region's one-stop CareerCenters. Older Worker Specialists will provide a range of core and intensive services to customers. Training will be provided by referral to approved providers.

Adult Education	One-Stop CareerCenter staff can refer participants to Adult Education services. Under WIA, an assessment tool will be provided by Adult Education for the One-Stop Center.
Vocational Rehabilitation	BRS staff will have the tools and resources to provide core intake, assessment, vocational planning, including the development of vocational rehabilitation plans, and placement service at the city's One-Stop centers. Other services, including specialized assessments, may take place at BRS offices and other locations appropriate to the service or activity.
Welfare-to-work	TDC's Welfare to Work program staff will be located at each of the region's one-stop CareerCenters. They will provide intensive case management and link customers with employment and supportive services provided by on-site and off-site, one-stop partners.
Community Services Block Grant	The Penquis, and Washington County CAP agencies, as the recipient of CSBG dollars, will be invited to have part-time staff co-located at the region's One-stop CareerCenter sites and will provide information and make referrals to the appropriate services and programs.
HUD Programs	Efforts will be made to link HUD Employment and Training Programs electronically to the region's One-Stop CareerCenter sites in each county.
Vocational/Technical Education (Perkins III)	Vocational technical education and career training programs are delivered in public secondary institutions. As such, there is not a direct presence at the One-stop. However, all regional vocational technical education centers will be linked via the internet to the CareerCenter so that they can access information on work-based learning opportunities, labor market information and employment opportunities for all students. Electronic access to the CareerCenters will be provided from multiple campus locations.

Apprenticeship	The apprenticeship program will work with and train the CareerCenter personnel in developing both adult and youth registered apprenticeships. As youth WIA clients progress toward increasingly- intensive, work-based learning experiences, pre-apprentice and apprenticeship programs will play a critical role in helping transfer responsibility for WIA youth clients to unsubsidized resources and employers. They will assist local school (in-school clients) and community-based organization (out-of-school clients) staff to find employers and establish apprenticeships for the WIA youth clients.
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Too often in the past, customers have been expected to go from office to office and talk with many different program representatives in order to receive all the services and information they need. The One-Stop CareerCenter is designed to provide customers with easy access to services and information provided by partner agencies. Each of the comprehensive/full service centers will provide an array of core services available to all customers. These services will include:

- intake and orientation
- initial assessment
- eligibility determination and assistance in establishing eligibility for financial aid and the welfare-to-work program
- referrals for specialized assessment and counseling
- employment related counseling
- job search and placement assistance
- employment statistics and labor market information
- program information and program costs
- state performance information and consumer reports
- information on the availability of support services
- information on filing for unemployment and access to a telephone claims system
- employment referrals
- follow-up services

The Tri-County Workforce Investment Board will have a full service CareerCenter in Bangor, Dover-Foxcroft, Ellsworth and East Millinocket. There will be full access to the services provided on a self-assisted or scheduled basis under the Workforce Investment Act and the Wagner-Peyser Act for the job seeker, incumbent workers, youth and employer customers. The 4 services listed from here are will also be offered more often on a scheduled basis to focus quality services at high peak times. This will pertain to the following programs: WIA Adult, Dislocated Worker (Core, Intensive and Training Services), WIA Youth Services, Wagner-Peyser, TAA, NAFTA, Veterans Employment and Disabled Veterans Outreach Programs, UI, Welfare-to-Work as well as Rapid/Community Response services. Full-time Department of Rehabilitation Services is available on-site at the Bangor CareerCenter and on a part-time basis in Dover-

Foxcroft, Ellsworth and East Millinocket. Divisions of the Blind Services are available on a full-time basis in the Bangor and Ellsworth CareerCenter and on a scheduled basis in other locations.

The design of the service delivery system is depicted in the graphic presented below. The graphic shows the continuum of services from Core to Intensive to Training in relation to the customer eligibility for the range of services; the volume of expected services provided; and the depth of the services from self-service on one end to highly individualized and professional mediated at the other end of the services continuum.

**Tri-County One-Stop Service Model**

	<u>Universal Access</u>	<u>Intensive Services</u>	<u>Training Services</u>
<u>Eligibility</u>	<i>Universal Eligibility</i>	<i>Unemployed or Under-employed After Receiving Core Services</i>	<i>Unemployed or Under-employed After Intensive Services, and in Priority Group</i>
<u>Volume of Delivery</u>	<i>High Volume Delivery</i>	<i>Medium Volume of Delivery</i>	<i>Low Volume of Delivery</i>
<u>Depth of Service</u>	<i>Low Depth of Service Information, Access &amp; Self-Help</i>	<i>Medium Depth of Service Group Activities &amp; Assisted Self-Help</i>	<i>High Depth of Service Individualized &amp; Developmental Services</i>

All applicants and employers who access the system at the One-Stop center will have available to them:

- Complete descriptions of all partner programs or services
- Eligibility information for all partner programs or services
- Either the ability to complete an application, place a job order, or obtain an appointment for application with the appropriate partner organization(s).
- All customers will leave the One-Stop center clearly knowing what step to take next and its relation to employment.

The Tri-County will use the Maine Department of Labor One Stop Operating System (OSOS) computer system to register all clients accessing the one-stop system and employer job openings, to the extent possible and keeping in mind the needs of the customer. Customers should have maximum access to employment opportunities but should not have to travel unnecessarily. All partners should have equal access to job openings.

Persons wishing entry into the services provided by other One-Stop System Partners will be able to visit any of the WIA offices for access information. Specific One-Stop Partner services include those provided by Job Corp, Community Service Block Grant (Community Action

Programs), HUD E & T, Adult Education & Literacy, Post Secondary and Title V Older Workers. Because of the wide-spread geographic nature of the Tri-County area, the CareerCenter, the satellite offices and the neighborhood outreach offices will have access information available on each local provider of services.

The principles that guide the Tri-County's One Stop System state there is "no wrong front door" and "customer sensitive/customer friendly" service is a cornerstone of the system. To implement such principles it will be necessary that each of the CareerCenter One-Stop partners and their staff understand the differences and similarities of all the partner programs. Partners are committed to providing the cross training to staff understanding and recognizing that each partner's unique program characteristics are essential to ensure a universal access to the service delivery system.

## **2. How are youth formula programs funded under §128(b)(2)(A) integrated in the CareerCenters?**

In the Tri-county workforce investment area, youth formula programs are integrated in the CareerCenters through cooperative agreements with LEX Wagner-Peyser staff and the staff of Rehabilitation Services. Cross-disciplinary training of staff across departments to enhance understanding of program design, eligibility and outcomes has already proven beneficial to WIA and other participants. As a single point of entry for young people into a broad array of programs and initiatives that promote transition into the stable workforce, the CareerCenter is committed to greeting and welcoming young people into the center and making sure that no engaged and interested youth leaves the CareerCenter without having received a service – the minimum being a conversation with a professional staff member and the offer of registration with Labor Exchange for job matching. Internal referrals for services are being made quite successfully among and between staff of the three primary CareerCenter partners - WIA, Wagner-Peyser and Rehabilitation Services. These referrals enhance both outcomes for youth and efficiencies for providers.

## **3. What models/templates/approaches does the Local Board recommend and/or mandate for service delivery in the CareerCenters? For example, do all CareerCenters have a uniform method of organizing their service delivery to business customers? Is there a common individual assessment process utilized in every Center?**

The Tri-County Board works closely with the Maine Department of Labor and the CareerCenter system to promote integrated and uniform services where possible and where it is valuable to do so. Certainly, systems integration such as the use of the One-Stop Operating System, common intake and assessment models, and job-matching systems are beneficial and have been promoted by the Boards for the local service providers to utilize. In the next two years the Board will be again collaborating with the State to evaluate that common assessment systems are used and enhanced.

As discussed earlier in this section, the service methodology that will be used in this region and that the board promotes these systems through policies that have been developed.

**H. Workforce Information – A fundamental component of a demand-driven workforce investment system is the integration and application of the best available State and local workforce information including, but not limited to, economic data, labor market information, census data, private sources of workforce information produced by trade associations and others, educational data, job vacancy surveys, transactional data from job boards, and information obtained directly from businesses. (§§111(d)(8), 112(b)(1), and 134(d)(2)(E).)**

**1. Describe how the Local Board will integrate workforce information into its planning and decision-making at the local level, including State and local CareerCenter operations, and case manager guidance.**

The Local Board has developed a number of strategies and programs to assure that its work is responsive to a plethora of economic data, labor market information, census data, input from key trade & professional associations, studies & recommendations from educational & training providers, and—perhaps most important—current information from chambers of commerce, community business organizations, and employers.

Of primary importance to the work of the Local Boards in Maine is the flow of information and data from the Maine DOL, and the regularly scheduled meetings of the Local Board Directors and the Bureau of Employment Services. Communication among all internal partners is essential to program planning, implementation, and continuous improvement.

In the next two years the Board plans to have the Local LMI Analyst provide an update on economic indicators to use as the basis to discuss CareerCenter operations and the needs of the workforce in the region.

### **I. Adults and Dislocated Workers**

**1. Core Services. §112(b)(17)(a)(i). Describe Local Board strategies and policies to ensure adults and dislocated workers have universal access to the minimum required core services as described in §134(d)(2).**

The Level One Core Services form the foundation upon which all CareerCenter programs are built. These services, which are primarily self-help and informational in nature, are designed to serve the largest number of people in the most cost-effective and efficient manner possible. That philosophical approach implies limited staff assistance, helping customers learn quickly how to use the technology (including adaptive devices) to access the latest information on jobs, training, the labor market and human resource issues. As the systems evolves over time, core offerings may be adapted to meet the changing needs of the area's customer base.

Level One is the point of full intersection for the four investing partners: job training, labor exchange, rehabilitation services and services for the blind and visually impaired. Partner staff share responsibility for designing and delivering high quality, front-end services that meet the broad workforce development needs of the general public.

In addition to offering access to the latest work-related information, technology and adaptive equipment/strategies, Level One Services also provide the launching point for a smooth transition to the more specialized workshop, counseling and training options in Levels Two and Three. Our goal is to minimize red tape and time delays, so that those who need more services can effect a transparent transition that is grounded in customer needs, as opposed to agency boundaries.

Core services for Job Seekers are divided into two categories: "Core A", which is primarily informational, with no registration required; and "Core B", with some one-on-one staff assistance and required registration into the system. That registration process triggers accountability for performance standards.

The CareerCenter One-Stop system in the Tri-County area is designed to provide customers with easy access to services and information provided by partner agencies. Each of the comprehensive/full service centers located in Bangor, Ellsworth, Dover-Foxcroft and East Millinocket will provide an array of core services available to all customers. These services are listed below and will include:

Core Services A, Self-Assisted Informational Services (No registration required):

1. Eligibility certification;
2. Outreach, intake (which may include worker profiling), and orientation to the information and other services available through the CareerCenter;
3. Initial assessment of skill levels, aptitudes, abilities, and supportive service needs;
4. Employment statistics information including job vacancy listings, job skill requirements for job listings, and information on demand occupations;
5. Performance information on eligible training providers;
6. Performance information on the local One-Stop delivery system;
7. Information on supportive services and referral to supportive services;
8. Information regarding filing for Unemployment Compensation;
9. Assistance in establishing eligibility for welfare-to-work activities and for other training and education programs;
10. Resource room usage;
11. Internet browsing (job information and training searches);
12. Interned accounts (Career Kit, Personnel Kit);
13. Initial development of employment plan;
14. Talent referrals (informational, e.g., talent scouts, labor exchange referrals of resumes without further screening); and
15. Workshops and job clubs.

Core Services B, Staff-Assisted Services (Registration required):

1. Staff assisted job search and placement assistance, including career counseling;
2. Follow-up services, including counseling regarding the workplace;
3. Staff-assisted job referrals (such as testing and background checks);
4. Staff assisted job development (working with employer and jobseeker); and
5. Staff assisted workshops and job clubs. (Training and Employment Guidance Letter: 7-99)

The State Plan includes the following services available to job applicants:

1. Individualized staff assistance to help customers acquire needed services;
2. Individual counseling that promotes the role that aspirations play in career decision-making, and promoting higher learning;
3. Common intake and eligibility determinations for Title I and partner programs;
4. Marketing and outreach for workforce development programs and services;
5. Referrals to partner programs;
6. Access to computer applications such as word processing, spreadsheets, database development and presentations;
7. Performance information about Title I and partner programs;
8. Information about Maine Labor Laws;
9. Information about the availability of, and how to access Supportive Services, Intensive and Training Services, and all partner programs;
10. Access to computer applications for personal and career development such as keyboarding, self-assessment and career decision-making;
11. Internet access;
12. Initial assessment to help customers link their vocational aptitudes and abilities to jobs;
13. Career counseling unrelated to developing individual employment plans; and
14. Information about obtaining post-secondary financial aid.

Core Services, Employers: These may include -

1. Listing and marketing job orders;
2. Electronic access to the Maine and America's Workforce Network;
3. Information about several topics, including occupational licensing, processing work permits, health and safety, labor law information, OSHA regulation, ADA, industry specific LMI, UI, pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship, and access to rapid response services;
4. Business surveys regarding economic expansion, recruitment plans and workforce training needs;
5. Referrals to private and public sector organizations regarding business-specific needs or problems; and
6. Information about acquiring economic development assistance.

All Core Service elements listed above will be designed to be delivered in both self-service and staff assisted formats. Each of the four CareerCenters in the region will provide full-time Information Center level assistance to job seekers and employers. When possible, volunteers from partner programs and the community will help support the staffing of the Information Center. During peak times, when customer demand exceeds the capacity of the assigned Information Center staff, staff members from other partner programs will be called upon to provide customer services on a rotating basis. The Tri-County area will have one full time Information Center Coordinator whose primary responsibility will be to review and maintain material and information stock, self-service tools, and public access information for all Centers.

Staff will also be recruited from specialized programs to be available on a part-time or as-needed basis. Programs such as the Department of Human Services, ASPIRE program, the two Maine based Job Corps, in-school programs, Older Worker programs, etc will be encouraged, as part of the development of MOU's, to have staff assigned to the CareerCenter on a part-time or "on-call" basis.

All staff assigned to duty in the Information Center will receive on-going training in the various roles and responsibilities including:

- Conducting intake and reception activities
- Providing customers with an orientation to the Information Center
- Providing customers with individualized assistance
- Developing workshop curricula and local resources
- Facilitating workshops
- Organizing and maintaining Information Center resources
- Providing general career counseling information

Building the customer base of the four CareerCenters within the region will focus on outreach and recruitment to a diverse range of customers including individuals with disabilities, veterans, welfare recipients, youth, employers and the general public. Marketing to targeted populations will generally take the form of referral linkages with One Stop partner organizations, linkages with other systems or community based organizations, presentations in the community, tours of the CareerCenter for certain groups, recruitment sessions for employers, and employer presentations and workshops. A marketing strategy designed to increase awareness of the Information Center Core services among the public at large will augment current "word of mouth" community awareness levels. Along with state and local level marketing efforts the local area will evaluate and implement strategies that will include:

- Advertisements in public media
- An internet web page
- Brochures
- Videos
- Job Fairs
- Public Speaking engagements at local community based organizations

All Core services, delivery modes and methods, staffing designs and recruitment and marketing efforts will be customized for each CareerCenter location. Staff and resources will be identified by each partner agency within each CareerCenter location to provide full-time delivery of Core Services. For example, WIA resources will be dedicated to providing at least one full-time Information Center Coordinator to support the four CareerCenters in the Tri-County area. All CareerCenter staff assigned to the Information Center will be responsible for providing all WIA core and intensive level services as well as working with W-P and BRS staff in general customer services arising from the universal access service nature of the CareerCenter.

In particular, WIA and W-P staff will be cross-trained in a number of areas including customer reception and registration, information center orientation and assistance, facilitating workshops and providing general labor market services. All CareerCenter partner organizations will work together to develop workshop curricula and local resources as part of the CareerCenter's continuing improvement process. Special workshops and seminars for universal customers pertaining to self-service tools and resources such as basic computer usage, using the Internet and preparing a resume will be facilitated by staff from each partner organization on a scheduled rotating basis thus promoting a seamless service delivery system.

The allocation of those staff and resources will be based on a mutually determined, center by center basis. Each of the four CareerCenters in the region will develop operational business plans which will specify objectives and mechanisms to promote both a sense of unity among staff and a commitment to customer service. The business plans of each CareerCenter will be agreed upon in a Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) between the investing partners and the LWIB. The Tri-County CareerCenters will create functional teams to promote team-building and communication across staff members performing similar functions.

Financial contributions of each partner program will contribute toward core service delivery in each of the areas four CareerCenters and will be negotiated at the local level based on state level agreements reached among the partners. The MOU for each CareerCenter will specify financial terms and conditions as negotiated among the partners and agreed to by the Workforce Investment Board.

Customers who are enrolled in WIA core services beyond self-services and who are determined eligible for intensive level services can either request additional assistance beyond available Core Services or may be identified by Information Center staff as needing additional services to become successfully employed.

In all cases the transition to intensive services will be based on an assessment of the customers needs and the availability of appropriate intensive level services on a case by case basis. For WIA eligible customers the WIA Plan Manager will assess the customer's job search efforts during the Core services enrollment period and determine the appropriate mix of intensive and training services as necessary. The assessment protocols for making these determinations will be based on several criteria including:

- Length of time the customer has spent in core services without securing employment. Eligible customers, who have been using core services without successfully finding work, will be identified by the Information Center Specialist. The customer will be given an interview appointment with a Plan Manager for the purpose of further assessment of the customer's service needs.
- Customers who are eligible for and in obvious need of intensive services based on targeted barriers to employment may also be referred to a Plan Manager earlier as needed.
- Customers identified as eligible for specific programs such as BRS services, Job Corps, etc. will have priority access to more intensive services funded by that partner or multiple partners.

Customers who are determined to be ineligible for WIA or other partner intensive or training services may participate in intensive services specifically provided by Labor Exchange for the universal access customer base. In addition, all workshops and seminars that are "jointly" provided by partners in the CareerCenter will have slots set aside for non-WIA eligibles on a prorated basis. All services for WIA eligible and ineligible customers will be of the same content and quality.

**2. Intensive Services. (§112(b)(17)(a)(i).) Describe Local Board strategies and policies to ensure adults and dislocated workers who meet the criteria in §134(d)(3)(A) receive intensive services as defined.**

Intensive Services will be available to adults and dislocated workers who are unemployed and unable to obtain employment through core services and who are determined to require intensive services to obtain employment. Intensive services will also be available to adults and dislocated workers who are employed, but who are determined to be in need of intensive services to obtain or retain employment that allows for self-sufficiency. Priority for intensive services will be given to those adult individuals (other than those who are being served through dislocated worker funding) who meet the above criterion, and who are either economically disadvantaged and/or are on public assistance.

Intensive services may include:

1. Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, which may include:
  - a. Diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools; and
  - b. In-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals;

2. Development of an individual service strategy, to identify employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve the employment goals;
3. Group counseling;
4. Individual counseling and career planning;
5. Case management for participants seeking training services; and
6. Short-term prevocational services, including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct, to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training. WIA Sec. 134(d)(3)(C)

Other intensive services, based on assessment or individual service strategies, may include:

1. Out-of-area job search assistance;
2. Literacy activities related to basic workforce readiness;
3. Relocation assistance;
4. Internships; and
5. Work experience. § 663.200(a)

The following may be able to receive intensive services -

1. Adults and dislocated workers who are unemployed, have received at least one core service and are unable to obtain employment through core services, and are determined by the CareerCenter to be in need of more intensive services to obtain employment; and
2. Adults and dislocated workers who are employed, have received at least one core service, and are determined by the CareerCenter to be in need of intensive services to obtain or retain employment that leads to self-sufficiency.  
§ 663.220(a) & (b)

Intensive services will be provided as an extension of the core self-directed and staff assisted service menu. Entrance into these more specialized and individualized service activities will be based on eligibility (for WIA customers) and need as determined by an assessment interview with the customer. A monthly menu of core and intensive level service activities will be published for each CareerCenter. Information Center Specialists, WIA Plan Managers and Labor Exchange Specialists will coordinate the referral of customers in need of Intensive level services to the activities based on individual service plans. Workshops and seminars will be delivered by a combination of WIA and Labor Exchange staff, trained in the particular service area. Workshops and case management practices will be the primary mode of intensive service delivery. Full assessment and plan development services will be tailored to meet the needs of the individual customer. Intensive level services will be of equal content and quality regardless of customer eligibility.

The “majority” of individuals served with intensive services will transition directly into employment without additional skill training investments. Our experience indicates that over

50% of customers enrolled in Adult and Dislocated Worker Intensive Services will transition directly to employment or outside services from the core and intensive level service programs.

This estimate is based on the expectation of limited training resources (thus constraining enrollment in training) and the needs of customers seeking employment in a “good” labor market. Effective brokering of job seeker and employer needs will increase the percentage of customers obtaining employment in the short run without extensive investment in new skill acquisition. It is expected that demand on training resources will be greatest in those areas where the labor market opportunities are weakest – rural areas – and when the employment opportunities are constrained by seasonal shifts in hiring.

Enrollment in intensive level services will be based on program and service capacity and the demands and choices of customers. An initial in intensive services will be followed by further assessment of the customer’s needs and will result in either continued enrollment in level II activities or referral to training activities – based on the availability of resources. All intensive services enrollments and activity duration decisions will be made by Plan Managers.

Support services available to customers enrolled in intensive services include transportation assistance, dependent care services, and other financial support needed by the customer to participate in intensive services. Applicable Support Service policies of each of the one-stop partner programs will determine the levels of financial assistance, rates and duration of service based the enrollment status of the customer. Maximum amounts of financial assistance for customers enrolled in the intensive service level will be based on policy guidelines and the duration of the customer’s stay in level II services as specified in the Tri-County LWIB’s support service policy.

Customers will transition from intensive services to training services based on the assessment of a Plan Manager as to the need for such training based on a mutually agreed upon employment plan.

### **3. Training Services. (§112(b)(17)(A)(i).)**

- a. Describe the Local Board strategies for increasing training access and opportunities for individuals including the investment of WIA Title I funds and the leveraging of other funds and resources.**

#### Adults and Dislocated Workers

Training services will be available to Adults and Dislocated Workers who have met the eligibility requirements for intensive services and are unable to obtain or retain employment through those services. Training services and delivery strategies will focus largely on the issuance of Individual Training Accounts. Adult and Dislocated Worker customers are eligible for training services if:

- Assessment and counseling services have been received through core and intensive services that result in an individual employment plan;
- The individual employment plan defines the purpose of training (occupational goal) and the amount of the Individual Training Account as well as the participant's interest and capacity;
- The training is selected from the statewide demand and growth occupational training program list;
- The average wage level for employees with this training is significantly greater than the participant can earn without this training, and this wage level can lead to self-sufficiency;
- The participant can meet the requirements for admission into the training program; and
- The participant is unable to obtain grant assistance from other sources to pay the cost of such training.

Priority for training services will be given to those Adult program customers (other than those who are being served through dislocated worker funding) who meet the above criterion or meet the Priority of Service criterion when in effect. Particular interest will be on assisting Adults who are either economically disadvantaged and are on public assistance.

Training Services, Level 3, may include:

1. Occupational skills training, including training for nontraditional employment;
2. On-the-Job Training;
3. Programs that combine workplace training with related instruction, which may include cooperative education and apprenticeship programs;
4. Training programs operated by the private sector;
5. Skill upgrading and retraining;
6. Entrepreneurial training;
7. Job readiness training;
8. Adult education and literacy activities provided in combination with services described in any of clauses 1 through 7;
9. Customized training conducted with a commitment by an employer or group of employers to employ an individual upon successful completion of the training. ( WIA Sec. 134(d)(4)(D))

In order to access training services, adults and / or dislocated workers must have met eligibility requirements and have received at least one intensive service.

The local area will take several steps to maximize customer choice in the selection of training providers. The Workforce Investment Board will prepare a demand occupational list of eligible training programs and providers with performance data. Customers will then be free to choose

any provider from the list. This process is described in the Eligible Training Providers Eligibility Policy and the Individual Training Account policy. The One-Stop partners will also provide training to ensure that staff can provide high-quality counseling to customers.

In addition, eligible customers may receive a variety of education, training, and support services supported by a partner or multiple partners. These will include:

- occupational skills training
- on-the-job training
- apprenticeship based training
- job readiness training
- adult education and literacy training
- customized training
- skills upgrading and retraining
- entrepreneurial training

Nearly all of the training services will be available by referral to an approved training vendor. Customers will have access to a statewide list of eligible training providers that will include performance information.

During the next two years of WIA funding, it is anticipated that training resources will be limited, therefore the number of customers who will receive ITA's will represent a limited percentage of total registrants for WIA Adult and Dislocated Worker services. It is anticipated that 50% or more of our customers will receive some level of training services.

A \$4,000 maximum financial limit on ITA's or other for training services has been established by the Tri-County WIB. The objective will be to extend the resources available for these services by aggressively leveraging other resources of both WIA partner programs and outside sources of financial aid. The goal of the local board is to expend between 25% to 30% of formula dollars for Direct Occupational Training and Supportive Services. Of particular importance over the next two years will be the increased emphasis on On-The-Job-Training contracts to maximize training dollars with the private employment sector.

Support services available to customers enrolled in intensive and training services include assistance with transportation costs, dependent care services, and other financial support needed by the customer to participate in employment transition and training services. Applicable Support Service policies of each of the one-stop partner programs will determine the levels of financial assistance, rates and duration of service based the enrollment status of the customer.

Maximum amounts of financial assistance for customers enrolled in the intensive service level will be based on policy guidelines and the duration of the customer's stay in level III training services as specified in the LWIB's support service policy.

## Youth Services

The LWIB plans to provide comprehensive wrap-around services for all WIA youth activities within the Tri-County including outreach, intake and eligibility, assessment, plan development, job placement and follow-up services through the local CareerCenters. Each center will have a resident Youth Plan Manager who will provide direct support to both internal and external youth program activities.

The CareerCenter will continue to build working partnerships with community based youth serving programs. The Tri-county Youth Services team will continue to build out the Youth Employability Network throughout the region to include partners and providers who serve, refer, and employ youth and young adults. Collaboration Agreements with a variety of youth serving programs such as Jobs for Maine's Graduates, Upward Bound at the University of Maine, DHHS Foster Care and Foster Care transition programs, the Youth Re-entry program, the Shaw House, the Penobscot Job Corps Center and others will continue as the mechanism to reflect this partnership.

By developing "systemic" agreements with other major programs, the Board will create a sustainable capacity in the Tri-county area to deliver coordinated services to a larger segment of the eligible youth population without duplication. Over the next two years, an expanded partnership model may include foster care and youth aging out of foster care programs, juvenile justice programs supporting youth offenders and children of incarcerated parents, community and faith-based organizations and Department of Education and Labor programs for migrant and seasonal farm workers.

### **b. Individual Training Accounts:**

#### **i. What policy direction has the Local Board provided for ITAs?**

The Tri-County Board has developed, implemented and updated the following ITA policy:

#### **TRI-COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD**

Policy Number: 00-03  
Effective Date: January 01, 2001  
Revision Number: 01  
Revision Date: 04-15-05

#### **Title: Individual Training Account Policy**

**Purpose:** To describe the Tri-County Workforce Investment Board's policy governing how its Individual Training Accounts (ITA's) system based on customer choice and accompanied by effective case management practices will be used to purchase training under the Workforce Investment Act.

## References:

WIA Sections 663.420( c); 663.310 (b); State of Maine WIA Plan

In accordance with the following Tri-County Workforce Investment Board Individual Training Account policy, adults, dislocated workers and youth customers between the ages of 18-21, who are unable to attain employment after participating in core and intensive services will be considered eligible to receive training utilizing Individual Training Account vouchers.

The ITA is considered as one resource to assist eligible individuals with the greatest need to acquire new skills. Prior to issuing ITA's the CareerCenter staff will review the applications of individuals eligible and waiting for training services. The CareerCenter staff will consider the following factors in issuing ITA's:

- Customer priority status;
- Customer assessment results including self-assessment results;
- Customer's job search portfolio including verification of completion of core and intensive services;
- Job search results documentation;
- Pell Grant and other financial aid application results;
- Case notes developed during plan management interviews and meeting;
- Customer's employment and career goals consistent with local labor market opportunities; and
- Customer's assessed ability to benefit from training assistance.

Specific policy parameters for ITA's include the following:

- Training must be in occupations identified in the local WIA Plan as growth occupations or documentation of employment prospects for areas not listed in the plan should be provided;
- Training must result in an employment wage sufficient to attain self-sufficiency without the aid of public assistance;
- Programs should not exceed 104 weeks (two years). Exceptions to this policy may be approved on a case-by-case basis and requests should include evidence that financial support is available during extended training periods;
- In general, all training programs must be within a reasonable commute of the WIA local area that may include out-of-the-area and out-of-state training institutions. Out-of-the-area training programs that are not within commuting distance to the WIA local area may be approved on a case-by-case basis. All approved training must be located within the contiguous United States;
- All applicants must apply for the Pell Grant and/or Maine State Scholarship Educational Opportunity Grant program, if eligible. Depending on the need and

availability of WIA funding, Pell funds may be combined with WIA funds to cover total expenses;

- WIA funding may be provided for college level and post baccalaureate instruction only if all of the following conditions have been met:
  - a. The customer must be accepted into a certificate or diploma program, and the course of study must be occupation-specific (i.e., radiologic technician, accounting, teacher certification). No funds shall be provided for general academic programs (i.e. General Studies, Bachelors of Business Administration, Bachelors of Art, etc.);
  - b. Total course of study will take no longer than 104 weeks (2 years) to complete and be a certificate or degree program; and
  - c. The customer must demonstrate that he/she has the financial resources to attend long-term training.
- Continuing Education and other similar courses will be approved if the following conditions apply:
  - a. The customer must have a specific occupational goal;
  - b. The customer must have a work history or educational background that relates to the occupational goal; and
  - c. The customer must present evidence describing how the proposed training will increase his/her employment marketability.
- ITA's may be utilized for expenses related to training, including but not limited to the following: books, tuition and fees, supplies, tools, uniforms and shoes, certification, licensing, testing fees, drug testing for entrance into training, medical requirements for training entrance, etc.;
- Customers accepted on a provisional basis may receive assistance on a case-by-case basis;
- ITA's will not be used for payment of late fees caused by customer error or delay. The customer will be responsible for these fees, as he/she is responsible for other fines or penalties;
- ITA funding limitations are as follows:
  - a. Up to \$2,500 in training costs, excluding supportive services may be expended for each participant for the first year of training; and

- b. For training that extends beyond one year, total training costs may not exceed \$4,000, excluding supportive services.

If the cost of training exceeds funds limitation guidelines, Plan Managers will assist in developing a financial plan to cover total costs of training. Customers shall not be required to apply for or access student loans, or incur personal debt as a condition of participation.

The specific documentation for the "need for training" may include but is not limited to the following factors:

- Customer priority status in relation to targeted populations, barriers to employment and placement on training waiting lists;
- Customer assessment results including self-assessment results documented in the customer's ISS;
- Customer's job search portfolio including verification of completion of core and intensive services;
- Job search results documentation including number of employer contacts, job referrals, interview results;
- Pell Grant and other financial aid application results that indicate an unmet financial need;
- Case notes developed during plan management interviews and meetings that support training objectives;
- Customer's employment and career goals consistent with local labor market opportunities; and
- Customer's assessed ability to benefit from training assistance.

This statement of policy will remain in effect until such time that it is revised or rescinded by the Tri-County Workforce Investment Board.

**ii. Describe innovative training strategies used by the Local Board to fill skills gaps.**

One of the innovative training strategies used in this region to fill a skills gap is The Hospitality Training Initiative. This is a collaborative effort between The Maine Highlands, Greater Bangor and Convention Bureau, The Tri-County Workforce Investment Board and the Eastern Maine Community College to meet the training needs of the tourism and retail industry. Built to meet the needs of industry professionals in all positions, the training series integrates classroom

instruction and hands-on training by industry experts to provide a comprehensive experience. Customer service skills, local and regional destination and line-level skills training are all included in the series. Once an employee has completed the training and skills validation process, they are certified by the American Hotel and Lodging Association's Educational Institute in that position and receive a lapel pin and certificate.

In response to employers needs, over the next couple of years the Tri-County Board and CareerCenters in this region will work with State partners to develop a Work Readiness Certification program to meet the "soft-skill" and rudimentary basic skills gaps that exist for people entering the workforce. This will be predicated on what the private industry states needs are so as to be endorsed by the private sector and add value.

**iii. Discuss the Local Board's plan for committing all or part of WIA Title I funds to training opportunities in high-growth, high-demand, and economically vital occupations.**

During the next two years this region will use Labor Market Information data to assess where the job growth and skills needs are to influence customer decision-making during the assessment process. In addition, the board will continue to work with economic development entities to see if emerging occupational skill gaps exist and then allocate training dollars for this type of training depending if the employment will lead to economic sustainability for the individual in training.

Participants may request training for an occupation not on the "demand list" if they can provide sufficient and verifiable documentation to demonstrate demand. Employer information and commitment to hire is required for approval of these requests.

**iv. Describe the Local Board's policy for limiting ITAs (e.g., dollar amount or duration)**

As previously noted in Section I.3.b.i., specific policy parameters for ITA's include the following: (I'll fix the weird spacing issues)

- Training must be in occupations identified in the local WIA Plan as growth occupations or documentation of employment prospects for areas not listed in the plan should be provided;
- Training must result in an employment wage sufficient to attain self-sufficiency without the aid of public assistance;
- Programs should not exceed 104 weeks (two years). Exceptions to this policy may be approved on a case-by-case basis and requests should include evidence that financial support is available during extended training periods;
- In general, all training programs must be within a reasonable commute of the WIA local area that may include out-of-the-area and out-of-state training institutions. Out-

of-the-area training programs that are not within commuting distance to the WIA local area may be approved on a case-by-case basis. All approved training must be located within the contiguous United States;

- All applicants must apply for the Pell Grant and/or Maine State Scholarship Educational Opportunity Grant program, if eligible. Depending on the need and availability of WIA funding, Pell funds may be combined with WIA funds to cover total expenses;
- WIA funding may be provided for college level and post baccalaureate instruction only if all of the following conditions have been met:
  - a. The customer must be accepted into a certificate or diploma program, and the course of study must be occupation-specific (i.e., radiologic technician, accounting, teacher certification). No funds shall be provided for general academic programs (i.e. General Studies, Bachelors of Business Administration, Bachelors of Art, etc.);
  - b. Total course of study will take no longer than 104 weeks (2 years) to complete and be a certificate or degree program; and
  - c. The customer must demonstrate that he/she has the financial resources to attend long-term training.
- Continuing Education and other similar courses will be approved if the following conditions apply:
  - a. The customer must have a specific occupational goal;
  - b. The customer must have a work history or educational background that relates to the occupational goal; and
  - c. The customer must present evidence describing how the proposed training will increase his/her employment marketability.
- ITA's may be utilized for expenses related to training, including but not limited to the following: books, tuition and fees, supplies, tools, uniforms and shoes, certification, licensing, testing fees, drug testing for entrance into training, medical requirements for training entrance, etc.;
- Customers accepted on a provisional basis may receive assistance on a case-by-case basis;

- ITA's will not be used for payment of late fees caused by customer error or delay. The customer will be responsible for these fees, as he/she is responsible for other fines or penalties;
- ITA funding limitations are as follows:
  - a. Up to \$2,500 in training costs, excluding supportive services may be expended for each participant for the first year of training; and
  - b. For training that extends beyond one year, total training costs may not exceed \$4,000, excluding supportive services.

If the cost of training exceeds funds limitation guidelines, Plan Managers will assist in developing a financial plan to cover total costs of training. Customers shall not be required to apply for or access student loans, or incur personal debt as a condition of participation.

**v. Describe the Local Board's current or planned use of WIA Title I funds for the provision of training through apprenticeship.**

The Local Board, like the State, does not currently plan to use limited WIA Title I funds for the provision of training through Apprenticeship. However, WIA funds are used indirectly through the support of REAP, LEAP and CareerCenter counselors to promote apprenticeship to businesses and to job seekers.

**vi. Identify Local Board's policies developed in response to changes to WIA regulations that permit the use of WIA Title I financial assistance to employ or train participants in religious activities when the assistance is provided indirectly (such as through an ITA) (20 CFR § 667.266(b)(1).)**

Section 188(a)(3) of the Workforce Investment Act indicates:

“Prohibition on Assistance for Facilities for Sectarian Instruction or Religious Worship - Participants shall not be employed under this title to carry out the construction, operation, or maintenance of any part of any facility that is used or to be used for sectarian instruction or as a place for religious worship (except with respect to the maintenance of a facility that is not primarily or inherently devoted to sectarian instruction or religious worship, in a case in which the organization operating the facility is part of a program or activity providing services to participants).”

The State acknowledges that effective July 12, 2004, WIA Final Regulations have been revised with regard to the possible role of sectarian/religious organizations as service providers. The Board understands the new regulations mean that:

- All social service organizations are potentially eligible to become WIA service providers even though no public money may be directed by government entities or contractors to sectarian/religious purposes and
- The First Amendment rights of sectarian/religious organizations will not be compromised or infringed.

The new regulations ask states to:

- Provide the criteria by which sectarian/religious organizations may be eligible as service providers and/or training facilities,
- Prevent direct use of public money for sectarian/religious purposes, and
- Protect faith-based and sectarian/religious organizations from discrimination.

The need to balance the above factors, while also allowing for participant choice, is met by the federally established distinction between ‘direct funding’ and ‘indirect funding.’ [20 CFR 667.275] The State understands this distinction to mean that:

- Direct Department of Labor (DOL) support may not be used for inherently religious activities, such as worship services or prayer meetings.
- Service providers receiving direct DOL support may offer inherently religious activities such as worship services or prayer meetings only when they are separated in time or location from government funded activities.
- Participation of WIA enrollees in inherently religious activities must be entirely voluntary.
- These restrictions do not apply when DOL support is received indirectly, such as by means of an Individual Training Account (ITA).

Indirect funding rules apply:

“Where customers have made a genuine and independent private choice of provider or training option, then ‘indirect’ funding rules apply. Under these rules, funded ETPs do not have to separate inherently religious activities in time or location, but can instead offer them as an integrated part of the regular training program. Further, so long as customers have voluntarily chosen to participate in its program, an ETP could require customers to fully participate in the program, including in any inherently religious activities that may be a part of the program. Religious activities must always be voluntary in government programs, but the voluntary requirement would be satisfied in such a case because the customer has voluntarily chosen to participate in the program.

Restrictions on the type of training permitted:

Currently, section 37.6(f)(1) prohibits the use of government funds, whether direct or indirect, to pay for customers to be employed or trained in “sectarian activities”. Thus, currently, a customer could not choose to use an ITA to fund training in, e.g., pastoral counseling, even if the training provider otherwise satisfied the requirements of the program. The Department has proposed a

change to this rule to clarify that, under the Constitution, it is permissible for organizations, including ETPs, to provide employment or training in inherently religious activities so long as the support for such training was received indirectly. Once the proposed change comes into effect, then customers will be able to use their ITAs for religious training (such as seminary) as long as the customers have a genuine and independent private choice between religious and other training options, and the organizations providing the religious training otherwise satisfy the requirements of the program. This change is expected to come into effect within the next few months.”

**c. On-the-Job (OJT) and Customized Training (§§112(b)(17)(A)(i) and 134(b)). Based on the outline below, describe the Local Board’s major directions, policies and requirements related to OJT and customized training.**

**1. Describe how the Local Board identifies OJT and customized training opportunities;**

The Tri-County Workforce Board has developed and implemented an OJT and Customized Training Policy which is described below. This policy is reviewed annually and updated or changed as is necessary.

**TRI-COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD**

Policy Number: 00-04  
Effective Date: January 01, 2001  
Revision Number: 01  
Revision Date: 04/6/05

**Title: On-the-Job Training and Customized Training Policy**

Purpose: To describe the Tri-County Workforce Investment Board’s policy governing how it will use On-the-Job Training and Customized training programs under the Workforce Investment Act.

References:

WIA Sections 663.420( c); 663.310 (b); State of Maine WIA Plan

On-the Job training (OJT) is a method of providing individualized occupational training. It is a “hire-first” program in which the employer, either public or private, enters into an agreement with the CareerCenter to hire, train and retain the individual upon successful completion of the training program. Because it is a “hire-first” program OJT will be used only for participants, older youth, adults or dislocated workers, whose goal is immediate employment unless otherwise allowed by this policy. The reimbursement to the employer is intended to cover the extraordinary costs of training and supervision as well as to compensate the employer for expected lower productivity of the trainee vs. a more experience employee.

OJT traditionally involves the acquisition of specific skills and employment competencies, through exposure in an actual work setting, to the processes, work tasks, tools and methods of a specific job or group of jobs. As such the training will be job and company specific requiring the customization of an outline detailing the skills to be learned and the level of proficiency to be demonstrated by the trainee upon completion of the program. This training outline must be developed before training begins.

OJT is not only job and company specific it is participant specific as well. As such the decision to enroll an individual in OJT must be justified and documented in that participant's Individual Service Strategy (ISS). At a minimum, the decision to enroll a participant in OJT must be supported by the results of vocational assessment including aptitude, academic and interest testing which conform to the Occupational Aptitude Patterns, GED Levels and Interest Area of the occupation to be trained for; and evidence of deficiency in job skills, job experience and job knowledge that the OJT is designed to remediate.

Specific OJT contracting standards established by the Tri-County Workforce Investment Board include:

- Contracts are written on a cost reimbursement basis. The reimbursement for an OJT contract cannot exceed 50% of the participant's wages for up to 40 hours per week during the agreed upon training period. Reimbursement may not occur for overtime, sick, vacation or other leaves;
- OJT contracts may be written only where the employer requires the incentive of reimbursement in order to hire and train the individual. OJT's may not be entered into if the employer would hire and train the individual regardless of reimbursement;
- Training contracts may be written only for occupations that traditionally require specific occupational training;
- The length of an OJT contract may not be for less than four (4) weeks nor exceed twenty-six (26) weeks and must be related to the SVP code for the occupation;
- Contracts may not be written for occupations with an SVP of 2 or lower, or for occupations that pay less than 150% of the applicable minimum wage rate unless the limitations of the individual trainee makes such training reasonable and appropriate, and these limitations are documented in the individual's ISS;
- The firm or establishment with whom the contract is written may not be involved in a strike, lockout or other labor dispute;
- The trainees working under the contract shall receive the same wages and benefits and be subject to the same working conditions as other employees working an equivalent length of time and performing a substantially equivalent job at the work site;

- Except when the employer has good cause related to the trainee's work performance, the employer shall, upon completion of the training contract, retain the employee with wages, benefits and working conditions at least equivalent to the level which existed under the contract. The employer may not have violated this requirement in the past;
- The training contract cannot impair existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements, except when the written concurrence of the labor union concerned has been obtained;
- OJT or customized training contracts may not be written to hire a member of the employer's immediate family as defined in the definition section of the Administrative Systems manual;
- OJT contracts may not be written to re-employ a former employee of the business unless there has been a substantial period of unemployment preceding the OJT development, and the training is for a new and substantially different occupation;
- OJT programs may not result in the displacement of currently employed workers; cannot reduce the hours of employment of current workers below their normal schedule or to less than full time as defined by company policy; or be contracted where any worker is on layoff or has been bumped from the same or substantially equivalent job for which the trainee will be trained;
- The job for which the individual will be trained may not be created in a promotional line that will infringe in any way on the promotional opportunities of currently employed individuals; and
- OJT programs cannot be written with a company that is relocating to a new area if the relocation resulted in increased unemployment in the company's original location.

Customized Training is designed to meet the special requirements of an employer – including a group of employers; conducted with a commitment by the employer to employ an individual upon successful completion of the training; and for which the employer pays not less than 50 percent of the cost of the training.

General criteria for Customized Training programs include:

- Training cannot be for new hires in any occupation in the local labor market where there is already a documented supply of workers trained and available to meet the employer's needs and skill levels for workers in that occupation as determined by the Department of Labor's Division of Labor Market Information Services (DLMIS);
- The employer must provide a statement of commitment to long-term operation within the Tri-County workforce area;
- The employer seeking training funds under the customized training program must pay

trainees a wage that is at least equal to 85% of the average wage for that occupation in the labor market as determined by DLMIS; and

- The employer must contribute at least 50% of the premium cost of employee health insurance except for small businesses with fewer than 25 employees and in operation less than three years at the time of application.

This statement of policy will remain in effect until such time that it is revised or rescinded by the Tri-County Workforce Investment Board.

**2. Describe how the Local Board markets OJT and customized training as an incentive to untapped employer pools including new business, employer groups;**

The LWIB with the CareerCenters have the primary responsibility to encourage the development and marketing of OJT and Customized Training as a tool for promoting skills attainment within high growth, high wage industries. In the Tri-County region the Employer Assistance Team has developed a Business Assistance CD (attached to the hard copy) which markets all CareerCenter Business services to local employers. The Board has a targeted outreach strategy with this product to market our services within the three-county region. Other local partners such as economic development agencies, business and trade associations, business advisory groups, chambers, educational institutions and others will be encourage to work with the LWIB and CareerCenters to support and promote demand-side training to meet business needs through OJT and customized training.

**3. Describe how the Local Board partners with high-growth, high-demand industries and economically vital industries to develop potential OJT and customized training strategies;**

The Local Board using LMI data, census data, trade and educational reports and economic development agency data have developed targeted industries within the region that will be the focus of efforts to develop future OJT and customized training strategies. The industries of focus were discussed earlier in the plan but are restated as follows: In this region workforce investments will be focused on various industry sectors including biotechnology, tourism and retail, health care, information technology, manufacturing, mature tradition industries and high-demand, high-growth occupations as they emerge.

The Board will continue to partner with the CareerCenter Employer Assistance staff, the Community College and other educational partners, trade associations and private employers to develop various strategies to meet industry needs.

The Board in conjunction with the Coastal Acadia Development Corporation and the Town of Trenton has recently submitted a Community Development Block Grant application with the State of Maine to give low-income individuals including youth an immersion to skills and job demands in the Marine Trades Industry. As part of this project, all participants will be registered

in the CareerCenter and appropriate matches made between an employer and individual for an OJT. The Board has a goal of completing four OJTs with WIA funds in the next year.

**4. Describe how the Local Board taps business partners to help drive the demand-driven strategy through joint planning, competency and curriculum development; and determining appropriate lengths of training, and**

Specific business needs will be determined by individual businesses, business sector-forums, business and trade associations involvement, economic development information and educational institution recommendations that will be use to drive the demand-driven strategy through joint planning, competency and curriculum development and determine appropriate lengths of training.

**5. Describe how the Local Board leverages other resources through education, economic development and industry associations to support OJT and customized training ventures.**

As stated in the answer to question 3 above, the board needs to be the convener or partner in addressing industry needs by sector and asking what programs and funding sources a group can collaborate together to prepare and submit a proposal to meet the need. Often times, this may be just packaging existing funding sources amongst each other to focus on a specific industry need. The local board is currently doing this and will hopefully increase these efforts in the future.

**J. Service to Specific Populations. (§112(b)(17)(A)(iv).)**

**1. Describe the Local Board's outreach and service strategies to ensure that the full range of employment and training programs and services delivered through the State's One-Stop delivery system are accessible to and will meet the needs of dislocated workers, displaced homemakers, low-income individuals such as migrants and seasonal farm workers, women, minorities, individuals training for non-traditional employment, veterans, public assistance recipients and individuals with multiple barriers to employment (including older individuals, people with limited English-speaking proficiency, and people with disabilities.)**

The Tri-County Local Workforce Investment Board service delivery system recognizes and purposely attempts to assist customers who are economically disadvantaged and have one or more "target barriers" to employment or who are "dislocated workers. It is likely that customers who cannot find employment through core and intensive services will logically be those with substantial barriers to employment. The key customer characteristics-target barriers are primarily applicable to the WIA Adult and Youth populations. For adults this includes; high school drop out no GED, single parent, math or reading below 8th grade level, substance abuse-documented "disability" that interferes with employment, offender, homeless, veteran, and TANF recipient. For Youth target barriers include deficient in basic literacy skills, school dropout, homeless, runaway, foster child, pregnant or parenting, offender and an individual (including a youth with a

disability) who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program. Dislocated workers, primarily applicable to WIA Title III programs, include applicants who were laid off from their last primary occupation.

The CareerCenter makes a conscientious effort to invite all customers who demonstrate a significant need for WIA Title I services to participate in its services. Need in part is based on whether the customer has “barriers” to employment or is a dislocated worker but also on other factors. Though not inclusive, examples of need may further include a lack of post-secondary education, limited employment experience and current job skills in a declining labor market. Through a common intake process, all customers must apply for and “qualify” for WIA programs in order to receive intensive and training level services.

Recognizing that WIA funding is limited, the Board and local partners will work to leverage funding and resources among partners and other sources to build a truly comprehensive workforce development system. In order to develop a system capacity to accommodate larger number of core service customers, while meeting individual needs through intensive and training services, the following priority guidelines have been established based on federal and state priority guidelines.

- Core services will be universally accessible to everyone who chooses to access them - regardless of registration requirement;
- First priority will be given to recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals (100% LLSIL) with “barriers” for intensive and training services;
- Second priority, should funds be available will be given to employed individuals determined by the CareerCenter staff to be in need of intensive services in order to obtain or retain employment that allows for economic viability. This includes underemployed individuals who have exhausted their cash benefits or whose income falls below 100% of LLSIL for the area; and
- Third priority, should funds still be available after priority services have been provided to low-income individuals and recipients of public assistance, will include any other unemployed, underemployed, or employed individuals in need of intensive services and training services to obtain or retain employment that allows for economic viability.

A delivery design that operates a priority of service model and one that promotes assessing immediate customer employment capability, must be accompanied by a strong plan management system that provides the counseling assistance and the supportive services necessary for the success of those individuals not able to acquire employment with their existing skills or experience. The process by which the Tri-County CareerCenter will manage the implementation of its WIA service delivery system consists of the basic elements of Registration, Registrant Interview, Assessment, Individual Service Strategy Development and Plan Management.

## Registration

The CareerCenter's Information Center provides customers with quick access to information about employment trends, labor market opportunities, training options and community resources. The information systems built into the Information Center design include a number of computerized databases to assist customers with self assessment of work skills, identify occupational skill gaps, locate training opportunities to help them fill those gaps and find support networks to strengthen the probability of their success. With customers as the primary partner in the design of the Individual Training Account-ISS, utilization of the Information Center is one of the most important components. Essential career programs include CHOICES '05 and O\*Net (transferable skills identification, interests, GED levels, financial aid and training institutions); America's Top Jobs (occupational outlook information on America's top 250 occupations) and; MEDI, ALMIS, and America's Workforce Network..

Registration is the process by which customers of the CareerCenters are determined to qualify for WIA Title I programs. The customer OSOS documented registration serves the customer selection process by providing an initial data driven customer profile and assists in the design of future assessment and plan management services for the customer.

## Registrant Interview

An individual one-on-one interview is the first formal contact between plan management staff and the Intensive and Training Services (ITA) bound customer. The intent of the interview is to begin to establish documentation of the customer's need for further WIA Title I system assistance and an informal synthesis of customer information for a preliminary ITA and ISS. The interview will become the starting point for many customers in the CareerCenter One-Stop delivery design, identifying the customer's need for intensive and training services. Services such as comprehensive assessment, ISS development, individual or group counseling, career planning, pre-vocational services, case management, follow-up services, occupational training, OJT, skill upgrading and retraining, workplace training, entrepreneurial training, customized training, adult education and literacy and job readiness training will be assessed and evaluated.

The initial interview includes a formal discussion of the customer's education, work experience/history, vocational interests and preferences, hobbies, special talents, transportation availability, financial subsistence/concerns, employment goals-type of work, hours per week and wage requirements, medical concerns-issues, other training-military, family support system, relocation preferences and personal issues.

## Assessment

In-depth assessment services and results provide the customer and plan manager the framework to facilitate informed career choices, establish viable re-employment plans and identify retraining service needs. Assessment of individual job skills, abilities and knowledge in relation to the customers labor market sets the stage for the design and development of an Individual Service Strategy (ISS). Throughout the customer's assessment process, plan management works with

each customer to find the right mix of self-help, mutual aid and professional assistance. No two customers are exactly alike, and the CareerCenter is designed to accommodate differences by providing individualized assessment planning and services delivery.

The objective of the assessment and planning process leading to formal structured job search plan or to the establishment of the ISS is to support individual initiatives, decision making, risk taking, and accomplishment in a manner dictated by the readiness and preferences of the customers. The identification of employment and training needs through the customer's participation in Core and Intensive services at the CareerCenter results from the investigation of resources and support services deemed most responsive to each individual situation. As the senior partner in the decision making process the customer will access appropriate diagnostic tools to identify academic proficiencies, vocational aptitudes, occupational interests, transferable skills and work values critical to ISS development.

### Individual Service Strategy (ISS)

WIA legislation and LWIB policy require that an employability plan be completed with each customer as part of their receipt of intensive and training services. The Training and Development Corporation as the local WIA service provider for Title I refers to the employability plan as the Individual Service Strategy (ISS). CareerCenter policy requires that the ISS must be completed, signed by the Plan Manager and customer, and approved by a Plan Manager peer or supervisor, before any training funds or any support services funds related to training or participation may be expended on behalf of the customer.

The Individual Service Strategy is designing, developing, finessing and synthesizing a customer's career education and/or employment plan into a written document. The ISS is an intricate look at what education, training or other career-related services a customer needs to become a skilled and competitive employee in the marketplace.

### Plan Management

Plan management is central to the CareerCenter's employment development effort with customers. Plan management integrates delivery of services to customers from intake through assessment, education and training, work competency development, job placement and follow-up. Plan management utilizes the key elements of the CareerCenter services design, assisting the customer design a personal plan for employment and choose services and activities necessary to help achieve his/her employment goals. The process of plan management ensures that all customers receive appropriate job training, educational development, placement and support services in a coordinated efficient and timely manner as outlined in a customers Individual Training Account-Individual Service Strategy (ISS).

### Mix of Services with Title I Funding

The Tri-County WIB will apportion available WIA adult and dislocated worker resources between core, intensive and training services based on the following criteria:

- anticipated needs of the population to be served;
- the amounts of core, intensive and training services to be provided by each partner at each site; and
- the recommendations of each One-Stop partner and historical experience in providing similar services.

The Tri-County anticipates allocating resources to each of the four designated One-Stop CareerCenters for use by the One-Stop partners to achieve the goals and outcomes established in this plan. The One-Stop Partners at the site will recommend a budget for apportioning the LWIB-allocated resources between core, intensive and training services. The LWIB will periodically review expenditures and project additional needs periodically during the plan period and may adjust allocations between sites or apportions between core, intensive and training services within any site.

### Displaced Homemakers

Coordination of services with Displaced Homemaker programs including programs funded by the Women, Work, and Community Program and Carl Perkins funds will include cross-referrals of common customers and sharing of core and intensive service activities within the CareerCenter. A Memorandum of Understanding will be entered into with the Displaced Homemaker programs to ensure that program services are coordinated.

### UI Profiling (Reemployment Services) Activities:

In accordance with the State of Maine Reemployment Services system, the Tri-County CareerCenters offer a series of reemployment activities and services to all profiled UI claimants. Specially designed Core Service workshops and seminars covering job search techniques and career decision-making are offered in the CareerCenters. While the workshops are open to all Core Service registrants, priority is given to UI and reemployment program targeted individuals. Non-compliance with referrals to the CareerCenter by UI or the individual's failure to take part in minimum services, or refusing bona fide job referrals are reported to UI using standard communication protocols.

- 2. Describe the Local Board's strategy for integrating and aligning services to dislocated workers provided through the WIA rapid response, WIA dislocated worker, and Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) programs. Does the Local Board have a policy supporting co-enrollment for WIA and TAA?**

The Maine Department of Labor's Bureau of Employment Services has contracted with The Tri-County Workforce Investment Board to have a Rapid Response Representative (RRR) provide coverage for the entire LWIB area. The Tri-County Area's Rapid Response Coordinator, on behalf of the one-stop delivery system, is directly responsible for first point of contact with employers and affected workers to set the stage for reemployment information and service deployment.

When dislocation occurs, the Rapid Response Representative immediately brings community partners together for planning and implementation of on-site Informational Session(s); Trade Adjustment Assistance Workshops (if applicable); and the provision of available services from the community through “Community Action Teams” to the affected workers. If the plant is unionized, organized labor groups are invited in the planning process. A typical Rapid Response Team includes: CareerCenter partners (WIA and Labor Exchange), Unemployment Insurance, Maine AFL/CIO, Town Officials, and Local Elected Officials; i.e., Representatives from Congressman Mike Michaud, Senator Susan Collins, and Senator Olympia Snowe’s offices. In addition, information is shared from Local Adult Education, Technical Colleges, the University system, Economic Development Agencies, Labor Market Information Services, Department of Human Services, Consumer Credit Regulation, and General Assistance. A PowerPoint presentation has been developed for these sessions so that uniform, consistent information is shared with dislocated workers throughout the state. Included is information on the new UI electronic process, On-the-Job Training, Apprenticeship, Credential/Degree/Certificate Learning, Customized Training, Self-Employment through the Maine Enterprise Option (MEO), Health Care Options (i.e., Cobra, Maine Care, Consumers for Affordable Health Care Foundation), Credit Counseling, TAA/TRA/ATAA and HCTC.

Businesses are informed of layoff aversion strategies such as employee buyouts, upgrading of skills where appropriate and linking needs of the employer with state and local economic development agencies for working capital or trained workforce. They are also informed on the Governor’s Training Initiative (GTI).

Strategies are developed and a menu of services are formulated to offer dislocated workers a variety of resources prior to, during, and after the layoff occurred. It’s not unusual to have Rapid Response Informational Sessions, Trade Adjustment Assistance/Trade Readjustment Assistance (TAA/TRA) Workshops, Registration, Assessment (Educational and Aptitude), identified workshops through the Dislocated Worker Survey, Job and/or Education Fairs on site. Community Action Teams have been very creative in providing services in the area of other community resources such as directories, food and clothing assistance, housing hotline, community-based programs, space for and free workshops, tax reprieves, and other avenues of services. If dislocation has occurred, then similar services are offered off site. All workshops are developed according to individual company worker needs based on the “Needs Surveys” that workers filled out either prior to or during the Rapid Response Informational Session.

The Local Layoff Event Plan for the region is as follows:

- Upon notification of layoff, the Rapid Response Representative, CareerCenter Manager and employer should work together to schedule a Rapid Response Session. (AFL/CIO will be contacted if affected)
- The Local Workforce Investment Board should start to secure funding (National Emergency Grant) if necessary. The Rapid Response Representative will initiate a Trade TAA/TRA/ATAA application if applicable.

- CareerCenter Manager will notify the Community Action Team contact to initiate a meeting if layoff event affects more than 70 employees.
- CareerCenter Manager will assess Community Action Team members and local staff for available resources. A contact to State Rapid Response Coordinator will be made if the layoff event affects more than 70 employees.
- CareerCenter staff will initiate a plan of workshops for job search assistance and career decision making on site if possible.
- CareerCenter staff will identify present skills of laid off workers, current job openings in labor market area and possible matches for immediate reemployment.
- At rapid response session, laid off workers will receive a date and time to return for the next step.
- If Jump Start Model is initiated, CareerCenter Manager will work with the state Rapid Response Coordinator and Jump Start Team to deliver up front services by timeframes identified.
- Along with the Community Action Team if initiated, the CareerCenter Manager will set up a labor exchange provider and/or training fair.

When fifty (50) or more are dislocated from a company, the core team explores the need to hire Peer Support Worker(s). Peer Support Workers' primary responsibilities are to contact 100% of the workers and link them with available services and resources within the CareerCenters and throughout the community. If the dislocation is not centrally located for easy accessibility to CareerCenter activities, then transitional centers are setup for easy access to services.

In the event of notification about dislocation in the LWIB area, the RRR takes the lead in validating the dislocation (within 24 hours) and developing a temporary transition assistance plan (within 48 hours). A "plant brief" detailing the nature/cause/impact of the dislocation is immediately forwarded to the State's Rapid Response Coordinator, and concurrently, related information is shared with applicable union leadership, local elected officials, the Executive Director of the LWIB, and appropriate managers within the CareerCenter network. For major dislocations of over 70, the Jump Start Model is initiated with Community Action Teams to provide optimum services to the workers. Under certain conditions, the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN) requires employers to give their workers 60 days notice before a plant closing or mass layoff. All employers are encouraged to provide notice to the State Dislocated Worker Unit as quickly as possible.

The RRR provides the initial outreach to companies that do not have organized labor. As specified by the Bureau of Employment Services, initial contact with companies having organized labor will be performed by a representative of the Maine AFL-CIO. Close coordination is required between the Maine AFL-CIO and the area RRR to develop appropriate and timely responses to dislocations.

Aside from the "Plant Brief," companies are also apprised of the Trade Adjustment Assistance/Trade Readjustment Assistance and Alternative Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA/TRA/ATAA) program along with the Health Coverage Tax Credit (HCTC) if the downsizing is the result of foreign imports.

**3. How is the Local Board’s workforce investment system working collaboratively with business and industry and the education community to develop strategies to overcome barriers to skill achievement and employment experienced by the populations listed in paragraph (a.) above and to ensure they are being identified as a critical pipeline of workers?**

During the past five years the Tri-County Workforce area has undergone a major economic shift from a manufacturing based economy to a more service sector based economy and has experienced several plant closures and lay-offs affecting many of those populations referenced in the question above. Through all of this, the Board and the CareerCenter system has had to develop strategies from an educational, vocational and life-skills arena to address barriers to skill achievement and employment in order to re-introduce individuals to a new work environment or a first-time work environment as a result of this shift.

To ensure successful re-entry of many of these populations into the workforce with the skill competencies necessary for today’s work environment, partnerships with rudimentary and basic-skills education partners, post-second education, business and industry associations and community-based agencies are necessary to develop pathways to success for those populations. Teams have been formed to address these issues initially as a result of the emergency need, and less as a pro-active effort to deal with these issues in the future as a result of the massive dislocations that have occurred. The Board and CareerCenter system have improved the process to assimilate and utilize Labor Market Information to design training and job matching strategies. Case management has been tied to Employer Assistance services to ensure an Individual Service Plan encompasses training relevant to job demand in the region. Partnerships with businesses and industries have been developed to ascertain their workplace needs and to promote the CareerCenter system as a viable option to acquire skilled workers through quality referrals of people who meet their needs. Thus, it is not one strategy, but multiple strategies in play to ensure that these groups of persons are identified as critical components for future training and employment opportunities in our region.

**4. Describe will the Local Board ensure that the full array of One-Stop services are available to individuals with disabilities and that the services are fully accessible?**

Like most One-Stop Centers, CareerCenters in the Tri-County region are responding to a number of issues and barriers involving integrated services for workers with disabilities. The Bureau of Rehabilitation Services is a partner in three of the five CareerCenters in the region: Bangor, Dover-Foxcroft and Ellsworth. During the last year, a planning grant to explore a system- and community-based approach to integration of services for people with disabilities successfully led to the ABLE ME grant, which now begins implementation in key CareerCenters in Maine. Target Centers in Maine have begun to look closely at the accessibility of equipment, the barriers between service providers, and implementation of participatory solutions.

## **K. Priority of Service**

- 1. What procedures and criteria are in place under 20 CFR 663.600 for the local board to direct CareerCenters to give priority of service to public assistance recipients and other low-income individuals for intensive and training services if funds allocated to a local area for adult employment and training activities are determined to be limited? (§§112(b)(17)(A)(iv) and134(d)(4)(E).)**

The Tri-County Workforce Board has developed and implemented the following Priority of Service and Waiting List Policy which is reviewed annually and modified as needed.

### **TRI-COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD**

Policy Number: 00-01  
Effective Date: January 01, 2001  
Revision Number: 01  
Revision Date: April 6, 2005

#### **Title: Workforce Investment Act Priority of Service for Adults Youth and Dislocated Workers and Waiting List Policies**

**Purpose:** To describe eligibility, and priority of service criteria for adults, youth, and dislocated workers to participate in intensive services, training activities and youth activities funded by the Workforce Investment Act; and To describe "waiting list" policies and procedures for intensive and training services.

#### References

P.L. 105-220, Workforce Investment Act, §101, 121 and 134.  
Federal Register, April 15, 1999 (Volume 64, No. 72) U.S. Department of Labor  
Workforce Investment Act; Final Rule, 20 CFR Part 63, Subpart F.

### **Priority of Service Policy Statement**

The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) describes a continuum of workforce development services for adults and dislocated workers that begins with a basic set of core information, self-help and staff assisted services that function as a gateway to more intensive services and training activities. WIA states in the event that funds allocated to a local area for adult employment and training activities are limited, priority for intensive and training services funded with Title I adult funds must be given to recipients of public assistance and other low income individuals in the local area.

In addition to the WIA priorities for services the Tri-County Local Workforce Investment Board service delivery system recognizes and purposely attempts to assist customers who are economically disadvantaged and have one or more “target barriers” to employment or who are “dislocated workers.” It is likely that customers who cannot find employment through core and

intensive services will logically be those with substantial barriers to employment. The key customer characteristics-target barriers are primarily applicable to the WIA Adult and Youth populations. For adults this includes; lacks current work history, veteran's, basic skills deficient, single parent, offender, homeless, high school drop-out or possess one or more disabilities.

For Youth target barriers include deficient in basic literacy skills, school dropout, homeless, runaway, foster child, pregnant or parenting, offender and an individual (including a youth with a disability) who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program. Dislocated workers include applicants who were laid off from their last primary occupation.

The following statement of policy is adopted by the Tri-County Workforce Investment Board to provide direction and guidance for establishing operational procedures needed to enable adult, youth and dislocated worker access to WIA funded services.

- Core services will be universally accessible to everyone who chooses to access them - regardless of registration requirement;
- Access to intensive services and training activities funded by Title I adult and dislocated worker WIA funds allocated to the Tri-County will be limited to residents of the three county area identified as most in need of such services and training. At a minimum, most in need for Title I adult funding is defined as recipients of public assistance or other low-income individuals with barriers to employment. Low-income individual will be defined in accordance with §101 of the Workforce Investment Act. Priority for services will be as follows:
  1. First priority for intensive and training services will be given to unemployed recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals (100% LLSIL) who have barriers to employment.
  2. Second priority, should funds be available will be given to other unemployed individuals with barriers determined by the CareerCenter staff to be in need of intensive or training services in order to obtain or retain employment that allows for economic viability. This includes underemployed individuals who have exhausted their cash benefits or whose income falls below 100% of LLSIL for the area; and
  3. Third priority, should funds still be available after priority services have been provided to low-income individuals and recipients of public assistance, will include any other unemployed, underemployed, or employed individuals in need of intensive services and training services to obtain or retain employment that allows for economic viability.
- Access to youth activities funded by Title I WIA funds allocated to the Tri-County will be limited to residents of the three counties. All other youth eligibility and priority criteria will be in accordance with the requirements established by the WIA, pertinent regulations and Maine State Policy.

## Waiting List Policy

The Tri-County CareerCenters will make a conscientious effort to invite all customers who demonstrate a significant need for WIA Title I services to participate in its services. Through a common intake process, all customers must apply for and “qualify” for WIA programs in order to receive intensive and training level services.

As we work to leverage funding and resources among partners and other sources to build a truly comprehensive workforce development system, we recognize that funding under WIA is limited. In order to develop a system capacity to accommodate larger number of core service customers, while meeting individual needs through intensive and training services (based on the above listed priority guidelines) a waiting list for intensive and training services will be established in each Tri-County CareerCenter location.

Each CareerCenter will maintain an accurate listing of all applicants for intensive and training services "by date of registration" and will offer services to individuals who meet the above listed priorities in order of their registration for such services.

The waiting list in each CareerCenter will be updated periodically to remove individuals who are no longer interested or available for intensive or training services.

This statement of policy will remain in effect until such time that it is revised or rescinded by the Tri-County Workforce Investment Board.

- 2. What policies and strategies does the Local Board have in place to ensure that, pursuant to the Jobs for Veterans Act (P.L.107-288)(38 USC 4215), that priority of service is provided to veterans (and certain spouses) who otherwise meet the eligibility requirements for all employment and training programs funded by the U.S. Department of Labor, in accordance with the provisions of TEGL 5-03 (9/16/03)?**

In order to ensure priority of service to veterans and certain spouses, CareerCenters will make referrals to the Training & Development Corporation staff and other service and training partners. CareerCenters will also consider other activities such as:

- Create and maintain a veterans services display area in the lobby,
- DVOPs and/or LVERs make presentations at staff meetings to inform staff about veterans services updates, and
- Write press releases announcing services to businesses and veterans.

### **L. Describe the process involved in carrying out Rapid Response activities.**

- 1. What methods are involved in receiving notice of impending layoffs (include WARN Act notice as well as other sources)?**

Notices of impending layoffs occur from many sources and in a variety of ways.

- Companies that have worked with us in the past, contact us when dislocation is about to occur;
  - Workers who have been laid off contact the CareerCenter of their choice and inform the staff that dislocation either has or is about to occur;
  - Sometimes the newspaper, television or other media inform the department of potential layoffs (this includes state and local legislative representatives);
  - Familiarity with a company's hiring procedures and yearly layoffs due to seasonal demands;
  - Familiarity with companies who have laid off in the past and who are still at risk due to the widening practice of foreign trade;
  - Employer Assistance Staff (aka Employer Services) who are in daily contact with business needs;
  - Notice from the Maine AFL/CIO of Union companies through their local union shop stewards;
  - The Unemployment Insurance generated list of those drawing UI benefits—local and/or statewide;
  - The Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN) that offers protection to workers, their families and communities by requiring employers to provide notice 60 days in advance of covered plant closings and mass layoffs. This notice is triggered if:
    - Plant Closing: An employment site will be shut down, and the shutdown will result in an employment loss for 50 or more employees during any 30-day period. This does not count employees who have worked less than 6 months in the last 12 months or employees who work an average of less than 20 hours a week for that employer;
    - Mass Layoff: A mass layoff which does not result from a plant closing, but which will result in an employment loss at the employment site during any 30-day period for 500 or more employees, or for 50-499 employees if they make up at least 33% of the employer's active workforce;
    - An employer also must give notice if the number of employment losses which occur during a 30-day period fails to meet the threshold requirements of a plant closing or mass layoff, but the number of employment losses for 2 or more groups of workers, each of which is less than the minimum number needed to trigger notice, reaches the threshold level, during any 90-day period, of either a plant closing or mass layoff.
- 2. What efforts does the Rapid Response team make to ensure that rapid response services are provided, whenever possible, prior to layoff date, onsite at the company, and on company time?**

Initial evaluation occurs at the plant planning session with the Rapid Response Team; i.e., type of dislocation, TAA/TRA/ATAA eligibility, need for Peer Support Worker(s), worker demographics and profiles, and strategic approach specific to the plant/worker needs. Evaluation continues with the "Needs Survey" conducted prior to or at the Rapid Response Session leading

to customized readjustment workshops. Companies are strongly encouraged to provide Rapid Response and Trade Sessions on site so that Rapid Response Teams can capture 100% of the workforce. Even on small dislocations, the emphasis is always on meeting the company on their own turf at a time convenient to the employer to provide the services. Most businesses are open to this effort and will release workers either at the beginning or end of a shift to participate in the sessions. As long as the Rapid Response Team is notified ahead of time of the dislocation, all efforts are made to provide an array of services on site from the initial planning to informational sessions to appropriate workshops specifically designed from the survey of worker needs.

**3. What services are included in Rapid Response activities? Does the Rapid Response team provide workshops or other activities in addition to general informational services to affected workers? How do you determine what services will be provided for a particular layoff (including layoffs that may be trade-affected)?**

The Rapid Response Sessions represent the initial vehicle to provide outreach and share information about CareerCenter services (reemployment, readjustment and/or retraining), Business Startups, Unemployment Insurance, Labor Market Analysis, Consumer Credit Protection, Educational Offerings through Local Educational Institutions, Health Coverage Options, and General Assistance and other programs offered through the Department of Human Services. If a Trade Petition has been initiated, workers are informed that in the event they are certified, TAA/TRA/ATAA and HCTC workshops will also be offered. If the company is unionized, the Maine AFL/CIO participates at all levels of Rapid Response Services. At the end of the Rapid Response Session, workers are given a time and date to go to the CareerCenter for continuity of services. Once there, a short orientation to the Information Center determines if workers desire Level I Services (job seeking skills; i.e., resume, interviewing etc.), Retraining, and/or Reemployment. If applicable, assessment (educational and aptitude) will be provided prior to closing. Otherwise it will be provided at the CareerCenter along with interest testing. Career assessment and related workshops (i.e., transferability of skills) assist individuals in focusing the level of skill needed for career choices.

Customized readjustment workshops are offered based on results of the “Needs Surveys” conducted either prior to or at the Rapid Response Session(s). In addition, Job, Education, and Resource Fairs may be available as well as job postings from related industries—oftentimes at the plant prior to layoff. CareerCenters now offer periodic Job Fairs with many employers taking applications on site.

In the event of a major dislocation (i.e., at least 70 workers), the Jumpstart Model is initiated and a Community Action Team (CAT) plans the series of services workers will receive based on the workers demographic, education, social, and economic needs. These services are usually offered onsite prior to layoff and may include assessment, workshops designed from the worker surveys, and other resources offered by community partners and businesses to ease their transition to new employment or retraining options through self-employment, OJT, Apprenticeship, or traditional schooling.

When fifty (50) or more are dislocated from a company, the Rapid Response Team explores the need to hire Peer Support Worker(s) as well as the need for a National Emergency Grant if workers are not trade affected. The Local Workforce Investment Board then starts the process of securing funding.

**4. How does the Local Board ensure a seamless transition between Rapid Response services and CareerCenter activities for affected workers?**

In the Tri-County Region, Rapid Response services are administered by the same organization that administers WIA funds. Due to the significant number of dislocation in this region, there has been a close collaboration and a major to deliver services to dislocated workers similar to, if not better than, the services being offered to other customers within our CareerCenters.

The skill sets of laid off workers are assessed to see how they transfer to other similar industries. However, the individual skill sets are also closely assessed to see where these transferable skills fit best. This is no different than what transpires in other WIA programs. Since nearly 60% of the workers initially indicate that they want a job with 40% desiring retraining/upgrading at some level, it is clear that as with WIA, the emphasis is on Reemployment.

As discussed in other sections, the Tri-County region has experienced major plant closures and dislocations over the past five years. Rapid Response programs are extremely active with these demands and offer a myriad of services to businesses/workers on site prior to workers connecting with their respective CareerCenters. This further ensures a seamless approach as much of the assessment and specialized workshops have already occurred by the time workers make the connection with CareerCenter staff to continue their individual plans.

The JumpStart approach is specifically designed to provide services in a timely fashion—from meeting with the company, pursuing a trade petition (if applicable), involving the union, filling our surveys prior to layoff if possible, and making the connection with CareerCenters in developing a plan of action. This includes setting up a series of workshops within a short period of time so workers can immediately access a menu of services. This is also important for writing National Emergency Grant for funding if necessary. For larger dislocations (70+), then Community Action Teams are instituted to provide additional services—many of which are community generated. Usually United Way, Town Officials, Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Agencies, Community Based organizations or other entities lead these groups. Job, Education, and Resource Fairs are usually part of this process as well as the use of Peer Support Workers. The Rapid Response Representative works in tandem with CareerCenter Managers in the provision of services to dislocated workers.

**M. Youth. ETA’s strategic vision identifies youth most in need, such as out of school youth and those at risk, youth in foster care, youth aging out of foster care, youth offenders, children of incarcerated parents, homeless youth, and migrant and seasonal farm worker youth as those most in need of service. Local Area programs and services should take a comprehensive approach to serving these youth, including basic skills remediation, helping youth stay in or return to school,**

**employment, internships, help with attaining a high school diploma or GED, post-secondary vocational training, apprenticeships and enrollment in community and four-year colleges. (§112(b)(18).)**

- 1. Describe your Local Board’s strategy for providing comprehensive, integrated services to eligible youth, including those most in need as described above. Include any State requirements and activities to assist youth who have special needs or barriers to employment, including those who are pregnant, parenting, or have disabilities. Include how the Local Board will coordinate across State agencies responsible for workforce investment, foster care, education, human services, juvenile justice, and other relevant resources as part of the strategy. (§112(b)(18).)**

The Workforce Investment Act calls for a “comprehensive strategy of services” to youth that includes multiple partners and strong connections to and integration with the workforce development system. The Tri-County LWIB and Youth Council is committed to developing a network of youth services that builds on the characteristics of a high performing youth development system. That system will have the following design features and capabilities:

*Comprehensive Service Network.* Our approach begins with creating a system that integrates youth services into a Youth Employability Network (YEN) wherein services can be provided in a way that is convenient to the customer. This design will also leverage existing facilities, programs and services to create a virtual One-Stop system for young people in the region so that they can be served at established and trusted community locations with which they or their peers have developed an on-going relationship. By locating and integrating youth services with the existing CareerCenters in the three counties we plan to establish a more comprehensive service network that will draw together the collective expertise and commitment of the region’s high-performing youth services providers. Rather than constructing new physical infrastructure, the Tri-County LWIB and Youth Council will identify youth program operators and services that can provide needed and high quality services in a cost-effective manner.

*Empowering information tools and choices.* Like many adults who have not learned to think strategically about career opportunities and job readiness, most youth who will be served by the Youth Employability Network are seeking improved economic well-being through employment. They are in need of better information about to achieve their own sustainable employability that requires them to have an enhanced understanding of how the labor market works; a better understanding of what resources and services are available to support them in preparing for a career; and practical instruction on how to act strategically to acquire necessary skills, navigate the labor market, and build a resume to get the kind of job they want. WIA Youth Services uses the CareerCenter with its extensive array of employment, career and employability resources to fill this information gap.

*Models for successful employment, and alternative ways to acquire the skills and competencies needed to get good jobs.* A major barrier to success at work, as well as in school, is the lack of role models and effective ways and models for youth to acquire the understanding of workplace expectations and requirements for developing competencies for success in a job and life-long

sustainable employability. For this reason the youth program design will stress practical exposure to and experience with real work and contemporary work environments. Youth living in our rural economy and region need access: an ability to get to workplaces that offer opportunities for work-based learning and entry-level jobs; and an ability to get hired into internships or entry jobs once they get there. New models and innovative work-based learning models will be encouraged to fill the gap in current institutional program services.

*Information and Referral Links.* Additional sites connected to the CareerCenter in each county including libraries, public housing developments, high schools, youth detention centers, community development corporations and neighborhood associations and other community based organizations will link into the Youth Employability Network to provide information and referral services for youth. Specific standards of access and user support will be established, to create high thresholds of quality in this second tier of sites.

*Connecting the CareerCenter with the rest of the Youth Service System: Ensuring Choice, Services Integration, Cost Effectiveness, and Accountability.* This approach will provide our customers with an optimal combination of individual choice and quality assurance within a framework that ensures program integrity, integration, and program and resource accountability. This distributive service system offers convenience; it also requires an efficient and rigorous management and accountability system, which the CareerCenter already has in place. The design will be a cost-effective, efficient way to marshal resources and services, supplemented by additional employment and training related services weaving them into a cohesive service strategy that can transform the individual's academic success and employment opportunities. Additional customization to address needs of youth and service providers will permit us to create a highly accountable service system that provides more convenient services, closer to home, with greater choice among providers, than would be possible in a delivery system that relied on only three or four CareerCenters.

*Qualifying vendors in the Tri-County Youth Employability Network.* An extensive network of qualified vendors who join the Youth Employability Network will provide training, supportive services and follow-up. This service system will ensure high quality services for every participant and choice among a variety of convenient and appropriate services and service providers.

The Youth Employability Network's organizational and service delivery backbone is the CareerCenter which provides staff and services that supports and improves the performance of youth and equips them to manage their work lives. The CareerCenter combines planning, assessment, and high-impact, immersion learning experiences – the core services of a one-stop career center – with a personalized support system which participants can access over the Internet from home, work and at participating businesses, agencies, institutions, libraries, faith and community-based organizations and recreation centers. Youth Plan Managers who will be located at each CareerCenter will be responsible to ensure that comprehensive guidance and counseling services are delivered including the following:

- Outreach and recruitment of younger (aged 14 – 18) and older (aged 19-21) who are either in-school age youth or out-of-school youth. The YEN will connect with an extensive network of existing providers of services to reach out to target populations identified by ETA/WIA as those most needing employment and training assistance and to establish appointments for youth for eligibility determination, enrollment and orientation. The YEN will also develop magnet activities to attract out-of-school and hard to serve youth;
- Determine and verify eligibility information. Eligibility information will be collected for each applicant in the format prescribed by the state's One Stop Operating System (OSOS);
- Provide an objective assessment of each eligible youth. Plan managers are responsible for assembling existing assessment data and determining what additional assessment information is needed, ordering and scheduling assessments, and assisting participants in interpreting results and using them to help inform the building of their Individual Learning Plan or Individual Services Strategy. The assessment will include a review of the academic and occupational skill levels, prior work experience, employability, interests, aptitudes, supportive service needs, and developmental needs of each youth. A new assessment of the youth is not required if it is determined appropriate to use a recent assessment of the youth conducted by another education or training program (e.g., Job Corps);
- Develop an Individual Learning Plan or Individual Service Strategy for each youth participant including identifying an employment goal, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate services for the youth taking into account the results of the objective assessment;
- Provide preparation for post-secondary educational opportunities, provide linkages between academic and occupational learning, provide preparation for employment, and provide effective connections to intermediary organizations that provide strong links to the job market and employers; and
- Track attainment of objectives specified in the youth's Individual Service Strategy.

The Tri-county Youth Program has entered into agreements with other state agencies to provide services to specific target populations (i.e., offenders and youth in or leaving the foster care system). The YEN will also include education and training providers, providers of the elements of youth services, and those organizations and agencies most likely to refer appropriate youth to the Career Center for employment assistance. Training & Development Corporation operates the DOL Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker program within the State of Maine. Our experience in working with this target population will be beneficial in WIA Youth efforts to reach and serve farmworker youth.

**2. Describe how the coordination with Job Corps and other youth programs will occur. (§112(b)(18)(C).)**

Where appropriate, the WIA Youth program will enter into Memorandums of Understanding with partner youth services to ensure the Tri-County's program design incorporates the following features:

- The program design will provide for the ten required program service elements in all geographic areas within the region;
- Through the YEN, linkages will be more firmly established with schools, community agencies and other youth programs to extend and enhance learning opportunities and provide a comprehensive approach to serve youth with special needs and barriers to employment, including youth who are parenting/pregnant, youth with disabilities, youth offenders, children of incarcerated parents, youth in foster care or aging out of foster care, migrant and seasonal farmworkers, youth with low attainment of basic skills, youth with poor or no work history and others identified by the LWIB as meeting priority of service classifications;
- Services for both in-school and out-of-school youth are organized and delivered;
- Services reflect plans for youth and young adults aging through the program to ensure that the intensity and method of service delivery is appropriate to their needs; and
- Leveraging of funds will occur to support the payment of wages and supportive service needs of participants.

The Tri-County LWIB enjoys a close and productive relationship with Job Corp that is already strong and effective in co-case managing youth and in conducting joint efforts for recruitment, enrollment, service plan design and delivery and placement – including internships, work experience, work-based learning and unsubsidized employment. WIA Youth Plan Managers are well-trained in the content and benefits of Job Corps for Maine youth and young adults. They engage in joint recruitment strategies and assist youth and young adults to make sound decisions regarding the selection of a training program such as Job Corps.

Ongoing coordination with Job Corps and other youth programs will be the responsibility of the Youth Services Program Manger and the Youth Council through the YEN and specified agreements with providers. Joint outreach, recruitment, enrollment, service delivery, and placement will be the norm. Records and tracking will be coordinated through the OSOS and partner information management systems. Participant privacy and confidentiality remain primary concerns that must be addressed in any coordinated service delivery design. Signed releases of information and co-case management will be presented, explained and kept on file for each WIA Youth participant.

Currently, Training & Development Corporation, the Maine Department of Labor, and the four Local Workforce Investment Boards in partnership with Maine's Job Corps Centers have proposed a national demonstration project to recruit, admit and place Job Corps students in Maine through a statewide Youth Employability Network. The project will implement a systems design to connect USDOL's two primary youth employability programs—Job Corps and WIA youth—in ways that will improve the performance of both programs. TDC is proposing to prototype the YEN and the connection of WIA and job Corps programs within the Tri-County area in PY 2005. This design will significantly increase the ability of the Tri-County's WIA Youth programs to recruit disadvantaged youth, develop their employability, and support successful transitions to employment and post-secondary education.

To ensure higher rates of success in Tri-County labor market, WIA youth programs and Job Corps Centers need to keep ratcheting up the performance capabilities of these programs by connecting the two programs—coordinating, aligning, and integrating their respective services, co-enrolling some of their respective customers, leveraging complementary strengths, minimizing redundant effort, and reaching out to networks of other service agencies to leverage resources and services of the larger network.

The proposed project offers a systems approach to address each of these needs by prototyping new mechanisms as part of an integrated, youth development system throughout the Tri-County area. Outreach and recruitment efforts of WIA and Job Corps will be coordinated, assessment mechanisms for evaluating, monitoring, documenting and certifying youth employability skills and competencies will be shared across programs, career development practices will be aligned, job development systems and practices will be aligned.

- 3. How does the Local Board plan to utilize the funds to support the State's and Local Area vision for serving youth? Examples of activities that would be appropriate investments of these funds include:**
- a. utilizing the funds to promote cross agency collaboration;**
  - b. demonstration of cross-cutting models of service delivery;**
  - c. development of new models of alternative education leading to employment;**  
**or**
  - d. development of demand-driven models with business and industry working collaboratively with the workforce investment system and education partners to develop strategies for bringing these youth successful into the workforce pipeline with the right skills.**
  - e. Describe how your Local Board will, in general, meet the Act's provisions regarding youth program design. (§§112(b)(18) and 129(c).)**

The Tri-County will utilize a comprehensive youth service provider, Training and Development Corporation, that will be providing services to majority of the WIA youth population through the CareerCenter. They will be responsible to the LWIB for ensuring that the ten required program elements listed above are provided to the youth they have assessed, developed individual strategies for, and enrolled. They may fulfill this responsibility directly or through contracts, agreements, or other means of procurement that incorporate to the maximum extent possible the

resources and capabilities of other youth service organizations in their respective areas of operation. The Youth Council and LWIB staff will work with the comprehensive service provider to facilitate such coordination.

**a. Utilization of funds to promote cross agency collaboration**

One of the primary purposes of the Youth Employability Network is the establishment and maintenance of operating guidelines and effective collaboration with local service providers. Funds will be used to engage in this purpose so that representatives of participating agencies can meet together to discuss strategies, program guidelines and outcomes, funding opportunities and limitations, co-case management and performance agreements and measurements. Consistent communication with all participating agencies is critical to ongoing success in this collaboration and the WIA Youth program will assume primary responsibility for maintaining good communication. The YEN will advertise for service providers when appropriate and will contract with partners when appropriate to ensure the full and effective delivery of the comprehensive youth services design to each youth in accordance with her or his Individual Service Strategy.

**b. Demonstration of cross-cutting models of service delivery**

Maine Reentry Network, Maine Department of Corrections and MDOL/BES/Tri-County WIA Youth Program

The Tri-county WIA Youth program is a primary partner in the Maine Youth Reentry project. This project is designed to provide comprehensive and integrated services to young people (aged 16 to 24) as they are released from the DOJ Corrections system. The WIA Youth and Adult programs are members of the network of providers to serve this high-risk population. The Youth Plan Manager will meet with a Reentry resident of Mountain View or Charleston prior to or shortly following release in order to conduct initial determinations of WIA eligibility, employability assessment, and probable benefits to the individual of participation in the WIA employment and training programs available.

A new Memorandum of Agreement between DOC and DOL partners is now in place (effective April 1, 2005) that provides specific guidance to the partners in operating this integrated service delivery initiative.

Maine Youth Opportunities Initiative, Maine Department of Health and Human Services Bureau of Child and Family Services (BCFS) and MDOL/BES/WIA Employment and Training

The Tri-County Youth program is a primary partner in the Youth Opportunities Initiative. This initiative is designed to provide coordinated services to youth aged 14 to 21 who are or have been in the foster care system in the areas of employment and training and financial literacy in order to enhance their successful transition to the workforce.

A new Memorandum of Agreement between BCFS and MDOL/BES is now in place to provide guidance and accountability in the provision of identified services to qualified and participating

youth. This new initiative is designed to serve one of the ETA target groups (youth in and leaving foster care) with coordinated services that will lead to sustainable employability and adult independent living skills for these young people.

### Jobs for Maine's Graduates and Upward Bound

Both Jobs for Maine's Graduates and Upward Bound serve in-school youth. Both programs are designed to encourage students to stay in school until graduation. Both programs encourage the development of basic employability skills, workplace readiness and maturing decision-making skills among their participants. Whether a young person opts to go from high school into the workforce or to post-secondary education, both of these WIA contracting programs connect youth with the importance of education in gaining sustainable employability for a lifetime.

### Maine Educational Opportunities Centers (MEOC)

MEOC is a long standing partner of the CareerCenter system in the Tri-County Area. In a partnership emphasizing cross referral and service integration and provision, MEOC and WIA programs endeavor to assist youth and adults (particularly first time college bound individuals) develop an education and employment plan leading to self-sufficiency. MEOC provides the following services for mutual customers: Essentials of College Planning, Career Exploration, Study Skills and Financial Aid application assistance. WIA services dovetail nicely within this partnership providing customers with career planning, education financial assistance, case management throughout the duration of the education period, and placement assistance upon graduation from college level programming.

### Integration of WIA Youth and Job Corps

Training & Development Corporation, the Maine Department of Labor and the four Local Workforce Investment Boards, in partnership with Maine's Job Corps Centers have proposed a national demonstration project to recruit, admit and place Job Corps students in Maine through a statewide Youth Employability Network (YEN). The project will implement a systems design to connect USDOL's two primary youth employability programs—Job Corps and WIA youth—in ways that will improve the performance of both programs. TDC is proposing to prototype the YEN and the connection of WIA and job Corps programs within the Tri-County area in PY 2005. This design will significantly increase the ability of the Tri-County's WIA Youth programs to recruit disadvantaged youth, develop their employability, and support successful transitions to employment and post-secondary education.

This national demonstration project includes several interconnected components:

Maine's Youth Employability Network—a new, statewide support framework for youth employability development. The YEN will connect the outreach, recruitment, assessment, intake, work experience and long-term placement activities of the Tri-County's WIA Youth and Job Corps programs to provide seamlessly integrated services for youth in these two programs. The Youth Employability Network will strengthen Outreach, Admissions and Placement of youth in

the Tri-County by creating efficiencies through alignment, coordination and integration of services, and by leveraging the efforts of a major new network of youth-serving agencies and organizations and youth-friendly employers. The Youth Employability Network will recruit more students for whom WIA is an effective intervention, provide better support for work-based learning, and support more successful transitions to work and post-secondary education.

Industry-specific employer networks and Work Opportunities—targeting businesses in high growth industry sectors as identified by USDOL ETA and the State of Maine. The Tri-County youth program will work with Penobscot Job Corps and other WIA partners to create a specialized business services network that will improve the alignment of occupational and employability content with employers' hiring requirements. The joint efforts of Job Corps, WIA Youth and other partners will to support a new, greatly expanded and more targeted work based learning program that: (a) accommodates employers' seasonal fluctuations in demand, (b) increases youth participants' qualifications for training-related employment, and (c) enables youth and their advocates to forge relationships with individual businesses that can lead to subsequent employment for qualified youth and young adults.

### **c. Development of new models of alternative education leading to employment**

The Tri-county Youth program has traditionally utilized Job Corps, SAD alternative education and adult education providers as the models of alternative education. These partnership will be continued and strengthened. There are now a number of new providers of alternative education with a dual focus on GED or high school diploma attainment and work readiness. Through the YEN, these providers will be invited to participate in providing cost-effective and successful educational and basic skills attainment to youth. The Individual Service Strategy that the youth writes in cooperation with his or her plan manager will incorporate both alternative education and methods of increasing work readiness, such as Work Experience, Internships, OJT and Job Shadowing that are designed to lead to regular unsubsidized employment. The business members of the YEN will assist in providing intermediary employment opportunities and regular employment at the conclusion of the development plan.

### **d. Development of demand-driven models with business and industry working collaboratively with the workforce investment system and education partners to develop strategies for bringing these youth successfully into the workforce pipeline with the right skills.**

The PY 2005 WIA Youth program will see a substantial shift in design and operation toward the direction of a demand-driven model that is based on actual business needs as described by local business representatives and that are reflective of the high growth industry sectors as described by the President and the Governor. All of the Tri-County WIA employment and training programs will make this same shift to include more emphasis on business needs for a ready and capable workforce in expanding business markets. The youth program will cooperate with other WIA program initiatives (described below) to accomplish the business strategy of the LWIB.

The Youth Employability Network has as one of its primary purposes the establishment of business relationships that support the goals of WIA for assisting youth and young adults to successfully move into the productive and stable workforce. One of the compelling features of the YEN is its ability to bring together, under the leadership and organization of the LWIB WIA Youth program, all the key players in the comprehensive service delivery model proposed here. These key players include representative from, government, business, education, training, social services, and faith and community based partners in providing the ten elements of youth services. The models of service delivery that come out of the YEN collaboration will be demand-driven and measured.

The WIA Youth program will move in a direction that primarily supports education, training, and subsidized work engagements in fields and with businesses that represent the high grow/high demand sectors of Maine's economy. In this way, both individual participants and the business community will be rewarded with workers who have gained a good measure of sustainable employability for the foreseeable future, and, the WIA funds supporting the youth programs will achieve a positive return on that investment.

**e. Describe how your Local Board will, in general, meet the Act's provisions regarding youth program design. (§§112 (b)(18) and 129(c).)**

The Tri-County Youth Council will maintain oversight of services through recommendation to the LWIB. The Youth Council will meet provisions of the Act through the creation of ad hoc committees to recommend program design strategies.

**N. Business Services. (§§112 (a) and 112(b)(2).) Provide a description of the state's strategies to improve the services to employers, including a description of how the Local Board intends to:**

**1. Determine the employer needs in the local areas and on a regional basis.**

The Tri-County Workforce Board utilizes a number of means to determine employer needs in the local and regional areas including: a combination of existing reports, Employer Assistance employer feedback, CareerCenter satisfaction surveys and employer forums.

The Board will utilize reports compiled by the University System, the Community College System, Trade Associations, the Department of Labor Division of Labor Market Information, U.S DOL Business Relations Group high-demand, high-growth employer data, and others to identify trends and issues for employer needs. The Employer Assistance representatives prepares monthly reports and also meet throughout the year and report on trends and employer needs in the local areas that each representative serves. The State of Maine also hires a firm to complete annual Individual and Employer Customer Satisfaction surveys which also reports findings from the Employer Community.

However, the major investment of time in the next two years will be holding small, informal forums with business throughout the three county regions to hear what their needs are now and

projected to be in the future so that strategies can be developed to enhance business retention, expansion and attraction in the region. Some of these forums may be developed as local human resources managers groups, may be structured by industry cluster or may be for general business in a defined region. The Board will be proactive in convening these meetings and will also invite partners from economic development, education and the CareerCenter Employer Assistance Division to attend. Findings will be shared with local, regional and statewide partners and used as the foundation to structure programs and strategies.

**2. Integrate business services, including Wagner-Peyser Act services, to employers through the CareerCenters.**

The State of Maine's CareerCenter system has integrated Wagner-Peyser staff and WIA staff to carry-out its business service strategy. The Maine Department of Labor contracts with the local Boards to carry-out Employer Assistance (Business Services) through-out the CareerCenters in each region. The Board then sub-contracts and negotiates local performance outcomes with the service provider of WIA services who designate a staff person called a Local Employer Assistance Representative (LEAP) to coordinate these business service activities. At the regional levels, Employer Assistance (Business services) Teams are integrated and fully-functional where the Lead Employer Assistance Representative from the WIA program oversees efforts between Regional Employer Assistance Representatives (REAPs) from the Wagner-Peyser (Labor Exchange) program. The LEAP and REAPs work in conjunction with a number of partners such as the Local Board, the State Employer Assistance Representative (SEAP), Job Corps, the Community College, private businesses, and other CareerCenter staff to integrate business services and strategies with others partners as offerings to employers via the One-Stop.

Over the next two years, demand-side activities will be the focus of the efforts of the CareerCenters in this region and internal and external partners will interface with the Employer Assistance Team to ensure that the workforce is being trained to meet the needs of local employers.

**O. Innovative Service Delivery Strategies (§112(b)(17)(A).)**

- 1. Describe innovative service delivery strategies the Local Board has or is planning to undertake to maximize resources, increase service levels, improve service quality, achieve better integration or meet other key Local Board goals. Include in the description the initiative's general design, anticipated outcomes, partners involved and funds leveraged (e.g., Title I formula, Statewide reserve, employer contributions, education funds, non-WIA State funds).**

A number of innovative service delivery strategies and programs have been developed by the Local Board in collaboration with other partners over the last two years. Plans for the upcoming two years include sustaining and expanding current initiatives and developing new initiatives and strategies. Some of these are discussed below:

(1) Hospitality Industry Training: A partnership between the Maine Highlands, the Greater Bangor Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Tri-County Workforce Investment Board and the Eastern Maine Community College formed to develop an innovative three-part training series for individuals working in the hospitality industry focusing on customer service skills, local and regional destination information and line-level skills training. The Board will continue to market and raise funds to support this training initiative with hopes to replicate it in other geographic areas or on a fee-for-service basis with individual employers.

(2) On-The-Job Training: An increased focus and emphasis for Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programming will be to promote On-the-Job Training opportunities with local employers in high-growth, high-demand occupations in the region.

(3) Worker Readiness Certification Program: The Local Board will partner with the State of Maine Department of Labor, the three other workforce boards, Adult Education and other partners to design and implement a Work Readiness Certificate to address basic and soft skills training to meet the needs of employers. This will address issues that workforce development hears from employers daily on “soft-skills” that are lacking from people entering the workforce.

(4) Tri-County Business Assistance CD: Last year the Tri-County CareerCenters designed a Business Assistance CD to give employers a “toolkit” of business resources available at the CareerCenters. The CareerCenters will continue to market business services with this resource, develop it into a web-based resource and add partner information to the CD.

(5) Tri-County Youth Employability Network: The Tri-County Youth Employability Network (YEN) has as a primary focus the development of enduring relationships between the WIA Youth program and the supply side and the demand side of employment for young people. On the supply side, the YEN will focus on building relationships with area service providers who serve or influence the youth that are eligible for WIA programming. These providers include State departments of Education and Health and Human Services, local social service providers, schools, alternative and adult education, colleges, occupational training providers, recreation departments, police and probation, and faith and community based organizations that serve youth and/or their families. On the demand side, the YEN will develop working relationships with area businesses that provide employment to younger workers, businesses in the high growth areas as identified by President Bush and Governor Baldacci, businesses whose corporate citizenship initiatives may include the provision of work-based learning experiences for youth, and other stakeholder businesses or business associations and networks. The YEN will focus on the needs of both youth and business and will seek the advice and feedback from both groups on the ongoing design of YEN partnerships and their strategic goals.

The YEN will work closely with the Tri-County business network team that operates on behalf of all WIA participant groups and businesses. An integrated approach to business outreach and services on behalf of all area businesses and WIA participants will streamline the process for businesses to partner with Workforce Investment activities and initiatives throughout the three - county region.

**P. Strategies for Faith-based and Community Organizations (§112(b)(17)(i).)**  
**Enhancing outreach opportunities to those most in need is a fundamental element of the demand-driven systems goal to increase the pipeline of needed workers while meeting the training and employment needs of those most at risk. Faith-based and community organizations provide unique opportunities for the workforce investment system to access this pool of workers and meet the needs of business and industry. Describe those activities to be undertaken to:**

- 1. increase the opportunities for participation of faith-based and community organizations as committed and active partners in the CareerCenter; and**

To increase faith-based and community organizations active participation in CareerCenter activities, every effort should be made to have at least one organization represented on the local board and/or staff from the CareerCenter can be active participants on the board of a community organization or volunteer for such an organization.

While the Tri-County region has enjoyed the participation of many community based organizations as collaborative partners this has not been the case for faith-based organizations. To try to increase participation by these organizations over the next two years, the Board will issue a request for vendors mailing to faith-based organizations throughout the region detailing what services are needed by customers of the CareerCenter. If an interested party replies a representative from the Board or CareerCenters will meet with them to see what collaborations can be formed and add them to the local area's vendor lists as a service agency.

- 2. expand the access of faith-based and community-based organizations' clients and customers to the services offered by the CareerCenters. Outline those action steps designed to strengthen local area collaboration efforts in conducting outreach campaigns to educate faith-based and community organizations about the attributes and objectives of the demand-driven workforce investment system. Indicate how these resources can be strategically and effectively leveraged in the Local Area to help meet the objectives of the Workforce Investment Act.**

To expand CareerCenter services to the clients of faith-based and community organizations, the following steps can be taken:

- Share CareerCenter information/activities through brochures, posters, e-mail announcements, etc. with all relevant local organizations,
- Create opportunities for training at their sites for staff and/or clients, regarding CareerCenter activities,
- Create opportunities for local businesses to recruit from the organizations' client base, if appropriate,
- In partnership with the local organizations, adult education programs, community colleges, etc., create training programs, based on business needs, for the clients, and,

- Share grant-writing/application development with the local organizations to create opportunities for additional programming, based on business needs.

## **Q. Performance and Accountability**

**The WIA requires the negotiation of core performance indicators for WIA Title I services for Adults, Dislocated Workers, Youth aged 19 - 21 and Youth aged 14 - 18. BES will negotiate local performance levels with each LWIB and State levels with the Department of Labor. This negotiation process will occur during the plan approval process. The negotiations between the State and the DOL will impact on local performance levels.**

- 1. Performance Indicators (Attachment) shows the expected performance levels for each of the national measures.**

See Pages 93-97

- 2. Describe the process used for developing the expected performance levels.**

The process used to develop the expected performance levels was a combination of a review of prior year's performance levels and negotiations with the State of Maine Department of Labor. A majority of the analysis was determined based on reviewing outcomes from prior years, determining service strategies and desired program outcomes for the next two years with service providers and then determining appropriate performance goals for the next two years.

- 3. How will these standards be evaluated and what corrective actions will be taken if the performance falls short of expectations?**

The required performance measures are monitored on a quarterly basis upon review of the quarterly reports. Additionally, service strategies are discussed and planned prior to the commencement of the plan year to meet desired outcomes. If the goals are not met on a quarterly basis, the Board will ask the service provider to provide a written explanation outlining why the goal has not been achieved and what steps will be implemented to ensure compliance with the goals and when the estimated date of compliance will be. In some instances the Board will also request the Maine Department of Labor to provide technical assistance to local service providers.

- 4. Describe the local area continuous improvement activities and how performance data will contribute to this process.**

The Maine Department of Labor, The Tri-County Workforce Board and the State of Maine's other three workforce Boards have agreed to work together as a system to promote continuous improvement opportunities to staff and systems development including how to analyze data and modify programs to achieve negotiated results. Staff training is done on an integrated basis between WIA funded staff and Wagner-Peyser staff to determine service strategies to achieve

each programs negotiated performance. Additionally, the Regional Department of Labor has provided training resources to the State of Maine from other organizations regarding performance data. Staff from the CareerCenters throughout Maine have attended these sessions and shared the information and strategies with local CareerCenter staff.

**5. Describe how the LWIB will measure progress of the attainment of your LWIB vision and goals.**

Over the next two years, the local board will set some measurable performance outcomes such as increasing the number of Job Postings within the CareerCenter, number of On-The-Job Training contracts developed, percentage of persons placed in employment paying a livable wage, etc. and will track these numbers to verify if goals were achieved. Each of the outcomes established will be done in the context of meeting the vision and goals of the Tri-County Workforce Board.

**R. Plan Input and Review Process**

**1. Describe how the LWIB: (1) consulted with and provided an opportunity for public comment on and input into the development of this local plan, and (2) how the LWIB will involve the public with the development of future local plan additions and modifications, including a comment period, prior to submittal to the State with the following key players:**

- a. Local Elected Officials and the Chief Local Elected Official in his/her partnership/approval role,**
- b. Representatives of Business,**
- c. Representatives of Labor,**
- d. One-Stop Mandatory Partners, and**
- e. Other Partners and Stakeholders.**

A DRAFT of the Tri-County Workforce Board's Local Area Plan will be completed and submitted to the Bureau of Employment Services by May 16, 2005. The DRAFT will be available on the LWIB web site [www.tricountywib.org](http://www.tricountywib.org) on May 16, and its availability will be announced it at least one area publication, the Bangor Daily News. Public Hearing notices with the WIA Plan and the website location were placed in three of the major newspapers in the Tri-County region: The Bangor Daily News, The Ellsworth American, and The Piscataquis Observer. The Public Hearing notice also stated the time and location of each hearing and a telephone number and e-mail address to address any comments and/or concerns. The public hearings in the Tri-County region were held on May 31, 2005 at the Ellsworth CareerCenter in Ellsworth, Maine; on June 01, 2005 at the Dover-Foxcroft CareerCenter in Dover-Foxcroft, Maine; and on June 02, 2005 at the Eastern Maine Development Corporation in Bangor, Maine. Comments at the public hearings are attached as Attachment F.

Responding to issues brought to its attention in scheduled Public Hearings, the Local Area Director and Staff will publish all comments on the Tri-County website and will work with the

local Board and staff to determine if changes to the Local Area Plan and specific policies will be made as a result of the comments received.

The Plan was developed in collaboration with a number of CareerCenter partners and WIA required partners. When the draft was completed, the plan was e-mailed to all Board members and required partners with a chance for input into the process. No comments were received. The plan was further reviewed and discussed at the June 9, 2005 quarterly board meeting at which time a motion to approve the plan as written was made and approved.

**2. Submit, as an attachment, any comments that express disagreement with the local WIA plan.**

Comments at the public hearings are attached as attachment F. There were no comments of disagreement with the plan.

**S. Assurances and Signatures**

Obtain signatures for the Local Area Certification form (in the Appendix) and include the following assurances with the plan.

- A. The Local Board, including the Chief Elected Official of the area, and providers receiving funds under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act will comply with the Fiscal Controls established in Section 184 of WIA.
- B. The Local Board and Chief Elected Official assure that they will comply with the nondiscrimination provisions of Section 188 of WIA, including an assurance that a Methods of Administration has been developed and implemented.
- C. The Local Board assures that it will collect and maintain data necessary to show compliance with the nondiscrimination provisions of Section 188 of WIA.
- D. The Local Board assures that Veterans will be afforded employment and training activities authorized in Section 134 of WIA.
- E. The Local Board assures that all WIA participants will be exposed to a full range of career choices, including orienting and giving women access to training and jobs with family supporting wages that women traditionally have not held.
- F. The Local Board assures that no funds received under the WIA will be used to assist, promote, or deter union organizing.
- G. The Local Board assures that it will comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.
- H. The Local Board assures that it developed this plan in consultation with the business community, labor organizations, and required partners.
- I. The Local Board assures that funds will be spent in accordance with the WIA legislation, regulations, written Department of Labor guidance, and all other applicable Federal and State laws.

**LOCAL AREA CERTIFICATION FORM**

This plan has been developed for the \_\_\_\_\_ Local Workforce Investment Area in accordance with the terms of the Workforce Investment Act of 1988.

**Approved for the Local Workforce Investment Board**

**Local Workforce Investment Board Chair**

Name (type or print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Approved for the Counties of the Workforce Investment Area**

**Chief Local Elected Official**

Name (type or print): \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Performance Indicators

APPLICABLE PROGRAM GROUP	WIA Requirement at Section 136(b)	LOCAL AREA PROPOSED PERFORMANCE GOALS		STATE PROPOSED PERFORMANCE GOALS	
		PY '05	PY '06	PY '05	PY '06
ADULT	<b>1. Adult Entered Employment Rate</b> (Of those adult exiters not employed at registration, the number who have entered employment by the end of the 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit) <i>Section 136(b)(2)(A)(i)(I)</i>	87%	88%	87%	88%
ADULT	<b>2. Adult Employment Retention Rate</b> (Of those adult exiters who are employed at registration or in the 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit, the number who are employed in the 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter after exit) <i>Section 136(b)(2)(A)(i)(II)</i>	84%	86%	84%	86%
ADULT	<b>3. Adult Earnings Gain Rate</b> (For those who are employed at registration or in the 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit, the total post-program earnings received in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarters after exit less the total preprogram earnings received in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarters before registration) <i>Section 136(b)(2)(A)(i)(III)</i>	\$2,400	\$3,100	\$2,400	\$3,100
ADULT	<b>4. Adult Employment and Credential Rate</b> (Of adult exiters who were enrolled in training, the number who are employed in the 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit and received a credential by the end of the 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter after exit) <i>Section 136(b)(2)(A)(i)(IV)</i>	63%	66%	63%	66%

APPLICABLE PROGRAM GROUP	WIA Requirement at Section 136(b)	LOCAL AREA PROPOSED PERFORMANCE GOALS		STATE PROPOSED PERFORMANCE GOALS	
		PY '05	PY '06	PY '05	PY '06
DISLOCATED WORKERS	<b>5. Dislocated Worker Entered Employment Rate</b> (Of those dislocated worker exiters, the number who have entered employment by the end of the 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit) <i>Section 136(b)(2)(A)(i)(I)</i>	89%	90%	89%	90%
DISLOCATED WORKERS	<b>6. Dislocated Worker Retention Rate</b> (Of those dislocated worker exiters who are employed in the 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit, the number who are employed in the 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter after exit) <i>Section 136(b)(2)(A)(i)(II)</i>	91%	93%	91%	93%
DISLOCATED WORKERS	<b>7. Dislocated Worker Earnings Replacement Rate</b> (For those dislocated worker exiters who are employed in the 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit, the total post-program earnings received in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarters after exit less the total preprogram earnings received in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarters before registration) <i>Section 136(b)(2)(A)(i)(III)</i>	-\$2,200	-\$2,000	-\$1,300	-\$1,200
DISLOCATED WORKERS	<b>8. Dislocated Worker Employment and Credential Rate</b> (Of the dislocated worker exiters who were enrolled in training, the number who are employed in the 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit and received a credential by the end of the 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter after exit) <i>Section 136(b)(2)(A)(i)(IV)</i>	65%	67%	65%	67%

APPLICABLE PROGRAM GROUP	WIA Requirement at Section 136(b)	LOCAL AREA PROPOSED PERFORMANCE GOALS		STATE PROPOSED PERFORMANCE GOALS	
		PY '05	PY '06	PY '05	PY '06
<b>YOUTH AGES 19 TO 22</b>	<b>9. Older Youth Entered Employment Rate</b> (Of those older youth exiters not employed at registration and do not move on to postsecondary education or advanced training, the number who have entered employment by the end of the 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit) <i>Section 136(b)(2)(A)(i)(I)</i>	81%	82%	81%	82%
<b>YOUTH AGES 19 TO 22</b>	<b>10. Older Youth Retention Rate</b> (Of those older youth exiters who are employed at registration or in the 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit and do not move on to postsecondary education or advanced training, the number who are employed in the 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter after exit) <i>Section 136(b)(2)(A)(i)(II)</i>	71%	72%	78%	81%
<b>YOUTH AGES 19 TO 22</b>	<b>11. Older Youth Earnings Gain Rate</b> (For those who are employed at registration or in the 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit and do not move on to postsecondary education or advanced training, the total post-program earnings received in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarters after exit less the total preprogram earnings received in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarters before registration) <i>Section 136(b)(2)(A)(i)(III)</i>	\$2,500	\$2,700	\$3,030	\$3,200

APPLICABLE PROGRAM GROUP	WIA Requirement at Section 136(b)	LOCAL AREA PROPOSED PERFORMANCE GOALS		STATE PROPOSED PERFORMANCE GOALS	
		PY '05	PY '06	PY '05	PY '06
<b>YOUTH AGES 19 TO 22</b>	<b>12. Older Youth Credential Rate</b> (Of the older youth exiters who were in employment, postsecondary education, advanced training by the end of the 1 <sup>st</sup> quarter after exit, the number who received a credential by the end of the 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter after exit) <i>Section 136(b)(2)(A)(i)(IV)</i>	55%	57%	55%	57%
<b>YOUTH AGES 14 TO 18</b>	<b>13. Younger Youth Skill Attainment Rate</b> (Of the total number of basic skills goals, work-related skills goals, and occupational skills goals for each registrant, the number of those skills attained) <i>Section 136(b)(2)(A)(iii)(IV)</i>	97%	98%	97%	98%
<b>YOUTH AGES 14 TO 18</b>	<b>14. Younger Youth Diploma or Equivalent Attainment Rate</b> (Of those younger youth exiters who registered without a diploma or equivalent, except those still in secondary school, the number who attained a diploma) <i>Section 136(b)(2)(A)(ii)(IV)</i>	62%	64%	62%	64%
<b>YOUTH AGES 14 TO 18</b>	<b>15. Younger Youth Retention Rate</b> (Of the younger youth who exited, except those still in secondary school, those who are in postsecondary education or advanced training or employment or military service or apprenticeship in the 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter following exit) <i>Section 136(b)(2)(A)(ii)(II)</i>	65%	67%	65%	67%
<b>PARTICIPANT</b>	<b>16. Customer Satisfaction</b> (Customer satisfaction of employers and participants with services received from the workforce investment activities) <i>Section 136(b)(2)(B)</i>	79%	80%	79%	80%

APPLICABLE PROGRAM GROUP	WIA Requirement at Section 136(b)	LOCAL AREA PROPOSED PERFORMANCE GOALS		STATE PROPOSED PERFORMANCE GOALS	
		PY '05	PY '06	PY '05	PY '06
EMPLOYER	<b>17. Customer Satisfaction</b> ( <i>Customer satisfaction of employers and participants with services received from the workforce investment activities.</i> ) Section 136(b)(2)(B)	74%	76%	74%	76%