

Susquehanna Workforce Network, Inc.



Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA)

Local Workforce Plan

For

Cecil and Harford Counties

2016 -- 2020

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## Background

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was signed into law July 22, 2014. WIOA became effective July 1, 2015, with full implementation on July 1, 2017. WIOA replaces the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and amends the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, the Wagner-Peyser Act, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

WIOA improves connections to employment and training opportunities that lead to economic prosperity for workers and their families. It strengthens engagement with the business community to align workforce system services and training programs to produce the needed skills resulting in qualified workers meeting business needs. Highlights of WIOA reforms to the workforce system include:

- Aligns federal investments to support job seekers and business
- Strengthens governing bodies that establish State, Regional and Local workforce priorities
- Helps businesses find workers with the necessary skills
- Aligns goals and increases accountability across the core programs
- Fosters regional collaboration to meet the needs of regional economies
- Targets workforce services to better serve job seekers

Section 108 of WIOA requires that each Local Board develop, in collaboration with core partners, and submit to the Governor, a 4-year Local Plan.

## Executive Summary

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Local Integrated Plan for Cecil and Harford Counties in Maryland is divided into ten sections.

### **Section 1: Strategic Planning**

This section identifies the vision, goals, economic and workforce information analysis, strategies and outcomes collectively identified for the Local Workforce Area.

### **Section 2: Alignment of the Local Workforce Development System**

The local workforce system will facilitate the alignment of multiple programs, funding streams and system objectives to ensure the workforce has the employability skills, occupational skills and education necessary to meet the needs of current and future employers.

### **Section 3: American Job Center Delivery System**

This section describes how services will be provided through an integrated delivery system for Cecil and Harford Counties.

**Section 4: Title I – Adult, Youth and Dislocated Worker Functions**

The employment and training services provided under Title I of the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act are described.

**Section 5: Wagner-Peyser Functions**

The implementation and operation of the “Amendments to Title III of the Wagner-Peyser Act”, of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is described.

**Section 6: Title II – Adult Education and Family Literacy Functions**

The implementation and operation of Title II, “Adult Education and Literacy”, of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is described.

**Section 7: Vocational Rehabilitation Functions**

The implementation and operation of Title IV, “Adult Education and Literacy”, of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is described.

**Section 8: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Functions**

The collaborative relationship between customers receiving public assistance and the workforce development system is described.

**Section 9: Jobs for Veterans State Grants Functions**

Veteran job seekers and the workforce development system is described.

**Section 10: Fiscal, Performance and Other Functions**

The accountability of the Susquehanna Workforce Board for fiscal and programmatic performance is described.

## List of Selected Acronyms

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
AEFL	Adult Education and Family Literacy
AJC	American Job Center
CASAS	Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems
CBO	Community Based Organization
CLEO	Chief Local Elected Official
DLLR	Department of Labor, Licensing & Regulation
DORS	Division of Rehabilitation Services
DVOP	Disabled Veteran Opportunity Program
DWDAL	Division of Workforce Development & Adult Learning
EARN	Employment Advancement Right Now
EDAB	Economic Development Advisory Board
EDC	Economic Development Commission
EEO	Equal Opportunity Officer
ETP	Eligible Training Provider
HBE	Harford Business Edge
HVAC	Heating, Ventilation & Air Conditioning
ETP	Eligible Training Provider
HBE	Harford Business Edge
HVAC	Heating, Ventilation & Air Conditioning
ITA	Individual Training Account
LMB	Local Management Board
LMI	Labor Market Information
LVER	Local Veteran Employment Representative
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSF	Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers
MWE	Maryland Workforce Exchange
NAWB	National Association of Workforce Boards
OJT	On-the-Job Training
POS	Priority of Service
RAMP MD	Regional Additive Manufacturing Partnership of Maryland
RFP	Request for Proposal
RSA	Resource Sharing Agreement
SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
TABE	Tests of Adult Basic Education
TANF	Temporary Aid to Needy Families
TCA	Temporary Cash Assistance
WIOA	Workforce Innovation & Opportunities Act

## Local Plan Requirements

### Section1: Strategic Planning

This section should include a description of the strategic planning elements consisting of –

- (A) An analysis of the regional economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and the employment needs of businesses in those industry sectors and occupations. The analysis should identify local priority industries based on employer (and WIOA partner) input.

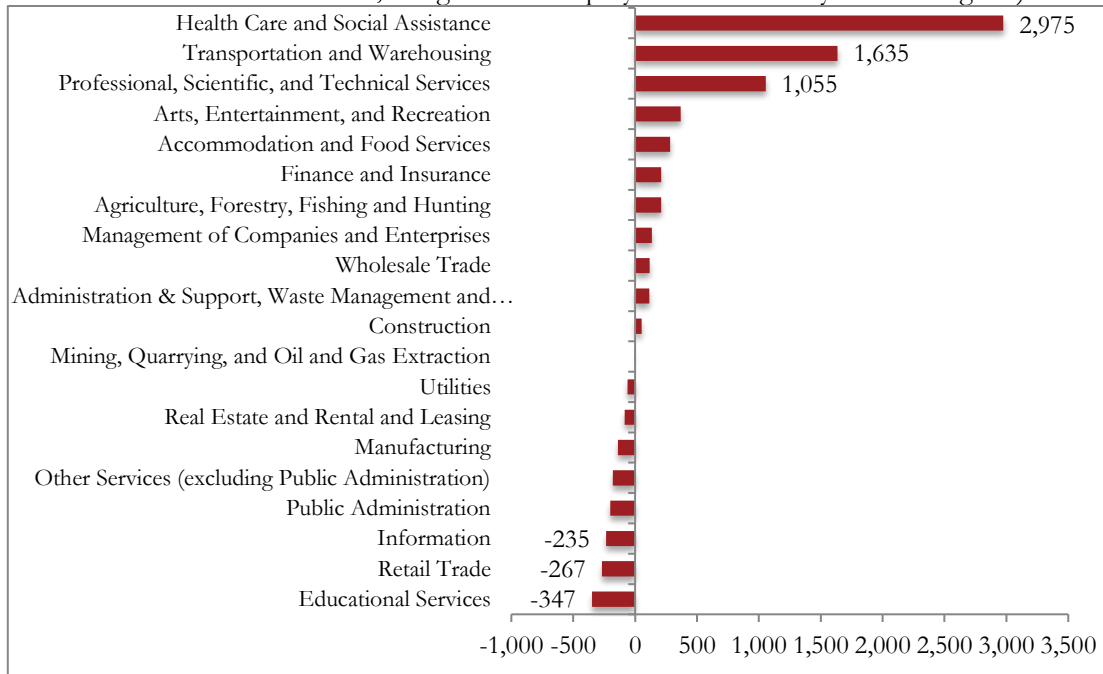
#### **Evidence of Job Growth and Job Openings**

The U.S. economic recovery, which began during the summer of 2009, is now in its eighth year. By this point in the business cycle, one would expect steady job growth and low unemployment rates. Indeed, this is precisely what one observes in the Susquehanna Workforce Area of Maryland, which encompasses Harford and Cecil counties.

The U.S. Census Bureau defines Harford County as being part of the Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD metropolitan statistical area. Cecil County is defined as being part of the Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington metropolitan statistical area and part of the Wilmington, DE-MD-NJ metropolitan division, which includes Cecil County, MD, Salem County, NJ, and New Castle County, DE.

Exhibit 1 (data from U.S. Census Bureau, Longitudinal-Employer Household Dynamics Program) indicates that job growth has been broad-based in recent years. Though a handful of sectors lost jobs during this period, including retail trade, data regarding job openings indicate that as of 2016, there continues to be net demand for human capital.

Exhibit 1. Growth in Susquehanna Region Employment by Industry Sector, 2011-2014 (U.S. Census Bureau, Longitudinal-Employer Household Dynamics Program)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau. OnTheMap Application. Longitudinal-Employer Household Dynamics Program. Notes: 1. Numbers represent individuals employed in, though not necessarily living in, the geographic area. 2. Numbers represent *primary* jobs, not total jobs. Primary Jobs: Public and private-sector jobs, one job per worker. A primary job is the highest paying job for an individual worker. 3. Susquehanna Region is comprised of Cecil County and Harford County.

Exhibit 2 supplies detail regarding job openings in Maryland’s workforce regions. These figures are not adjusted by population. If they were, the data would show that the number of job openings in the Susquehanna Workforce Region is similar to the number of job openings in other areas per 1,000 people. As of July 2016, the Susquehanna Region was associated with 15.5 job openings per 1,000 people, only a bit less than Western Maryland (16.1) and Southern Maryland (15.9), and greater than the Lower Shore (15.4) and Prince George’s County (14.4).

Exhibit 2. Job Openings by Workforce Region (as of July 11, 2016)

Rank	Workforce Region	Job Openings
1	Baltimore City Workforce Region	23,368
2	Montgomery County Workforce Region	22,630
3	Mid-Maryland Workforce Region	14,079
4	Baltimore County Workforce Region	13,639
5	Anne Arundel Workforce Region	13,048
6	Prince George’s County Workforce Region	12,868
7	Frederick County Workforce Region	5,653
8	Southern Maryland Workforce Region	5,558
9	Susquehanna Workforce Region	5,504
10	Western Maryland Workforce Region	4,071

Source: Maryland Workforce Exchange, Labor Market Information available at:

<https://mwejobs.maryland.gov/vosnet/lmi/default.aspx>. Job Source: Online advertised jobs data.

Notes: 1. The table above shows the workforce development regions with the highest number of job openings advertised online in Maryland on July 11, 2016 (Jobs De-duplication Level 2). 2. Jobs De-duplication Level 2: high level de-duplication of advertised jobs (for statistical analysis).

### **Existing Business & Employer Characteristics**

Among other things, Exhibits 3 and 4 jointly indicate that the Susquehanna Region is dominated by businesses with fewer than 50 employees. While this is not unusual, it is instructive. Small businesses continue to disproportionately generate new employment opportunities and often have different needs from their labor force than larger employers. While larger employers have the ability to create specialized positions that emphasize one or two primary skills, small employers often need people who are extremely versatile, often engaging in sets of activities that are largely unrelated.



Exhibit 3. Susquehanna Region, Private Sector Establishments by Size, 2014

Establishment Size	# of Establishments			% of Total Establishments
	Cecil County	Harford County	Total Susquehanna	
Micro (0-9 employees)	1,336	3,967	5,303	74.2%
Small (10-49 employees)	362	1,159	1,521	21.3%
Medium (50-99 employees)	37	152	189	2.6%
Large (100-499 employees)	30	92	122	1.7%
Largest (500+ employees)	6	7	13	0.2%
<b>Total</b>	1,771	5,377	7,148	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, County Business patterns.

Exhibit 4. Susquehanna Region Business Establishments by Industry, Calendar Year 2015

Industry	Average # of Reporting Units	% of Total Reporting Units
TOTAL ESTABLISHMENTS	7,775	99.9%
<i>Government Sector</i>	204	2.6%
Federal Government	77	1.0%
State Government	18	0.2%
Local Government	109	1.4%
<i>Private Sector (All Industries)</i>	7,571	97.4%
Goods-Producing	1,333	17.1%
Natural Resources and Mining	85	1.1%
Construction	1,026	13.2%
Manufacturing	222	2.9%
Service Providing	6,234	80.2%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	1,656	21.3%
Information	55	0.7%
Financial Activities	703	9.0%
Professional and Business Services	1,490	19.2%
Education and Health Services	854	11.0%
Leisure and Hospitality	756	9.7%
Other Services	720	9.3%

Source: Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR), Maryland Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW). Note: figures presented represent the sum of Cecil County and Harford County.

Though small employers dominate the establishment count, their share of employment in the Susquehanna Region is much smaller. In large measure, this is because there is one standout (at least in terms of size) employer in the Susquehanna Region, and that is Aberdeen Proving Ground. It is estimated that in 2015, the Proving Ground employed approximately 22,800 people, not all of whom are federal employees. By itself, that represents almost 19 percent of Susquehanna regional employment (recent data from the Maryland Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages program indicate the presence of about 120,544 jobs in the region). Therefore, no discussion of skills in demand can be complete without a comprehensive overview of the needs of Aberdeen Proving Ground.

Exhibit 5. Major Employers in the Susquehanna Region

Rank	Company	Number Employed	Product/Service	Industry
<b>Cecil County</b>				
1	W. L. Gore & Associates	2,405	Medical products/R&D	Manufacturing
2	Perry Point VA Medical Center*	1,500	Medical services	Health care
3	Union Hospital/ Affinity Health System	1,236	Medical services	Health care
4	IKEA	580	Home furnishings distribution	Wholesale trade
5	Cecil College	515	Higher education	Educational services
6	Walmart	500	Consumer goods	Retail trade
7	Orbital ATK	464	Propellants, rocket motors	Manufacturing
8	Terumo Medical Products	342	Medical products / R&D	Manufacturing
9	Penn National Gaming/ Hollywood Casino	334	Casino gaming	Arts, entertainment and recreation
10	Terumo Cardiovascular Systems	297	Medical products / R&D	Manufacturing
<b>Harford County</b>				
1	Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG)*	<b>22,797</b>	Military installation; R&D	Federal government
2	Upper Chesapeake Health (UCH)	3,129	Medical services	Health care
3	Rite Aid Mid-Atlantic Customer Support Center	1,300	Pharmaceuticals & health-related consumer goods distribution	Transportation and warehousing
4	Kohl's	1,255	Consumer goods distribution & retailing	Retail trade
5	ShopRite of Maryland	1,000	Groceries	Retail trade
6	Walmart	900	Consumer goods	Retail trade
7	Jacobs Technology	874	Laboratory analyses	Professional services
8	Jones Junction Auto Group	563	Car dealers	Retail trade
9	Target	500	Consumer goods	Retail trade
10	Wegmans Food Markets	499	Groceries	Retail trade

Source: Maryland Department of Commerce; Cecil County Office of Economic Development; Harford County Office of Economic Development (October 2015). Note: Excludes post offices, state and local governments; includes public higher education institutions.

\*Employee counts for federal and military facilities exclude contractors to the extent possible; embedded contractors may be included.

Exhibit 6 provides data regarding Susquehanna Region employment by industry. Note that though Aberdeen Proving Ground is estimated to employ more than 22,000 people, total federal employment in the region is in the range of 13,000. This is because many of the employees at the Proving Ground work for private contractors, many of whom are represented in the professional services sector.

Exhibit 6. Susquehanna Region: Employment by Industry, Calendar Year 2015 (Maryland Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages Program)

Industry	Annual Average Employment	% of Total Employment
TOTAL EMPLOYMENT	120,544	100.0%
<i>Government Sector</i>	26,797	22.2%
Federal Government	13,012	10.8%
State Government	1,137	0.9%
Local Government	12,648	10.5%
<i>Private Sector (All Industries)</i>	93,747	77.8%
Goods-Producing	16,906	14.0%
Natural Resources and Mining	1,178	1.0%
Construction	6,782	5.6%
Manufacturing	8,946	7.4%
Service Providing	76,841	63.7%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	26,634	22.1%
Information	489	0.4%
Financial Activities	3,709	3.1%
Professional and Business Services	12,144	10.1%
Education and Health Services	15,597	12.9%
Leisure and Hospitality	14,517	12.0%
Other Services	3,751	3.1%

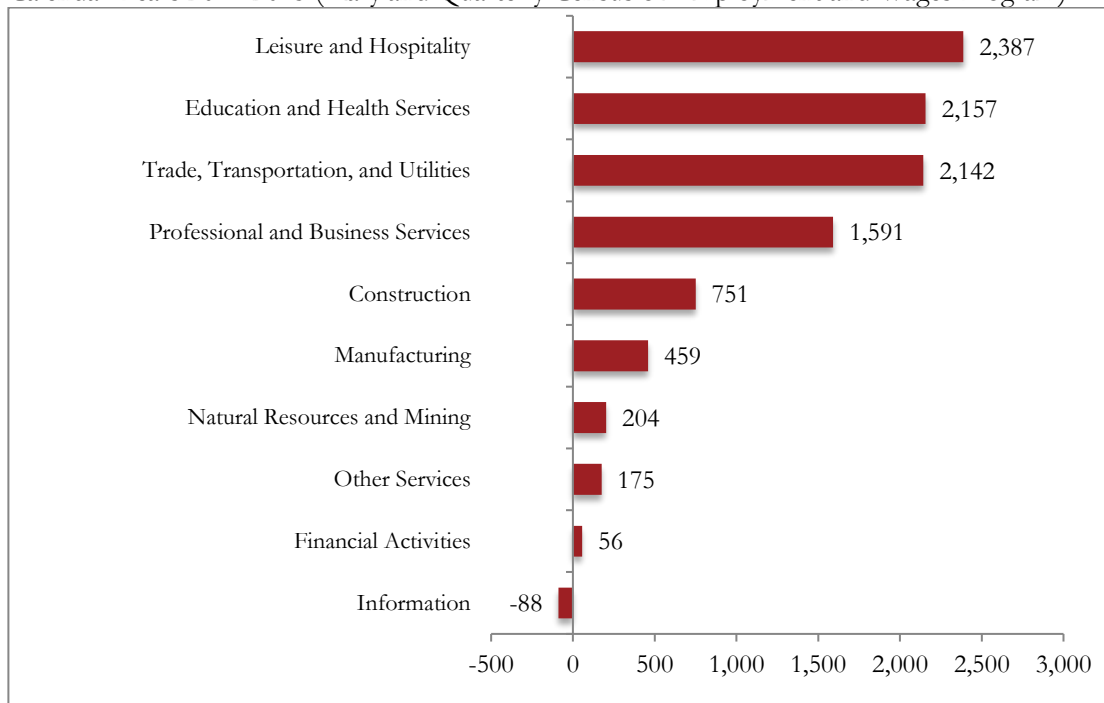
Source: Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR), Maryland Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program. Note: figures presented represent the sum of Cecil County and Harford County.

## Emerging and In-Demand Industry Sectors & Occupations

Arguably, the principal objective of workforce development professionals is to help place people into occupations that neatly fit their skills. Of course, skills can be added. Those skills related occupational categories. Exhibit 7 (data from Maryland’s Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages program) provides statistical detail regarding private employment growth in the Susquehanna Region between 2011 and 2015. The data stand for the proposition that the lion’s share of private sector job growth is in services, particularly leisure and hospitality (primarily hotels and restaurants), education and health services, distribution (otherwise known as trade, transportation and utilities), and professional services.

Given the expansion of information technology and the spread of disruptive technologies, observers may be surprised by the job loss attached to the information category. However, that segment includes traditional information dissemination segments such as radio stations, newspapers, and magazines. These segments have not been sources of job creation in many years, and in fact have in many instances been negatively impacted by the emergence of online information dissemination and advertising platforms.

Exhibit 7. Growth in Susquehanna Region Private Sector Employment by Industry, Calendar Years 2011-2015 (Maryland Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages Program)



Source: Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR), Maryland Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program. Note: figures presented represent the sum of Cecil County and Harford County.

Exhibits 8 and 9 supply forward-looking information regarding expanding industries and occupations. The Susquehanna Workforce Network has been working aggressively to identify rapidly expanding middle wage occupations. That is absolutely necessary given the domination of lower wage occupations in terms of anticipated job growth. The top five occupations in terms of expected absolute job growth between 2012 and 2022 are cashiers, retail salespersons, waiters/waitresses, laborers, and janitors. Though there are employees within these categories that can earn a middle wage or better (e.g., waiter at a high-end restaurant), on average, each of these segments pays well below the median wage.

Exhibit 8. Susquehanna Workforce Region: Top 10 Industries by Projected Employment Growth, 2012-2022

Rank	Industry	Total Employment		2012-2022	
		2012 Est.	2022 Proj.	Total Growth	Annual % Growth
1	General Merchandise Stores	3,579	5,657	2,078	4.70%
2	Administrative and Support Services	3,311	5,317	2,006	4.90%
3	Plastics and Rubber Products Manufacturing	2,877	3,942	1,065	3.20%
4	Warehousing and Storage	3,644	4,674	1,030	2.50%
5	Educational Services	9,380	10,265	885	0.90%
6	Food Services and Drinking Places	9,704	10,569	865	0.90%
7	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	9,438	10,117	679	0.70%
8	Ambulatory Health Care Services	4,561	4,881	320	0.70%
9	Food and Beverage Stores	4,390	4,698	308	0.70%
10	Amusement, Gambling, and Recreation Industries	2,257	2,517	260	1.10%

Source: Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR), Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning; Maryland Workforce Exchange, Labor Market Information.

Exhibit 9. Susquehanna Workforce Region: Top 10 Occupations by Projected Annual Openings, 2012-2022

Rank	Occupation	2012-2022 Est. Annual Openings
1	Cashiers	244
2	Retail Salespersons	224
3	Waiters and Waitresses	167
4	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	135
5	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	104
6	Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	96
7	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	85
8	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	58
9	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants (Except Legal, Medical, and Executive)	57
10	General and Operations Managers	55

Source: Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR), Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning; Maryland Workforce Exchange, Labor Market Information.

In a sense, Exhibits 10 and 11 supply forward-looking information as well. Both exhibits show data pertaining to job openings advertised online as of July 2016. These job openings in many cases will translate into future employment creation as positions are filled. Exhibit 10 highlights the role that federal government contracting plays in the Susquehanna Region. It can be argued that federal contracting and distribution represent the two industries that best distinguish the Susquehanna community from others.

Booz Allen Hamilton is a well-known and highly regarded private enterprise that engages in a significant volume of federal government contracting. Leidos, Inc., though perhaps less well known nationally, is another significant enterprise that is focused on federal cyber, border and transportation security, and other activities that often have relevance to the public sector. Other significant government contractors with a sizeable regional presence include CACI International, Engility Corporation, CSRA, and Lockheed Martin.

The list of employers seeking to hire large numbers of people also includes quite a few distributors and healthcare providers. All of this information helps supply stakeholders with insight regarding skills in demand.

Exhibit 10. Top Employers Hiring in the Susquehanna Workforce Region (Employers with Job Openings Advertised Online as of July 18, 2016)

Rank	Employer Name	Job Openings	Rank	Employer Name	Job Openings
1	Booz Allen Hamilton Inc.	164	11	Home Depot	48
2	Leidos, Inc.	134	12	ManTech International Corporation	45
3	Redner's Warehouse Markets	88	13	Pilot Flying J	45
4	Terumo Medical Corporation	77	14	Cracker Barrel Old Country Store	42
5	CACI International Inc	71	15	Lockheed Martin Corporation	42
6	CRST Expedited	69	16	Macy's	35
7	Upper Chesapeake Medical Center	62	17	Union Hospital	34
8	Celadon Trucking	61	18	AASKI Technology	33
9	CSRA, Inc	58	19	PNC Bank	33
10	Engility Corporation	57	20	Sava Senior Care	32

Source: Maryland Workforce Exchange, Labor Market Information (online advertised jobs data).

Notes: 1. The table above shows the employers with the highest number of job openings advertised online in Susquehanna Workforce Region, Maryland on July 18, 2016 (Jobs De-duplication Level 2). 2. Jobs De-duplication Level 2: high level de-duplication of advertised jobs (for statistical analysis).

Exhibit 11 shows that the industry known as professional, scientific and technical services is easily associated with the most substantial number of job openings in the Susquehanna Region presently. Many of these job openings relate to the firms listed immediately above.

Exhibit 11. Susquehanna Region Job Openings by Industry (as of July 2016, Week 2)

Industry (Ranked by # of Openings)	Job Openings
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1,522
Retail Trade	801
Health Care and Social Assistance	583
Manufacturing	480
Transportation and Warehousing	357
Accommodation and Food Services	317
Administrative & Support/Waste Management & Remediation Services	286
Public Administration	225
Educational Services	129
Wholesale Trade	125
Other Services (except Public Administration)	113
Information	97
Finance and Insurance	78
Construction	57
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	33
Arts Entertainment and Recreation	14
Mining	5
Agriculture Forestry Fishing and Hunting	4
Management of Companies and Enterprises	3
Utilities	2

Source: Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR): Workforce Dashboard.  
 Available: <http://www.dllr.maryland.gov/workforcedashboard/>. Note: DLLR Workforce Dashboard figures differ slightly from those reported by the Maryland Workforce Exchange.

While the fact that the Susquehanna Region is associated with a significant number of job openings is reason for optimism, it should be noted that many of the jobs being created by the local economy are highly technical in nature. Many available workers may not have the skills (or security clearances) necessary to access these jobs. There are job openings in non-technical segments of course, but many of these positions (e.g., retail trade, accommodation/food services) are associated with lower average wages.

One significant exception is manufacturing. This industry produces many middle income jobs or better. Anecdotal information suggests that despite offering high wages, many manufacturers suffer difficulty filling job openings, often because local educational institutions are more likely to focus their activities on students seeking training for healthcare, tourism, or computing.

Exhibit 12 provides some sense of supply and demand. Note that in highly technical categories like computer and mathematical occupations or in architecture and engineering occupations, the number of job openings vastly exceeds the number of job seekers according to the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation. However, in categories such as office/administrative support or protective security occupations, the quantity of labor supplied appears to exceed the quantity of labor demanded.

Exhibit 12. Susquehanna Region Job Openings and Seekers by Occupation Group (as of July 2016, Week 2)

Occupation Group (Ranked by # of Openings)	Job Openings	Job Seekers	Openings-Seekers	Candidates Per Job Opening
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	755	273	482	0.36
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	721	137	584	0.19
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	717	436	281	0.61
Management Occupations	538	635	-97	1.18
Sales and Related Occupations	515	291	224	0.57
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	499	165	334	0.33
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	357	1,282	-925	3.59
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	263	151	112	0.57
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	253	280	-27	1.11
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	240	262	-22	1.09
Education Training and Library Occupations	163	90	73	0.55
Personal Care and Service Occupations	152	80	72	0.53
Healthcare Support Occupations	118	229	-111	1.94
Production Occupations	114	276	-162	2.42
Arts Design Entertainment Sports & Media Occupations	88	125	-37	1.42
Construction and Extraction Occupations	77	232	-155	3.01
Protective Service Occupations	71	114	-43	1.61
Building & Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	49	90	-41	1.84
Life Physical and Social Science Occupations	48	73	-25	1.52
Community and Social Services Occupations	42	122	-80	2.90
Military Specific Occupations	15	18	-3	1.20
Legal Occupations	6	40	-34	6.67
Farming Fishing and Forestry Occupations	4	13	-9	3.25

Source: Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation: Workforce Dashboard. Note: DLLR Workforce Dashboard figures differ slightly from those reported by the Maryland Workforce Exchange.



(B) An analysis of the knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the businesses in the Local Area, including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

**Large Numbers of Job Openings at Both Higher and Lower End of Wage Spectrum**

The Susquehanna Region is associated with a significant number of job openings, including in highly paid, technical occupational categories. There are also large numbers of openings in lower paid segments, including retail, certain distribution segments, and hospitality.

Predictably, these two sets of positions are associated with discrete credentialing requirements. This helps explain the data in Exhibit 13. A significant number of positions require a bachelor’s degree. There are also a significant number that require no more than the completion of high school. Presumably, this is a reflection of the differential needs of technology companies (e.g., cyber) versus those in distribution or hospitality.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the data relates to work experience requirement. The data stand for the proposition that employers do not value experience nearly as much as one might expect. Fewer than 2 percent of job openings are attached to a work experience requirement above 10 years. More than a quarter are associated with entry level workers, and nearly another third are associated with workers who require 2 years or less experience.

Exhibit 13. Susquehanna Region Job Openings by Educational & Work Experience Requirements, in All Industries (as of July 2016)

<b>Minimum Education Level</b>	<b>Job Openings</b>	<b>%</b>
No Minimum Education Requirement	91	8.8%
High School Diploma or Equivalent	411	39.7%
1 Year of College or a Technical or Vocational School	4	0.4%
Vocational School Certificate	3	0.3%
Associate's Degree	54	5.2%
Bachelor's Degree	443	42.8%
Master's Degree	22	2.1%
Doctorate Degree	7	0.7%
Specialized Degree (e.g. MD, DDS)	1	0.1%
<b>Work Experience Requirement</b>	<b>Job Openings</b>	<b>%</b>
Entry Level	160	25.5%
Less than 1 Year	45	7.2%
1 Year to 2 Years	153	24.4%
2 Years to 5 Years	192	30.6%
5 Years to 10 Years	68	10.8%
More than 10 Years	10	1.6%

Source: Maryland Workforce Exchange, Labor Market Information. Job Source: Online advertised jobs data.

Notes: 1. The table shows the minimum required education level/work experience on job openings advertised online in Susquehanna Workforce Region, Maryland on July 10, 2016 (Jobs De-duplication Level 2). 2. Jobs De-duplication Level 2: high level de-duplication of advertised jobs (for statistical analysis).

One implication is that many employers may be satisfied with younger workers. Under these circumstances, older workers may find themselves at a disadvantage.

Exhibit 14. Skill Levels of Available Candidates in the Susquehanna Region Workforce (July 2016)

Minimum Experience	Potential Candidates	Percent
Less than 1 year	1,040	8.7%
1 Year to 2 Years	400	3.3%
2 Years to 5 Years	1,030	8.6%
5 Years to 10 Years	1,720	14.3%
More than 10 Years	7,838	65.2%

Source: Maryland Workforce Exchange, Labor Market Information. Candidate Source: Individuals with active resumes in the workforce system. Notes: 1. The table shows the experience levels of potential candidates in Susquehanna Workforce Region, Maryland on July 10, 2016. 1 2. Jobs De-duplication Level 2: high level de-duplication of advertised jobs (for statistical analysis).

### **Customer Service is the Most Commonly Demanded Skill**

Exhibit 15 supplies statistical detail regarding many of the skills that are in high demand. At the top of the list is customer service, which is consistent with the general desire to foment client satisfaction but also likely relates to the large numbers of job openings in service categories. In service categories, employees are quite likely to come into direct contact with customers. This may also help explain the high ranking of interpersonal skills, flexibility and customer service skills on this list.

Exhibit 15. Susquehanna Region Job Openings, Top 10 Job Skill Requirements, in All Industries (as of July, 2016)

Detailed Job Skill	Skill Group	Job Openings
Customer service	Customer Service Skills	1,161
Problem solving	Basic Skills	492
Interpersonal skills	Interpersonal Skills	393
Flexibility	Interpersonal Skills	324
Customer Service Skills	Customer Service Skills	285
Risk management	Risk Analyst Skills	246
Software support	Computer Support Specialist Skills	195
Time management	Basic Skills	160
Decision making	Basic Skills	155
Appointment setting	Telemarketing Skills	140

Source: Maryland Workforce Exchange, Labor Market Information. Job Source: Online advertised jobs data. Notes: 1. The table shows the top 10 advertised detailed job skills found in job openings advertised online in Susquehanna Workforce Region, Maryland on July 11, 2016 (Jobs De-duplication Level 1). 2. Jobs De-duplication Level 1: low level de-duplication of advertised job openings (more jobs).

Exhibits 16 and 17 are useful for a number of reasons, but are especially helpful in identifying occupations that are attached to mid-level compensation. Often, what separates one’s ability to enter a mid-level occupation as opposed to an entry-level one is a credential. These credentials can take many forms, including a college degree, a license, or a certification.

Given its large distribution and warehousing component, it’s not altogether surprising that demand for people with a commercial driver’s license is elevated. The aging of the population may help explain substantial demand for people with a CPR certification, while the presence of a large government contracting community may help explain the demand for people with backgrounds in information security, networking, and systems management.

Exhibit 16. Susquehanna Region Job Openings, Top 10 Advertised Job Certification Requirements, in all Industries (as of July, 2016)

Certification Group	Job Openings Match Count
Commercial Driver’s License (CDL)	350
Certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)	143
Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP)	133
Security+ Certification	97
Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA)	95
GIAC IT Security Administration Certification	91
Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification	68
Advanced Cardiac Life Support Certification (ACLS)	59
Society for Protective Coatings Certification	36
Systems Security Certified Practitioner (SSCP)	32

Source: Maryland Workforce Exchange, Labor Market Information. Job Source: Online advertised jobs data. Notes: 1. The table shows the top 10 advertised job certifications found in job openings advertised online in Susquehanna Workforce Region, Maryland on July 10, 2016 (Jobs De-duplication Level 1). 2. Jobs De-duplication Level 1: low level de-duplication of advertised job openings (more jobs).

Exhibit 17. Susquehanna Region Job Openings, Top 10 Detailed Tools & Technology Requirements, in all Industries (as of July, 2016)

Detailed Tool/Technology	Tool/Technology Group	Job Openings Match Count
Linux	Operating System Software	250
PowerPoint	Presentation Software	221
Forklift	Forklifts	140
JavaScript	Web Platform Development Software	123
UNIX	Operating System Software	114
Cash Register	Cash Registers	85
Hand Truck	Hand Trucks or Accessories	68
Pallet Jack	Pallet Trucks	68
Microsoft Excel	Spreadsheet Software	64
Microsoft Word	Word Processing Software	58

Source: Maryland Workforce Exchange, Labor Market Information. Job Source: Online advertised jobs data. Notes: 1. The table shows the top 10 advertised detailed tools and technologies found in job openings advertised online in Susquehanna Workforce Region, Maryland on July 11, 2016 (Jobs De-duplication Level 1). 2. Jobs De-duplication Level 1: low level de-duplication of advertised job openings (more jobs).

Exhibits 18-20 detail the specific job skills and credentials required for the top three emerging/in-demand industries (by total number of job openings) in the Susquehanna Region. Note the outsized demand for very specific information technology capabilities.

Exhibit 18. Susquehanna Region Job Skills Requirements in the Top 3 Emerging/In-Demand Industries (by Total Job Openings)

Skill Rank	Detailed Job Skill	Skill Group	Job Openings Match Count
<b>Professional, Scientific &amp; Technical Services</b>			
1	Problem solving	Basic Skills	178
2	Interpersonal skills	Interpersonal Skills	125
3	Risk management	Risk Analyst Skills	106
4	Software support	Computer Support Specialist Skills	94
5	Customer service	Customer Service Skills	72
<b>Retail Trade</b>			
1	Customer service	Customer Service Skills	334
2	Customer Service Skills	Customer Service Skills	117
3	Inventory management	Bill and Account Collectors Skills	30
4	Flexibility	Interpersonal Skills	25
5	Cash handling	Cashier Skills	24
<b>Health Care and Social Assistance</b>			
1	Software support	Computer Support Specialist Skills	92
2	Software integration	Software Developer Skills	70
3	Customer service	Customer Service Skills	60
4	Problem solving	Basic Skills	45
5	Flexibility	Interpersonal Skills	45

Source: Maryland Workforce Exchange, Labor Market Information. Job Source: Online advertised jobs data. Notes: 1. The table shows the top advertised job skills found in job openings advertised online in Susquehanna Workforce Region on July 12, 2016 (Jobs De-duplication Level 1) for the following sectors: Professional, Scientific & Technical Services (NAICS 54), Retail Trade (NAICS 44-45), Health Care and Social Assistance (NAICS 62). 2. Jobs De-duplication Level 1: low level de-duplication of advertised job openings (more jobs).

Exhibit 19. Job Certification Requirements in the Top 3 Emerging/In-Demand Industries (by Total Job Openings)

Rank	Certification Group	Job Openings Match Count
<b>Professional, Scientific &amp; Technical Services</b>		
1	Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP)	87
2	Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA)	68
3	Security+ Certification	68
4	GIAC IT Security Administration Certification	63
5	Society for Protective Coatings Certification	28
<b>Retail Trade</b>		
1	Commercial Drivers License (CDL)	11
2	Promotional Products Association International (PPAI) Certification	1
<b>Health Care and Social Assistance</b>		
1	Certification in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)	89
2	Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification	43
3	Advanced Cardiac Life Support Certification (ACLS)	39
4	Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)	27
5	Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP)	18

Source: Maryland Workforce Exchange, Labor Market Information. Job Source: Online advertised jobs data. Notes: 1. The table shows the top advertised job certifications found in job openings advertised online in Susquehanna Workforce Region on July 12, 2016 (Jobs De-duplication Level 1) for the following sectors: Professional, Scientific & Technical Services (NAICS 54), Retail Trade (NAICS 44-45), Health Care and Social Assistance (NAICS 62). 2. Jobs De-duplication Level 1: low level de-duplication of advertised job openings (more jobs).

Exhibit 20. Detailed Tools & Technology Requirements in the Top 3 Emerging/In-Demand Industries (by Total Job Openings)

Skill Rank	Detailed Tool/Technology	Tool/Technology Group	Job Openings Match Count
<b>Professional, Scientific &amp; Technical Services</b>			
1	Linux	Operating System Software	175
2	JavaScript	Web Platform Development Software	99
3	PowerPoint	Presentation Software	85
4	UNIX	Operating System Software	64
5	Scripting languages	Web Platform Development Software	46
<b>Retail Trade</b>			
1	Cash Register	Cash Registers	36
2	Pallet Jack	Pallet Trucks	20
3	Hand Truck	Hand Trucks or Accessories	12
4	Forklift	Forklifts	12
5	Scanners	Scanners	7
<b>Health Care and Social Assistance</b>			
1	PowerPoint	Presentation Software	39
2	Linux	Operating System Software	37
3	Git	File Versioning Software	25
4	Mortars	Pestle or Mortars	21
5	UNIX	Operating System Software	15

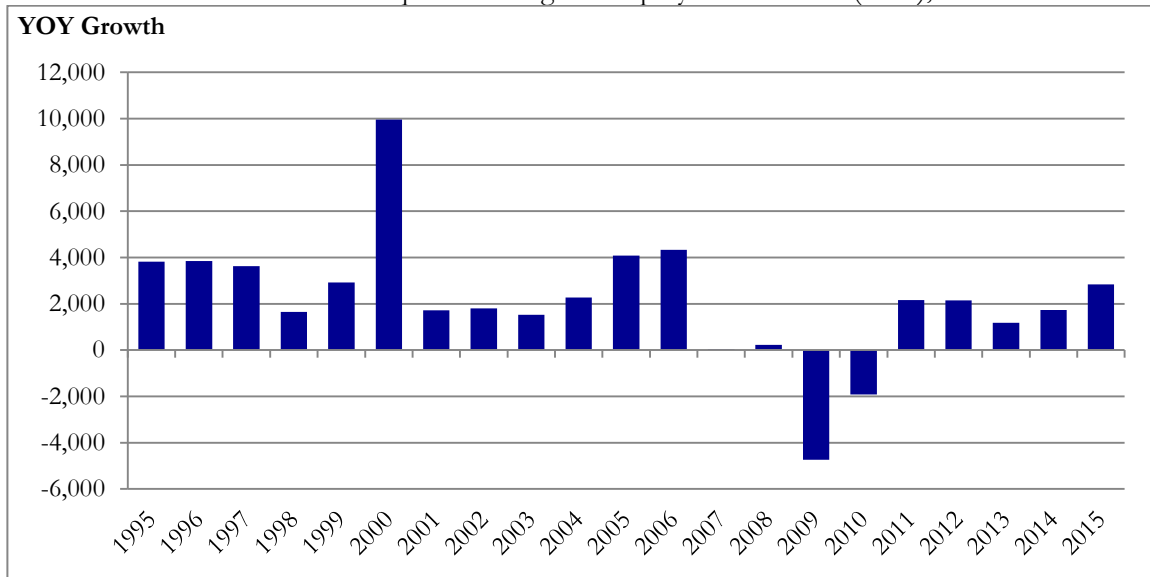
Source: Maryland Workforce Exchange, Labor Market Information. Job Source: Online advertised jobs data. Notes: 1. The table shows the top advertised detailed tools and technologies found in job openings advertised online in Susquehanna Workforce Region on July 12, 2016 (Jobs De-duplication Level 1) for the following sectors: Professional, Scientific & Technical Services (NAICS 54), Retail Trade (NAICS 44-45), Health Care and Social Assistance (NAICS 62). 2. Jobs De-duplication Level 1: low level de-duplication of advertised job openings (more jobs).

(C) An analysis of the workforce in the Local Area, including current labor force employment (and unemployment) data, and information on labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the Local Area, including individuals with barriers to employment.

**Job Growth Remains Apparent, Unemployment Low**

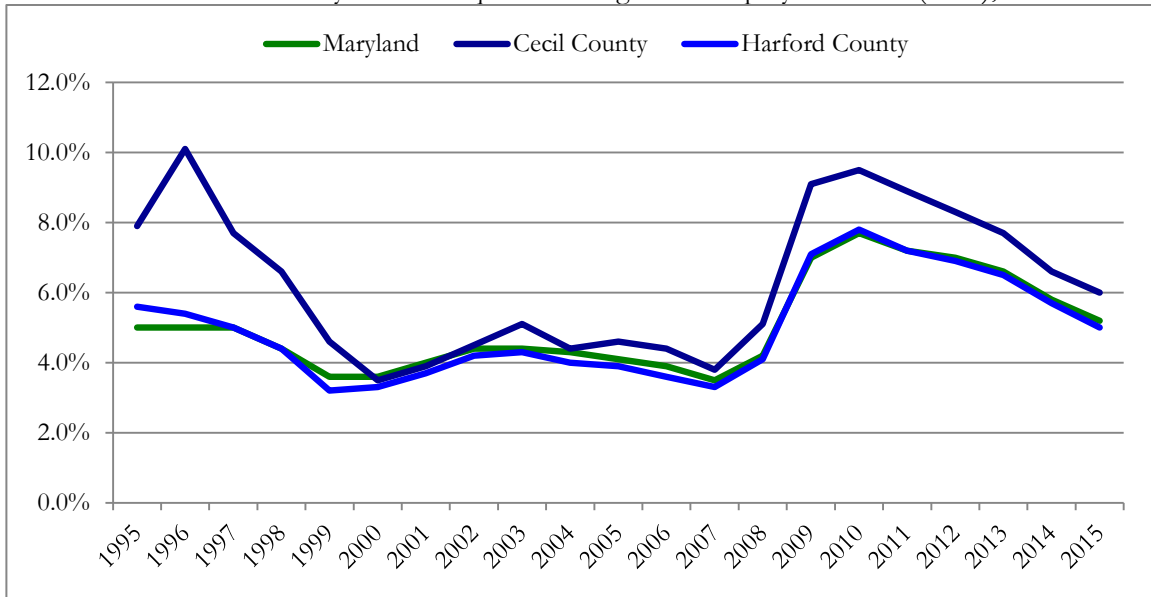
Exhibit 21 reflects year-over-year job growth in the Susquehanna Region based on data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. In 2015, the region experienced the creation of more than 2,800 positions on net. This helped drive down the unemployment rate to 6 percent in Cecil County last year and 5 percent in Harford County.

Exhibit 21. Susquehanna Region Employment Growth (NSA), 1995-2015



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Notes: 1. NSA: Not Seasonally Adjusted. 2. Susquehanna Region represents the sum of Cecil County and Harford County employment.

Exhibit 22. Maryland & Susquehanna Region Unemployment Rate (NSA), 1995-2015

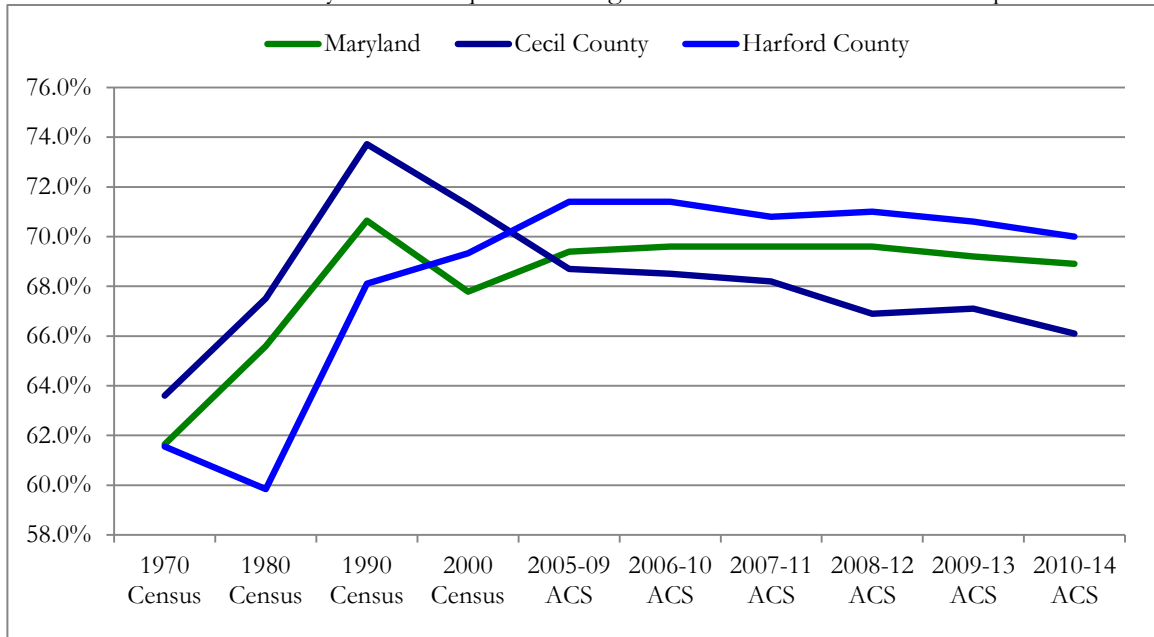


Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Notes: NSA: Not Seasonally Adjusted.

Many people point out that national unemployment has declined in recent years in part because of diminished labor force participation. As of this writing, national labor force participation stands at 62.7 percent (June 2016), not much above a four-decade low. Labor force participation has also been declining in Harford and Cecil counties, with Cecil County experiencing faster decline. This is potentially occurring for a number of reasons, including retirement among older residents, the end of rapid labor force participation rate growth among women, and lower participation among young males than historic patterns.



Exhibit 23. Maryland & Susquehanna Region: Historic Labor Force Participation Rates



Source: 1. Maryland Department of Planning, [http://www.mdp.state.md.us/msdc/s3\\_projection.shtml](http://www.mdp.state.md.us/msdc/s3_projection.shtml).  
 2. U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year estimates: S2301.

### **Worker Characteristics in the Susquehanna Region**

Exhibits 24-26 supply data pertaining to worker characteristics. Among the most significant observations is that more than half of those living in the Susquehanna area with jobs earn more than \$3,333/month. Exhibit 26 indicates that the population of people in the Susquehanna Region with a graduate degree has skyrocketed since 2000. In the year 2000, the region was home to approximately 16,700 residents with a graduate or professional degree. By 2014, there were roughly 27,700 such people, which represents an expansion of 66 percent.

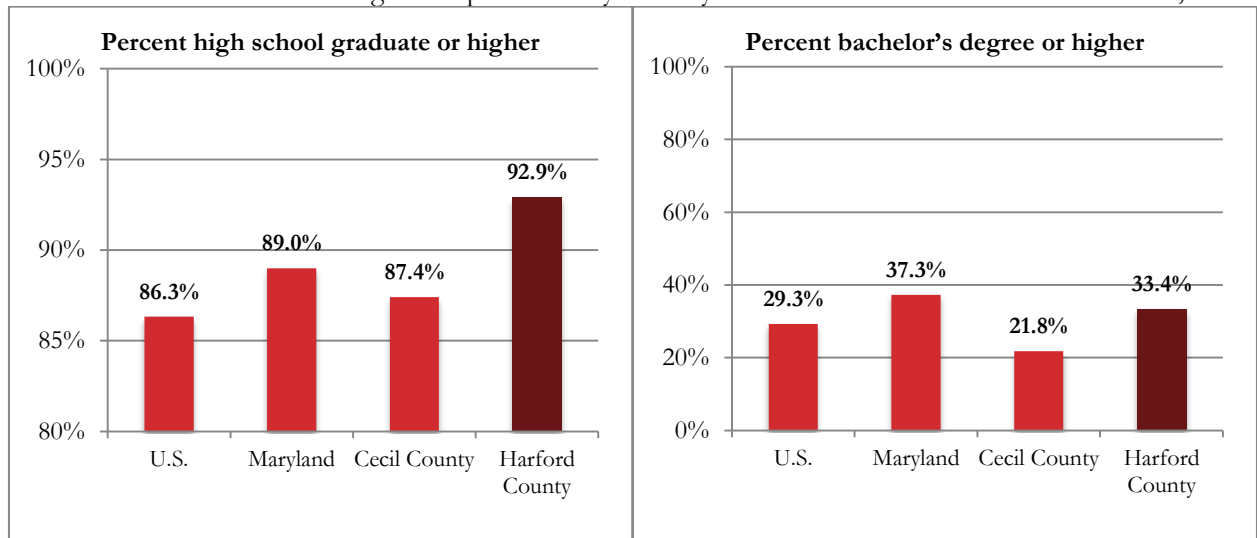
Assuredly, some of this expansion in highly educated workforce relates to the expansion of Aberdeen Proving Ground and its related federal contractor base during the intervening period. The population of those with bachelor's or associate's degrees has also expanded during this period, while the population of those with less than a high school degree has declined.

Exhibit 24. Susquehanna Region Jobs by Worker Characteristic, 2014

	Work Area		Home Area	
	Count	Share	Count	Share
<i>Sex</i>				
Male	48,650	49.5%	75,100	50.1%
Female	49,603	50.5%	74,671	49.9%
<i>Age</i>				
Age 29 or younger	25,893	26.4%	33,986	22.7%
Age 30 to 54	50,493	51.4%	80,944	54.0%
Age 55 or older	21,867	22.3%	34,841	23.3%
<i>Race</i>				
White	81,152	82.6%	128,338	85.7%
Black or African American	13,239	13.5%	16,280	10.9%
American Indian or Alaska Native	302	0.3%	431	0.3%
Asian	2,459	2.5%	3,188	2.1%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	64	0.1%	95	0.1%
Two or More Race Groups	1,037	1.1%	1,439	1.0%
<i>Ethnicity</i>				
Not Hispanic or Latino	94,692	96.4%	145,372	97.1%
Hispanic or Latino	3,561	3.6%	4,399	2.9%
<i>Educational Attainment</i>				
Less than high school	7,703	7.8%	10,774	7.2%
High school or equivalent, no college	21,194	21.6%	31,097	20.8%
Some college or Associate degree	22,899	23.3%	36,402	24.3%
Bachelor's degree or advanced degree	20,564	20.9%	37,512	25.0%
N/A (1)	25,893	26.4%	33,986	22.7%
<i>Earnings</i>				
\$1,250 per month or less	23,842	24.3%	28,693	19.2%
\$1,251 to \$3,333 per month	33,753	34.4%	44,913	30.0%
More than \$3,333 per month	40,658	41.4%	76,165	50.9%

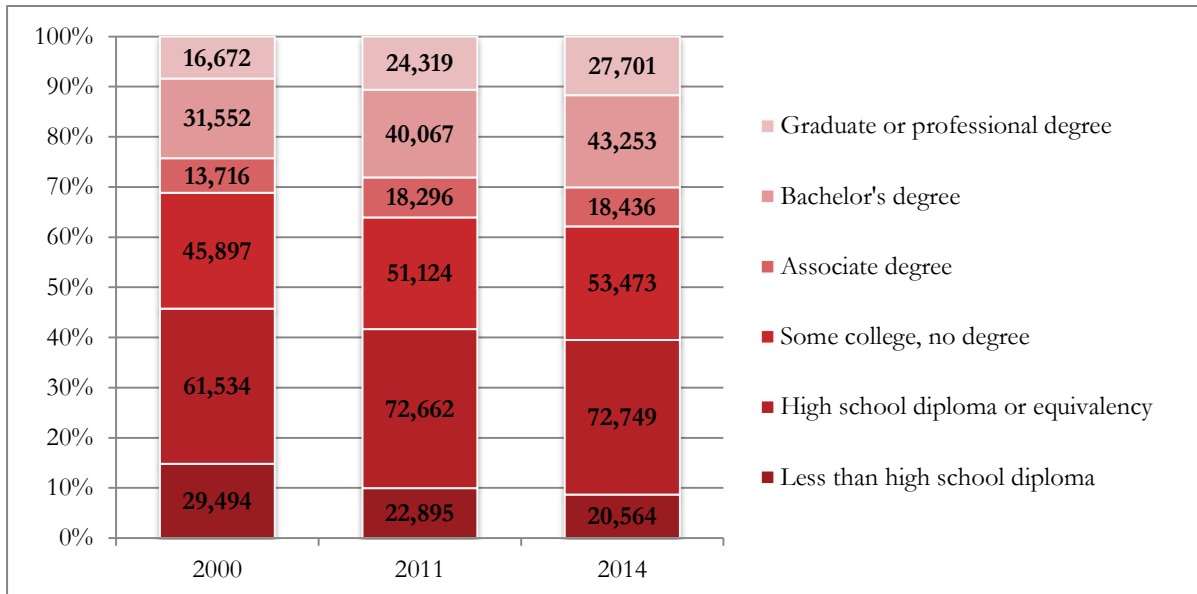
Source: U.S. Census Bureau. OnTheMap Application. Longitudinal-Employer Household Dynamics Program. Notes: 1. Educational attainment not available (workers aged 29 or younger). 2. Numbers represent *primary* jobs, not total jobs. 3. Susquehanna Region is comprised of Cecil County and Harford County.

Exhibit 25. Percentage of Population 25 years+ by Select Levels of Educational Attainment, 2014



Source: U.S. Census Bureau: 2010-2014 ACS 5-year estimates: DP02.

Exhibit 26. Susquehanna Region: Population Aged 25+ by Educational Attainment, 2000, 2011, 2014



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census: DP-2; 2007-2011 and 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates: DP02. Note: figures represent the sum of Cecil County and Harford County.

### **Number of Job Openings on the Rise**

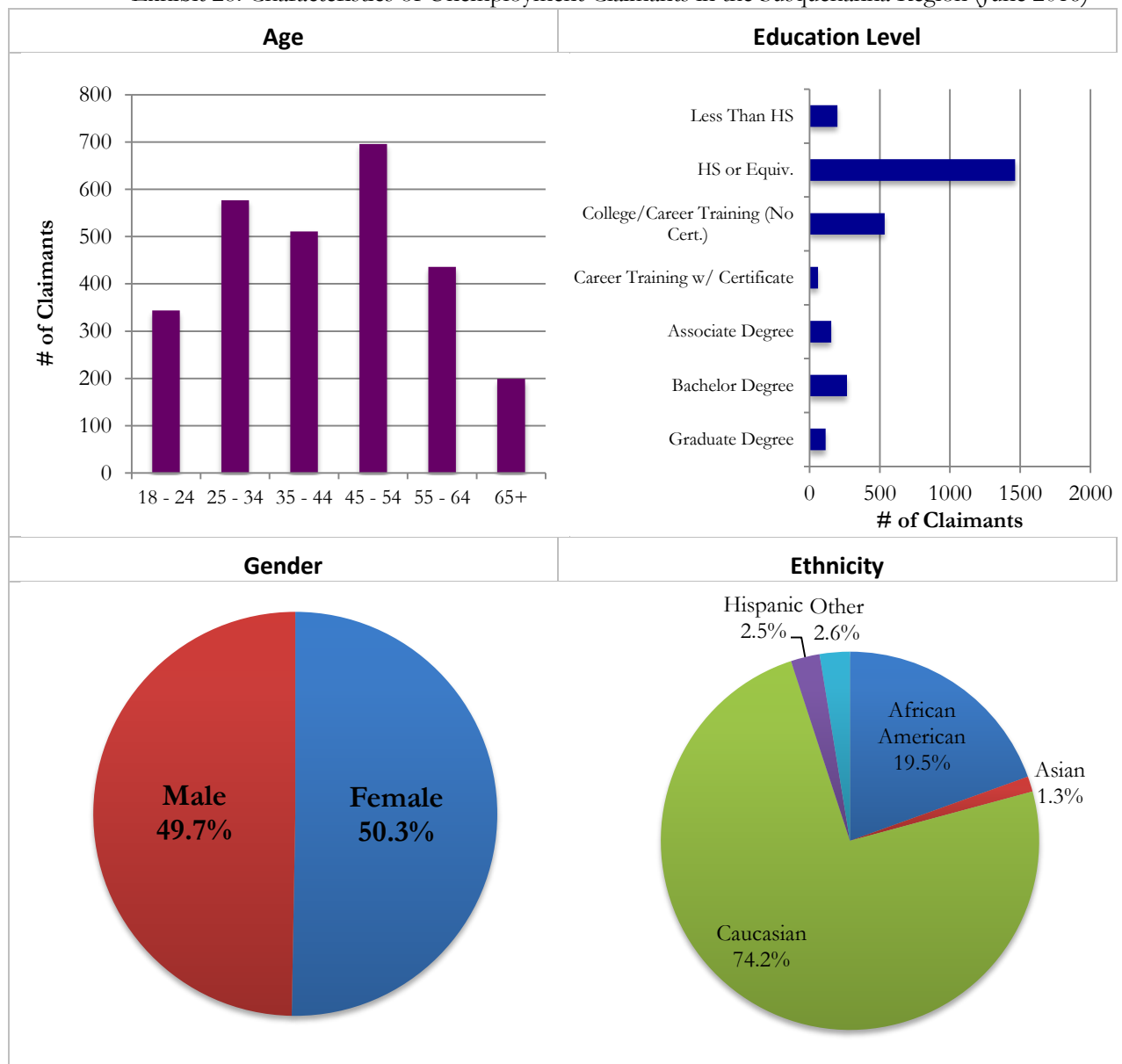
Were it not for mismatched skills and a lack of adequate credentialing, the Susquehanna Region's unemployment rate would be even lower. As reflected in Exhibit 27, available data indicate that there are roughly as many openings as there are unemployed residents in the region. As Exhibit 28 reveals, a large fraction of the unemployed are workers between the ages of 45 and 54. There are also a disproportionate number of unemployed who ended their academic careers upon high school graduation. Many employers are looking for college graduates today not because the jobs they need to fill require a college degree, but because they conclude that if one has the ability to complete a college degree, one has the capacity to remain focused on their duties for lengthy periods. Moreover, as indicated by data above, many of the job openings in the Susquehanna Region are associated with highly technical tasks, and do in fact require a college degree or better.

Exhibit 27. Number of Unemployed People and Online Job Openings in Susquehanna Workforce Region

Time Period	Number Unemployed	Job Openings	Number of Unemployed per Job Opening
June, 2015	10,444	9,884	1.06
September, 2015	9,404	10,072	0.93
December, 2015	8,778	9,276	0.95
March, 2016	9,262	9,253	1.00

Source: Maryland Workforce Exchange, Labor Market Information: Labor Market Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics Program; Online advertised jobs data. Note: The table shows the estimated number of unemployed to number of advertised online job openings in Susquehanna Workforce Region, Maryland. These figures are not seasonally adjusted.

Exhibit 28. Characteristics of Unemployment Claimants in the Susquehanna Region (June 2016)



Source: Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation: Workforce Dashboard; Maryland Unemployment Insurance

## **Commuting Patterns**

There are of course flows of human capital between regions. Data indicate that the number of people commuting out of the Susquehanna Region is enormous. That comes as little surprise since both Cecil and Harford counties are part of larger metropolitan areas.

The data indicate that of those living in the Susquehanna Region and employed, a bit more than 60 percent work outside of the region (2014 data). In a coincidence of numbers, among those working in the region, a bit more than 60 percent live in the region.

In total, the Susquehanna Region exports approximately 51,500 workers. Again, this is not surprising given the suburban status of the jurisdictions that make up the region and the proximity of dense job centers like Philadelphia, Baltimore and Wilmington.

Exhibit 29. Susquehanna Region: Labor Market Details, 2014

<b>Area Labor Market Size (Primary Jobs)</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Share</b>
Employed in Susquehanna Region	98,253	100.0%
Living in Susquehanna Region	149,771	152.4%
Net job inflow	-51,518	-
<b>In-Area Labor Force Efficiency</b>		
Living in Susquehanna Region	149,771	100.0%
Living and employed in Susquehanna Region	59,310	39.6%
Living in Susquehanna Region but employed outside the region	90,461	60.4%
<b>In-Area Employment Efficiency</b>		
Employed in Susquehanna Region	98,253	100.0%
Living and employed in Susquehanna Region	59,310	60.4%
Employed in Susquehanna Region but living outside the region	38,943	39.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. OnTheMap Application. Longitudinal-Employer Household Dynamics Program. Notes: 1. Numbers represent *primary* jobs, not total jobs. 2. Susquehanna Region is comprised of Cecil County and Harford County.

Exhibit 30 provides insight regarding where Susquehanna Region residents work. Based on these data and the large numbers of people working in Baltimore County and Baltimore City, it is not surprising that portions of I-695 are so congested each weekday.

Exhibit 30. Locations where Susquehanna Region Residents are Employed, 2014

		Count	Share
<b>Total Workers</b>		149,771	100.0%
<b>Counties</b>			
1	Harford County, MD	44,306	29.6%
2	Baltimore County, MD	30,264	20.2%
3	Baltimore City, MD	16,263	10.9%
4	Cecil County, MD	15,004	10.0%
5	New Castle County, DE	11,170	7.5%
	All Other Locations	32,764	21.9%
<b>Places</b>			
1	Baltimore City, MD	16,263	10.9%
2	Bel Air town, MD	9,206	6.1%
3	Towson CDP, MD	5,351	3.6%
4	Elkton town, MD	4,656	3.1%
5	Bel Air South CDP, MD	4,368	2.9%
	All Other Locations	109,927	73.4%
<b>Zip Codes</b>			
1	21014	11,927	8.0%
2	21921	7,706	5.1%
3	21001	4,822	3.2%
4	21015	4,293	2.9%
5	21237	3,477	2.3%
	All Other Locations	117,546	78.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. OnTheMap Application. Longitudinal-Employer Household Dynamics Program. Notes: 1. Numbers represent *primary* jobs, not total jobs. 2. Susquehanna Region is comprised of Cecil County and Harford County. 3. CDP: Census designated place.

Those living in the Susquehanna Region but working beyond its boundaries often earn substantial amounts. Of the jobs filled by Susquehanna community residents outside the region, 58 percent are associated with compensation exceeding \$3,333/month. By contrast, despite the presence of Aberdeen Proving Ground and related private contractors, among those Susquehanna Region residents who also work in the region, the share earning more than \$3,333/month is a bit less than 40 percent.

Exhibit 31. Susquehanna Region: Employment Inflow/Outflow, Characteristics of Workers, 2014

	Susquehanna Region Jobs Filled by Residents	Susquehanna Region Jobs Filled by Outside Workers	External Jobs Filled by Susquehanna Region Residents
<i>Number of Workers</i>	59,310	38,943	90,461
<i>Age</i>			
Age 29 or younger	15,219	10,674	18,767
Age 30 to 54	30,191	20,302	50,753
Age 55 or older	13,900	7,967	20,941
<i>Earnings</i>			
\$1,250 per month or less	14,741	9,101	13,952
\$1,251 to \$3,333 per month	21,141	12,612	23,772
More than \$3,333 per month	23,428	17,230	52,737
<i>Industry Class</i>			
Goods Producing	9,011	6,777	12,353
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	12,247	12,112	19,683
All Other Services	38,052	20,054	58,425

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. OnTheMap Application. Longitudinal-Employer Household Dynamics Program.

Notes: 1. Numbers represent *primary* jobs, not total jobs. 2. Susquehanna Region is comprised of Cecil County and Harford County.

The growth of employment and industry experienced since 2000 is largely attributed certain advantages of the region. These include the accessibility to a network of transportation arteries including both rail and interstate and the availability of affordable land. The region also benefits from easy access to the large metro markets of Baltimore, Wilmington and Philadelphia. Also cited by various studies is access to an affordable and skilled workforce.

As reflected in the Labor Market Analysis completed by Whitney, Bailey, Cox and Magnani, LLP, by 1998 the Susquehanna Region had completed a decade of growth. During this decade, growth occurred most substantially in Wholesale Trade and Finance, Retail Trade and Construction and Services; with Services increasing 47% and Retail 27%. In 2004, the Labor Market Analysis commissioned by the Local Board and completed by the Jacob France Institute reflected broad-based job growth across all major industry sectors. Key drivers at that time were Administrative and Support Services, Professional and Technical Services, Transportation and Warehousing and Food Services and Drinking establishments.

The 2016 Labor Market Analysis commissioned by the Local Board identifies major barriers to employment that exist regardless of demographic or specialized target group. The region must continue the significant advancements and progress made relative to educational attainment rates; especially with the influx of higher skilled positions related APG. Expansion of transportation initiatives are paramount to getting workers to jobs. Addressing industry skill needs through appropriate and shorter term credentialing strategies, matched with enhanced awareness of security clearance and industry background check requirements are critical to advance worker potential in the region.

- (D) An analysis of the workforce development activities (including education and training) in the Local Area, including an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of such services, and the capacity to provide such services, to address the identified education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers in the Local Area

SWN is focused on executing workforce strategies that help businesses grow, residents improve their careers and find jobs, and increase economic potential of the region. This has been accomplished through strategic public/private partnerships with business, industry, governmental organizations, economic development, and education. SWN's Board of Directors, the Workforce Board for Cecil and Harford County, is a collaborative network of local leaders whose composition comprises a majority of private sector business leaders from demand industries joined by public sector community partners that include economic development, education, training and community organizations.

Workforce development strengths include:

- Strong economic and workforce development partnerships
- Proven ability to address local and regional workforce priorities collaboratively with partner organizations
- National and local award winning Workforce Board with representation and strategic linkages to key business, industry, sector and government leaders
- Proven long term record of accountability and performance
- Strong and collaborative partnerships with local and regional economic developers, chambers of commerce, education and training providers and business, governmental and community organizations
- Proven and successful track record with grants and serving targeted populations
- Secondary and Post-Secondary systems that aggressively seek to expand educational and training opportunities, degree and credentialing opportunities and workforce programs
- Dynamic business outreach and engagement
- Situated in the northeastern corner of Maryland with intermodal transportation



and sandwiched between two major metropolitan areas provides increased access to workforce services and employment opportunities

- Customarily deploys data-driven decision making practices

Key local workforce opportunities and challenges include:

- Continuing to expand higher education and credentialing opportunities
- Accelerated job openings via retirements
- Increased prevalence of professional, scientific and technical occupations
- Predominance of Small and Micro businesses necessitating workers with versatile skill sets
- Capacity to expand workforce programs and sector initiatives to address the needs of the diverse industry composition in the local area
- Broadening access of workforce services to those living in the most rural areas and to specialized and targeted populations with multiple barriers to employment
- Increasingly, job growth in the region is concentrated in industries that require elevated levels of human capital

(E) A description of the Local Board’s strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment), including goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance described in Section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA in order to support Local Area economic growth and economic self- sufficiency

The **Susquehanna Workforce Network, Inc.** (SWN) is a private, nonprofit corporation that collaboratively oversees, coordinates, and plans workforce development programs and services for businesses and individuals in Cecil and Harford Counties in Maryland. SWN is focused on executing workforce strategies that contribute to the economic competitiveness of the region by creating solutions to address the region's pressing challenges. This is accomplished through strategic public/private partnerships (P3) with business, industry and other governmental agencies, economic development and education that focuses on measureable outcomes that support local and regional economic development priorities.

SWN has a 33 year history of collaborative and regional efforts addressing business and industry needs. Through a variety of Federal, State, Local and Private resources, SWN manages and administers programs that help businesses grow and provides employment opportunity for area residents including youth, adults, dislocated worker and various disenfranchised populations. SWN **Business Services** operations assist the business community attract, retain and develop their workforce. The **Susquehanna Workforce Centers** assist residents in achieving their career and employment goals. SWN’s **Youth Services** connect the emerging workforce to entry level employment opportunities and funds services to specialized populations.

The Susquehanna Workforce Network and our collaborative partners strategic focus areas include:

- Meeting the workforce development needs of the business and government communities
- Supporting a workforce development system that produces an educated and highly-skilled workforce
- Promoting and enhancing a labor market system that provides job seekers, incumbent workers, students, out-of-school youth and business with valuable information and assistance
- Creating a broader awareness of the region's workforce development assets
- Promoting industry recognized certifications and credentials linked to demand occupations
- Encouraging industry or sector partnerships and career pathway strategies

Objectives specific to enhancing the Workforce Development System include:

**Objective #1: To create a comprehensive workforce development system in Cecil and Harford Counties based on collaborative planning and integrated service delivery to businesses and job seekers.**

Collaborative Planning & Service Delivery

- Meet quarterly with partners to monitor system integration processes
- Establish criteria and processes for customer-centered services

Integrated Service Delivery

- Identify eligibility and appropriateness criteria of each partner
- Develop referral procedures

**Objective #2: To implement customer centered services by expediting service delivery through the elimination of redundant service documentation and individualized assessments.**

- Review customer flow delivery throughout the system

**Objective #3: To reduce financial inefficiencies through system partner collaborations.**

- Identify duplications of services with all partners

**Objective #4: To ensure trainings and the development of career clusters and sector strategies are based on labor market data and economic projections.**

- Correlate trainings to employment opportunities for middle skill jobs
- Career Clusters and Sector Strategies based on growth industries

**Objective #5: Promote a governance system focused on comprehensive planning,**

**continuous improvement and accountability.**

The local workforce development board will provide leadership for the system by ensuring that:

- All workforce initiatives are driven by labor market data and validated by employers
- Workforce system partners have access to labor market data for service alignment
- Develop strategies to leverage and increase funding to the workforce system
- Facilitate a comprehensive service delivery strategy to businesses

The negotiated performance level were not completed at the time this plan was submitted.

Please see the following negotiated performance measures:

Adult Measures

Employment Rate 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter after exit 69%

Employment Rate 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter after exit 69%

Credential Attainment 51%

Dislocated Worker Measures

Employment Rate 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter after exit 74%

Employment Rate 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter after exit 70%

Median Earnings \$7,887

Credential Attainment 50%

Youth Measures

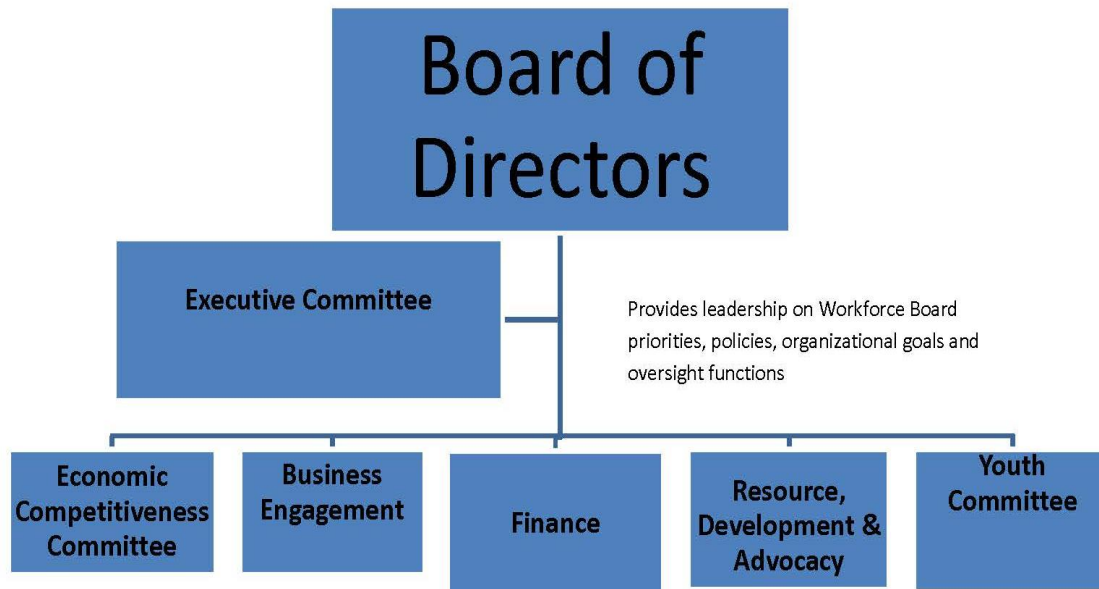
Employment/Placement 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter after exit 57%

Employment/Placement 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter after exit 57%

Credential Attainment 57%

(F) Taking into account analyses described in subparagraphs (A) through (D), a strategy to work with the entities that carry out the core programs to align resources available to the Local Area, to achieve the strategic vision and goals described in subparagraph (E).

The Workforce Board’s membership and committee structure, along with SWN’s professional staff, core partners and programs and other community organizations will collaboratively work to align and access resources that are available in the region to support the Workforce Board’s strategic focus areas and system objectives. It is envisioned that over the duration of this Workforce Plan, the Board’s Committee structure and focus areas will adapt as local conditions and priorities evolve. This will facilitate the continued alignment with local and state priorities. The current committee structure of the Workforce Board includes:



### COMMITTEE OBJECTIVES

Provides insight and information on programs being developed to help train current and future workforce to meet perceived short and long term employment needs of area businesses.

Ensure close coordination with Economic Development and area businesses; evaluate and expand services as needed; promote resources of system partners.

Maintain a financially sound and fiscally responsible workforce system.

Increase financial resources for SWN; increasing awareness of agency impact and capabilities; explore resource opportunities.

Provide recommendations for WIB on youth policy and initiatives.

Further, a WIOA Partner Group, consisting of the required partners as described in WIOA law, was implemented to foster the alignment of core programs and services. To facilitate access and community engagement, SWN implemented an Ambassador Program where community representatives and organizations representing targeted populations are invited to engage in a dialogue of services and build community links.

## Section 2: Alignment of the Local Workforce Development System

This section should include –

(A) A description of the workforce development system in the Local Area that identifies the programs that are included in that system and how the Local Board will work with the entities carrying out workforce development programs identified in the State Plan. The description should also include how the Local Board and the programs identified plan to align and integrate to provide services to customers. The description should also include programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.);

- **Identify the programs that are included in the system.**

The Susquehanna Workforce Area workforce development system includes a majority of the partners detailed in section 121 (b) (1) (B) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

<b>Required One Stop Partner</b>	<b>Local Partner</b>
Title I Youth	Yes
Title I Adult	Yes
Title I Dislocated Worker	Yes
Title III Wagner Peyser	Yes
Title II Adult Education and Literacy	Yes
Title IV Rehabilitation Act	Yes
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families	Yes
State Unemployment Compensation	Yes
Older Americans Act	Yes
Perkins Career and Tech Ed	Yes
Trade Act	Yes
Job Counseling, Training and Placement for Veterans	Yes
Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker	Yes
Employment & Training Housing and Community Development	Yes
Employment & Training Community Services Block Grant	Not in area
Second Chance Act	Not in area
Job Corps	Not in area
Youth Build	Not in area
Native American Programs	Not in area

The Local Board collaborates and plans with these entities in a variety of ways to include representation on the Board and through its committee structure as described in Section I. Board meetings include information and discussion sessions with various system partners. Further, integration and alignment of services are frequent and ongoing planning topics and discussions through WIOA Partner meetings and various group and independent communications. The preliminary objectives to further foster integration and alignment of services are identified in Section I (E). It is anticipated that these plans will be detailed and negotiated through the active engagement of all system partners during the development and execution of Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with local partners; including Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006. (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.).

(B) A description of how the Local Board, working with the entities identified in A, will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment, including how the Local Board will facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, and improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable);

Through the Susquehanna Workforce Board's committee structure, the Local Board will continuously strive to ensure and expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment. The WIOA, its accompanying regulations and the OMB Uniform Grant Guidance provide the framework to advance access and services to both the business and job seeker customers of the local system. Expanding access to services is a collaborative and shared responsibility of the local system that requires the collective expertise and resources of the WIOA partner organizations. MOU's, referral arrangements and collaborative planning will encourage co-enrollment, as appropriate, to support maximum utilization of services and expertise to support customer needs.

The Local Board will facilitate the development of career pathways by engaging with education and training institutions, advisory boards and business organizations through the participation of these entities on the Local Board, committee structure and community engagement efforts.

The Local Board's role in developing Career Pathways will include:

1. Identifying sectors that are favorable to Career Pathways
2. Ascertaining business enterprises relevant to identified sectors
3. Engaging businesses to participate in the development and support of Career Pathway and sector initiatives
4. Support education and training partners in developing programs that meets the need of the business community
5. Engage partners in Career Pathway initiatives

The expansion of the workforce development system will create expanded access to employment, training, education and supportive services for eligible individuals with barriers. Through the development of a system that facilitates partner engagement and maximizes awareness of all partner services, the streamlining of services and the development a more efficient service delivery will foster access to all partner services and reach to expanded populations.

(C) A description of the steps taken by the Local Board to engage entities identified in A in the formulation of its Local Plan.

The Local Board embarked on a comprehensive approach to engaging entities to actively participate in the formulation of the Local Plan which began approximately 12 months prior to the Plan’s submission. This has included:

1. Each Core Partner and many of the WIOA Required Partners engaged with the Workforce Board during monthly meetings of the Board beginning September 2015.
2. Local workforce and economic development partners, as well as many WIOA core and/or required partners are members of the Local Board. Plan and planning considerations have been a routine agenda topic at monthly meetings.
3. The Workforce Board’s professional staff, as well as many partner staff, actively engaged in local, state and national events, meetings, workgroups and other activities to support the development of the workforce areas local plan.
4. A local WIOA Partner Group was established and began convening in October of 2015. This has fostered collaborative planning and the identification of needs and priorities. This led to cross agency/ individual planning meetings and discussions contributing to the development of the plan.
5. Local partners provided input and often co-authored portions of the local plan.
6. Relevant portions of the Local Plan were further developed, informed and shared through the Board’s committee structure whose membership includes WIOA and local partner entities.
7. The pre-Draft Plan was shared with the WIOA Partners prior to the public comment notice.
8. All partners, and others, will have the opportunity for additional input during the Public Comment period.

(D) A description of the strategies and services that will be used in the Local Area—

- To facilitate engagement of businesses, including small businesses and businesses in in-

demand industry sectors and occupations, in workforce development programs;

- To support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the Local Area.
- To strengthen linkages between the American Job Center delivery system and Unemployment Insurance programs;

The Workforce Board has a long history of facilitating business engagement, convening and collaborating with business community and business organizations and leading efforts to support a local workforce development system that addresses the needs of the Workforce Areas business community. To that end, the Board leads and supports a Business Engagement Committee and program with the following Vision, Mission and Goals.

**Vision:**

To continuously expand recognition as a collaborative network of economic and workforce development experts that create innovative partnerships with regional business and industry to advance and grow the competitiveness of the region and support a better quality of life for businesses to grow and prosper.

**Mission:**

- Advance strategies that address the changing economic and workforce development needs of the business community.
- Cultivate a coalition of partners that efficiently connects the business community with innovative solutions, information and assistance needed to increase business competitiveness and support the workforce attraction, retention and development needs of area businesses.

**Goals:**

- Ensure close coordination with economic development, business organizations and area businesses.
- Evaluate, align and expand available services to address current and future business needs.
- Increase market penetration annually.
- Utilize a business friendly (consultative/relationship sales approach) and coordinated outreach to provide solutions and support business growth.
- Elevate knowledge of business assistance programs available through partner programs and increase business and industry intelligence.
- Connect businesses to available resources ASAP.

The Workforce Board is highly experienced with collaborations of workforce development programs, economic development organizations and partners to address priorities. The workforce area's Economic Development Directors are engaged members of the Local Board. Additionally, both Offices of Economic Development collaborate with the Local Board on workforce development needs and priorities and rely on the Susquehanna Workforce Network



to lead workforce efforts related to workforce attraction, retention and development. There exist significant cross representation of memberships as many members of the Workforce Board, as well as SWN's Director, are members of the Area's Economic Development Advisory Board and Commissions as well as economic and industry organizations such as RAMP MD, Northeastern Maryland's Additive Manufacturing Authority and the Army Alliance which supports workforce, economic and other priorities related to the workforce areas largest employer; Aberdeen Proving Ground.

In planning for WIOA implementation, all local WIOA Partners have demonstrated cooperative planning and interest in aligning services throughout the areas workforce delivery system. This includes linkages with Unemployment Insurance programs. These linkages will be further detailed through the development and execution of MOUs with the partner programs.

The strategies identified in Section D strengthens services and access to all programs. Linkages specific to Unemployment Insurance programs are addressed in Section 5 (B).

- (E) A description regarding the implementation of initiatives such as EARN Maryland, apprenticeship, incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, integrated education and training, career pathways initiatives, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies, designed to meet the needs of businesses in support of the strategy described in Section 1.

The Local Board and SWN aggressively seek opportunities and actively engage in initiatives that increase the economic competitiveness and workforce potential of the workforce area to support the needs of the business community and labor force. Examples of these strategies follow.

#### EARN Program

SWN formed the Susquehanna Manufacturing Coalition which is comprised of area manufacturers, two offices of economic development, two community colleges, and two public school systems for the purpose of implementing the Manufacturing Training Initiative. The objectives of the Initiative are to 1) to provide innovative training designed by the industry and correlated to nationally recognized standards and competencies that produce industry recognized certifications; 2) to develop viable and accessible training opportunities to targeted populations; 3) to grow the pipeline for the industry through innovative benefit outreach strategies; and 4) to establish training within the region identified by industry as critical.

#### Apprenticeships

The community colleges in the region support opportunities for registered apprenticeship programs. The apprenticeship programs that exist are in the trades such as electrical and

HVAC. There is an interest in developing additional apprenticeship programs but capacity challenges are currently a barrier to the expansion of additional programs at this time. The area's Workforce Center staff and system partners consistently make referrals to the existing registered apprentice programs and will align with DLLR's efforts to advance Apprenticeship programs in Maryland and the workforce area.

#### Incumbent Worker Training & On-the-Job Training (OJT)

The workforce area's Business Service Team promotes and facilitates incumbent worker training and OJT to area businesses. Incumbent worker training is currently offered through the local EARN Manufacturing Training Initiative and through the two Offices of Economic Development. SWN plans to expand incumbent worker training initiatives to other demand industries by utilizing up to 20% of its WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker resources. OJT is an effective training strategy and continues to be offered through the local EARN Initiative as well as through WIOA resources.

#### Customized Training Programs

In the development of the EARN Manufacturing Training Initiative, the focus groups and surveys conducted with local manufacturers identified the lack of a basic manufacturing foundation course for their industry in our region. A course that met the manufacturers' specifications was brought to the region from out of state to provide our local community colleges with a template for the development of a customized training program. As specific training needs are identified by local businesses, the SWN convenes representatives from the local community colleges to develop customized training programs.

#### Integrated Education & Training

SWN collaborated with an integrated education and training pilot program offered at a local community college. While these programs demonstrate effectiveness and promising practices, the cost of additional integrated programs will require the identification of significant resources to address the nearly prohibitive cost to support expansion.

#### Career Pathways

The Susquehanna Region is committed to the creation of career pathways in industries with growth potential. These industries have been identified through labor market data and industry focus groups. There have been several attempts to develop career pathways beyond the secondary education level. Local community colleges are initiating pathway development in healthcare and administrative services.

#### Business Engagement and Intermediaries

As previously described in Section 2 (D) the workforce area has a mature Business Engagement Team which is comprised of SWN Business Service Representatives, representatives from the Offices of Economic Development and various workforce and economic development partners. The Team connects a variety of resources to the

business community to meet determined needs and grow their business. SWN has a long history of working collaboratively with area Chambers of Commerce and business entities such as the Northeastern Maryland Technology Council and RAMP MD; among others.

#### Sector Strategies

Sector strategies have been supported to include Manufacturing, Information Technology, Construction and Warehouse and Distribution to varying degrees. The use of focus groups, business panels, surveys, expos and symposiums have all advanced efforts to support industry sector initiatives in the workforce area.

- (F) A description of how the Local Board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the Local Area with economic development activities carried out in the Local Area in which the Local Area (or planning region) is located, and promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services;

#### Collaborative Planning

The Workforce Board membership includes the Economic Development Directors for Cecil and Harford Counties. The Executive Director of SWN is appointed to the Cecil County Economic Development Commission (EDC) and the Harford County Economic Development Advisory Board (EDAB). Representatives of the offices of Economic Development serve on two major standing committees of SWN: Business Engagement Committee and Economic Competitiveness Committee. Various members of the Workforce Board are also members of the EDC and EDAB.

The work of the Board and the standing committees have facilitated the coordination and alignment of workforce development priorities with the priorities of each office of economic development. These organizations have collectively produced marketing materials for growth industries and occupations in demand. Most recently they have collaborated on a local labor market analysis study which will be used widely by various organizations to support workforce and economic development planning and programming.

#### Collective Service Delivery

Facilitating and planning workforce attraction, retention and development activities that address the needs of area businesses is an ongoing collaborative effort; essentially a matter of routine at strategic and operational levels. Additionally, when notice of company downsizings and/or closings are received, the local Rapid Response Team engages with representatives from the offices of economic development.

#### Entrepreneurial Skills Training and Microenterprise Services

Entrepreneurial Skills Training was identified in Cecil and Harford Counties as a credible workforce development strategy, given that 76% of the business establishments in the

region are micro establishments (0-9 employees). The County Chambers of Commerce often offer entrepreneurial training with business mentors that were entrepreneurs. In Harford County, Harford's Business Edge (HBE), a non-profit entity, leads many of the Harford County entrepreneurial initiatives in collaboration with many representatives and organizations. Members of the Local Board, as well as SWN's Executive Director are members of the HBE Board. The Local Board and SWN staff support business incubator efforts in the region and will continue to engage and support activities with small business and entrepreneurial programs and organizations such as the Small Business Development Center, MD Procurement Technical Assistance Program and others.

- (G) A description of how the Local Board will leverage and coordinate supportive services in the delivery of workforce development activities carried out in the Local Area. Specifically, the Local Plan should address how the Local Board will work with Local Management Boards and other providers to deliver supportive services to jobseekers;

#### Supportive Services

Based on the needs of the job seekers, every effort will be made to access supportive services from multiple funding streams and through collaborative efforts with partners. The provision of Supportive Services available to the customers of the workforce system will be based on the referral partner and the assets available through the system.

#### Local Management Board Coordination

The Directors of the Local Management Board (LMB) are members of the Susquehanna Youth Committee. The priority of the LMB in Cecil County is the completion of a needs assessment targeting disconnected youth, incarceration impact, mental health and substance abuse in children, mental health, substance abuse and homelessness. The LMB in Harford County is also conducting a youth assessment and service availability in Harford County.

The WIOA Youth Vendors and the LMBs have discussed referral strategies for disconnected youth. Currently, the Local Management Boards are either funding services to youth younger than the age range stipulated through WIOA or are not funding any organized service delivery to youth. Both local LMB's are in planning stages that may result in changes to their service priorities and strategies. The two LMB's are represented on the Local Boards Youth Committee and have been provided with referral protocol for youth who meet the service criteria of the youth vendors funded through WIOA. Continued engagement with WIOA partners through the Youth Committee will further foster alignment of youth services.

- (H) A description of how the Local Board intend to provide a greater business voice in the delivery of workforce development activities carried out in the Local Area. The description should include how the Local Board will engage businesses on decisions regarding the type and content of training activities;

The Economic Competitiveness Committee of the Local Board has facilitated focus groups and

developed surveys with industry specific groups within the past few years. The industries were chosen based on Labor Market data and the industry growth potential in the region. Thus far the following industry groups have been surveyed for their training needs: Manufacturing, Information Technology and Construction.

The Business Services Team continues to assess the needs of the specific industries. A coalition of like businesses was formed for the EARN Initiative. Specific training needs were identified and validated once a training curriculum was found or developed. The Economic Competitiveness Committee and the Business Services Team will continue to form industry coalitions to support the economic growth and relevancy in the region.

- (I) A description of how the Local Board will promote and cultivate industry-led partnerships, such as career pathways and EARN Maryland, in the delivery of workforce training opportunities.

The Local Board will utilize current Labor Market data to prioritize the development of career pathways in concert with local education institutions. The benefits cited by Manufacturing Coalition members have proven to be powerful recruitment tools in the formation of other industry coalitions. The Business Services Team in the region have led the effort in insuring that the needs of Coalition members were met and provided with resources for skill enhancement of their workforce. SWN has sponsored Industry Expos featuring the employment opportunities through this industry.

The most mature industry-led partnership currently implemented in the region is the Manufacturing Coalition through EARN. The members of this Coalition have provided immeasurable assistance in identifying their industry needs, validating training curriculum and hiring trained customers. The Local Board plans to utilize this model when forming other expanded Industry Coalitions to address needs of growth industries in the region.

- (J) A description of the role (if any) of local faith or community-based organizations in the local workforce development system.

A new Ambassador Program was initiated by SWN to inform community-based and faith based organizations of the services provided through the workforce system. This outreach initiative was developed to enhance the awareness and accessibility of the workforce system. The Ambassador Program is scheduled quarterly at one of the region's Workforce Centers. In addition to providing information, the program facilitators are identifying ways to assist and support the work of each organizations through coordination strategies and opportunities. The development of a database has been established to communicate with these community and faith-based organization on a consistent basis.

### Section 3 – American Job Center Delivery System

This Section should include a description of the American Job Center delivery system in the Local Area, including

(A) List the American Job Centers in your Local Area, including address and phone numbers. Indicate the One-Stop Operator for each site and whether it is a comprehensive or satellite center.

There are three comprehensive One-Stop Centers. The centers are located in Aberdeen, Bel Air, and Elkton at the following addresses:

Susquehanna Workforce Center -University Center, 1201 Technology Drive, Aberdeen, MD – 410-272-5400 / fax 443-327-8763

Susquehanna Workforce Center-Bel Air, 2 South Bond Street, Bel Air, MD – 410-836-4603 / fax 410-836-4640

Susquehanna Workforce Center-Elkton, 1275 West Pulaski Highway, Elkton, MD – 410-996-0550 / fax 410-996-0555

The Workforce Centers are currently jointly operated by SWN and the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation, Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning

(B) Customer Flow System - Describe the customer flow process used in the Local Area. This description should include eligibility assessment, individualized training plans and case management.

In the design of an innovative and customer-centered delivery system, all system partners will continue to evaluate the most efficient and effective ways to meet the needs of customers. Customer Flow System design and process refinement will be ongoing discussions by the WIOA Partners; and likely evolve over the duration of this Plan. The initial design is as below.

#### Workforce Center Flow

- Workforce Center visits
- Identify purpose of the customer's visit
- Based on purpose of visit:
  - Career Services – register in MWE, orientation and Workforce Center seminars
  - Job Search – register in MWE, LMI information and linkages to recruiting events in the region by local businesses
- Individualized Career Advising
  - Eligibility Determination & Service Appropriateness
  - Assessments: basic skills, career and occupational skills
  - Create an Employment and Training Plan
  - Training Research – LMI (occupations In demand)
  - Need of support services identified
  - Referral to partner programs as needed
- Training Enrollment
- Follow-up Services for at least a year

## Partner Referral Flow

- Referred to the Workforce Center by a system partner
- Review Customer Referral Form to determine purpose of referral
- Based on purpose of visit:
  - Career Services – register in MWE, orientation to Workforce Center seminars
  - Job Search – register in MWE, LMI Information and linkages to recruiting events in the region by local businesses
- Individual Career Advising
  - Eligibility Determination & Service Appropriateness
  - Review assessments from Customer Referral Form or conduct assessments as needed
  - Create an Employment and Training Plan
  - Training Research – LMI (occupations in demand)
  - Need of support services identified
- Training enrollment
- Follow-up Services for at least a year
- System referral partner will be kept informed throughout this process

Note that upon identifying the purpose of a customer's visit, it is determined if the customer is a member of priority target population segment and the Priority of Service levels. If the customer is a veteran, a referral will be made to a veteran specialist for assistance.

(C) Describe how the Local Board will ensure meaningful access to all customers.

The majority of services will be accessed through the Workforce Centers in the Susquehanna Region and through system affiliate sites. Technology will be deployed to insure accessibility for limited English speaking individuals, people with disabilities, and persons with non-traditional employment goals. Partner access strategies will be specified in the Partner MOU's. The Local Board will assess and monitor advancements to customer access by reviewing adherence to the MOU's and best practices identified by the Partner organizations. The full development of a comprehensive workforce system is an ongoing work in progress and strives to increase effectiveness over time. The Local Board has elected to utilize the Partner MOU's as a primary mechanism to elevate and enhance access to the local system. Inasmuch as the MOU's will likely be more frequently revised and executed, this strategy seems most logical and effective. The partners have identified critical components in the development of a comprehensive system. See Section 2, A.

- (D) A description on the process the Local Board intends to provide for the solicitation and selection of a One-Stop Operator as identified in Section 107 of WIOA.

The Board's Executive Committee will perform the initial analysis of the options provided by the WIOA law and the regulations. Further input will be solicited from WIOA Partners and the Local Board. The Local Board will ensure the solicitation and selection of a One Stop Operator in compliance with Section 107 of WIOA, related federal and state policy and local procurement policy.

- (E) A description of how the Local Board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local businesses, and workers and jobseekers;

The Board plans to utilize its standing committees, ad-hoc committees, and the WIOA Partners to ensure and drive continuous improvement of service delivery and eligible providers of services. Additionally, the selection of service providers will focus on those who are effective in delivering the needed services required to meet the needs of local businesses, workers and job seekers. Labor market and business demand will drive occupational training programs. Criteria used for the selection of service providers will include the ability to meet program design requirements, relevance and reasonableness of cost, past performance and experience, adequacy of financial resources, impeccable record of integrity, experience, account and operational controls, the technical skills to perform the work, and the lead to employment.

- (F) A description of how the Local Board will facilitate access to services provided through the American Job Center delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and through other means;

The Local Board will facilitate access to services provided through the workforce system by increasing the awareness and understanding of all workforce system partner services. Through the partner meetings, an awareness of existing partner services are identified. Through this process, service gaps will also be identified and addressed.

Cecil and Harford Counties are a mix of suburban and rural areas. Many small and rural communities lie outside of major population centers. While the available public transportation services are being enhanced, the use of private transportation is a necessity which poses a major barrier for many of our citizens. Because of these factors, we have and will encourage the use of technology for service access. SWN's website, [www.SWNetwork.org](http://www.SWNetwork.org) hosts a basic assessment instrument for youth and adults who are beginning their career search and provides an overview of services and the most recent job recruitments. The Maryland Workforce Exchange, <https://mwejobs.maryland.gov> is promoted at our three Workforce Centers, affiliate sites and throughout the counties' library system.



(G) A description of how entities within the American Job Center delivery system, including American Job Center operators and the American Job Center partners, will comply with Section 188 of WIOA, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C.12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities;

SWN will ensure that services will be accessible to qualified individuals with disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Each Workforce Center will conduct an annual assessment of accessibility of their Center. The assessment will be reviewed for compliance and any deficiencies will be addressed. WIOA Partners will acknowledge compliance through the execution of MOU's with the Local Board. A coordinated referral process between the One-Stop Centers, the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS), and other organizations that provide specialized services to people with disabilities will ensure streamlined services. Through DORS, eligible job seekers with disabilities will have access to specialized employment related services. Additionally, DORS will assist with identifying needs and developing strategies to support physical and programmatic accessibility. Accessibility Assessments have been conducted by staff of the Susquehanna Workforce Network and staff of the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation on an annual basis at each Workforce Center. Based on Section 188 regulations and forthcoming guidance, necessary adaptations to this process will be made as further guidance is provided.

(H) An acknowledgment that the Local Board understands that, while Section 188 of WIOA ensure equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities, sub-recipients may also be subject to the requirements of:

- a. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, which prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities by recipients of Federal financial assistance;
- b. Title I of the ADA, which prohibits discrimination in employment based on disability;
- c. Title II of the ADA, which prohibits State and local governments from discriminating on the basis of disability;
- d. Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act; and
- e. Maryland Anti-Discrimination laws;

As a condition of financial assistance under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, the grant applicant assures, with respect to operation of WIOA funded programs or activities and all agreement or arrangements to carry out the WIOA funded programs or activities, that it will comply fully with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions and requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, which prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities by recipients of Federal financial assistance; Title I of the ADA, which prohibits discrimination in employment based on disability; Title II of the ADA, which prohibits State and local governments from discriminating on the basis of disability; Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act; and

Maryland Anti-Discrimination laws.

(I) A description of the roles and resource contributions of the American Job Center partners;

The Local Board expects that One-Stop Partners will comply with WIOA Section 121 (b) (1) (A) of WIOA as follows:

- Provide access through the one-stop delivery system to such program or activities carried out by the entity, including making the career services described in section 134(c)(2) that are applicable to the program or activities available at the one-stop centers
- Use a portion of the funds available for the program and activities to maintain the one-stop delivery system, including payment of the infrastructure costs associated with the centers
- Enter into a local Memorandum of Understanding with the local board, relating to the operation of the one-stop system
- Participate in the operation of the one-stop system consistent with the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding, the requirements of WIOA and the requirements of the Federal laws authorizing the program or activities.

(J) A description of how the Local Board will use Individualized Training Accounts based on high-demand, difficult to fill positions identified within local priority industries identified in Section 1(A);

Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) will be provided to eligible individuals through the workforce delivery system for occupational specific training programs and are for in-demand occupations and/or within priority industries as determined by the Local Board. ITAs may be used to access training providers from vendors who are listed on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) and other approved providers and programs when ETPL programs are not available or accessible. The Local Board currently has identified \$4,500.00 as a dollar limitation for an ITA; this amount may be adjusted. Exceptions to the policy will be allowed for certain occupations that are in high demand and are designated as a local priority.

ITAs are utilized for programs that are occupational specific. The length of training can be up to two years or until the cap is reached. Participants must maintain good academic standing and be making satisfactory progress to remain in their selected program.

The Local Board reserves the right to adjust the aforementioned ITA dollar limitations if it would be deemed in the best interest of the customer and the Local Board.

(K) A description of how the Local Board will provide priority of service that conforms with the State Plan. This should include a description of additional local requirements or discretionary priorities including data to support the need and how the local requirement and/or priority will be documented and implemented for the Adult program.

Veterans and eligible spouses will receive the first level of priority of service.

The veterans and eligible spouses are identified at entry points in the Centers and receive priority referral to services over non-veterans. Monitoring for compliance is done constantly at all levels: Management, Workforce Center Coordinators/Managers, Supervisors and Line Staff.

The Workforce system in the Susquehanna Region will comply with Policy Issuance 2016-04-Employment Services for Veterans-February 24, 2016.

Priority of service for the WIOA Title I Adult Program

Priority of service beyond first level (veterans and eligible spouse) will include the following population segment and/or barrier priorities:

Individuals who are not veterans or eligible spouses, but meet criteria to be considered a target population including: Individuals with Disabilities, Mature Workers, unemployed individuals including long-term unemployed, Out-of-school Youth/Young Adults, Ex-offenders, Homeless individuals, low income individuals (including TANF and SNAP recipients)

Priority of service for WIOA Dislocated Workers

Priority of service will be given to dislocated workers who are residents of the region. The Board approved a tiered system for categorizing dislocated workers based on most-in-need status using such criteria as obsolete skills, disability status and unemployment profile.

The Susquehanna Workforce Area system partners have a history of serving individuals with barriers to employment through various programs and remain committed to serving hard to serve and targeted populations. Susquehanna's WIOA Partners will continue priority of services to targeted populations through strategies that include staff training, dissemination of information on services available throughout the system, referral systems that efficiently connect customers to appropriate WIOA partner services and programs, and continuing to strengthen relationships, competence, and accountability among all partners involved in the system.

Target Populations: Individuals with Barriers to Employment

- Displaced Homemakers
- Eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers
- Ex-offenders
- Homeless individuals
- Individuals facing substantial cultural barriers
- Individuals with disabilities, including youth with disabilities
- Individuals within two years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under Part A of the Social Security Act
- Individuals who are English language learners
- Individuals who are unemployed, including the long-term unemployed
- Individuals who have low levels of literacy

- Individuals without a High School Diploma
- Low income individuals (including TANF and SNAP recipients)
- Native Americans, Alaskan Natives, and Native Hawaiians
- Older individuals
- Single parents (including single pregnant women and non-custodial parents)
- Veterans
- Youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system

Priority of Service for the WIOA Title I Adult Program

First Priority: Veterans and eligible spouses who are also low-income, recipients of public assistance and/or basic skills deficient

Second Priority: Individuals who meet criteria to be considered a target population (including veterans)

Third Priority: Eligible spouses who did not meet “first priority” conditions

Fourth Priority: Individuals who are not veterans and do not meet criteria to be considered a target population

(L) A description of how the Local Board will utilize funding to create incumbent worker training opportunities.

The Business Engagement Team will identify the training needs of local businesses. Their monthly business contacts assist in identifying the specific training required for businesses to grow and remain competitive. Additionally, the Local Board in collaboration with workforce and economic development partners may prioritize industry sector and occupational categories. The Team utilizes a variety of funding streams to assist businesses in strengthening their workforce. The offices of economic development often have incumbent worker training funds and SWN may have industry specific training funds from other non WIOA grants and resources. Maryland recently initiated an incumbent worker training program which will be presented as a viable training source to local businesses. The Local Board may utilize up to 20% of the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker resources to support Incumbent Worker training. Incumbent Worker training will be employer driven, and will require a minimum of a 50% match by the employer. This training strategy will use a cost reimbursement methodology.

(M) A description of how the Local Board will train and equip staff to provide excellent, WIOA-compliant customer service.

The staff that provides direct service to the customers at the three Workforce Centers has a history of providing an efficient and “customer friendly” delivery of service while still meeting the WIOA compliance requirements. Monthly customer satisfaction reports have indicated a satisfactory rating of no less than 96%. In preparation for the transitioning to WIOA, the

complete delivery system was reviewed and evaluated in the context of a “customer centered” design model. The Local Board has invested in staff development training to enhance the proficiency of the staff. All staff who provide direct service to job seeking and business customers are encouraged to obtain and maintain industry recognized credentials in areas such as resume writing, government job applications, job coaching and career facilitation.

Currently, customer triage, intake and documentation obtainment processes are being evaluated to insure that the customer’s needs are met without unnecessary delay and exhibit high quality customer service and satisfaction.

## Section 4 – Title I – Adult, Youth and Dislocated Worker Functions

This Section should include –

- (A) A description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the Local Area;

Employment and training services as described in Title I of WIOA, including career and training services will be delivered through the region’s Workforce Centers. The Centers in the Susquehanna Workforce Area have demonstrated the ability to deliver effective and innovative workforce services with high levels of customer satisfaction. The WIOA Partners represent a multi-disciplinary team that includes education, social services, workforce services, housing, rehabilitation services, and the Local Board. Partner services will be integrated where feasible and provided and/or accessed through the Centers. Partner agencies may continue to provide services at existing partner affiliate locations in addition to those provided at the Workforce Centers. The regions Workforce Centers offer a consistent menu of career and training services as described in WIOA and as further identified Section 4 (F) and (G). Each Workforce Center currently has the capacity to increase partner on-site presence and services as afforded by the partner programs. This expansion will be encouraged through ongoing discussions and through WIOA Partner quarterly meetings and planning activities.

- (B) A description of how the Local Board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the Local Area with statewide rapid response activities, as described in Section 134(a)(2)(A).

The Local Board, through its Business Services staff and Business Engagement Team, will lead and ensure proper coordination of rapid response activities. SWN Business Service Representative will ensure a coordinated effort with the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation Dislocated Worker Services Unit and other local partners to provide an array of rapid response services to employers and their employees affected by the movement and loss of jobs in the region. In addition to information on services provided through the Workforce Centers, topics such as unemployment insurance, health insurance, financial assistance, labor market information and other partner services will be included as appropriate.

As referenced in USDOL Training and Employment Guidance Letter 19-16, it is critical for Rapid Response activities to be carried out in conjunction with the Local Board, Chief Elected Officials and other stakeholders. The workforce areas Business Engagement Team and local staff are critically positioned to have established relationship with the local enterprises experiencing closures and/or significant loss of personnel resulting from downsizing. Additionally, this collaborative team is well positioned and aware of the local and state assets available to assist companies and their impacted workers. This supports the customization and delivery of services that are planned jointly with company officials; and in collaboration with the Dislocated Worker

Services Unit. The workforce area's Business Engagement Team includes multiple partner programs to include local economic development officials, education and training representatives, veteran program staff and other economic and workforce development partners.

- (C) A description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce development activities in the Local Area, including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities, which description and assessment shall include an identification of successful models of such youth workforce investment activities;

The youth workforce development activities include an objective assessment which includes academic levels, skill levels, work experience, employability, interests and aptitudes and supportive service needs. The SWN youth training providers assess reading and math functioning levels through either CASAS or TABE basic skills assessment. A Transition-to-Work Inventory is the basic assessment used for Career Planning by identifying interests, career clusters, and career options. Youth with disabilities are encouraged to use the Woofound interest assessment for their initial career assessment. All youth services funded through WIOA receive or have access to the fourteen required program elements.

- (D) A description of how the Local Board will coordinate education and workforce development activities carried out in the Local Area with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services;

Since 2000, the Susquehanna Workforce Network and Local Board has advanced efforts and developed significant expertise in local labor market information, industry growth and trends and produced and/or collaborated on projects that produced analysis and information that has been used throughout the region. These products have been used by economic and workforce development partners, local governmental organizations, education and training provides throughout the region. In 2016, a Labor Market Analysis of the region will be produced in collaboration with the Offices of Economic Development.

The Local Board believes this analysis along with Business Engagement activities and other industry related activities validates critical information that supports the advancement of secondary and postsecondary education programs and services. Most recently this information has contributed to and supported the expansion of CTE programming, curriculum revisions and more at the Cecil County Public Schools new School of Technology. The Local Board will continue to work collaboratively with postsecondary programs in the region to align coursework being offered with relevant industry needs.

Additionally, Title I program staff work with secondary and postsecondary institutions connecting employment and training programs and services with students seeking employment in local in-demand occupations. This includes offering relevant workshops to secondary and post-secondary educational institutions, Summer Job Fairs, Entry Level Job Fairs and seminars

on job fair preparation and employability. The close proximity to area Centers further facilitates employment for students exiting secondary and postsecondary programs as well as fostering potential enrollments in Title I training services.

- (E) A description of how the Local Board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out under this title in the Local Area with the provision of transportation, including public transportation, and other appropriate supportive services in the Local Area;

The Workforce Centers are staffed with partner staff that have a keen awareness of resources and supportive services that are available through partner and community agencies. Additionally, Partner agencies will identify assistance available to system customer through their MOUs with the Local Board.

The Local Board, through Title I supportive services, provides a flat rate system designed to defray participant transportation and child care expenses through a tiered system which is reviewed and appropriately adjusted.

Additionally other supportive services may be provided, within the resources available, to participants whose Employment Plan indicates they would be unable to participate in a training program without such assistance. The supportive services made available may include, training or placement physical examinations, uniforms, driver education, license application fees, etc., necessary to meet entrance requirements to enter training, attend training, or begin employment. Recognizing that specific supportive services needs arise occasionally, the Local Board may provide other services which are allowable under WIOA if the need is identified and adequate funds are available. Financial assistance will be used to pay for necessary services only and will be limited to discrete payments required for participation. The individual's determination of such need, and the amount, will be based on the results of the objective assessment and documented in the Employment Plan. Other supportive services will be provided on a referral basis to other local human service agencies, where possible.

The Local Board reserves the option to revise Supportive Service Policy if deemed in the best interest of the customer and the program.

Members of the Local Board and/or their staff participate on local transportation initiatives and advisory groups. Collaborative planning and engagement with the Department of Social Services, Division of Rehabilitation Services, Local Management Boards and area community organizations facilitates the identification of needs and access to available transportation and supportive services that exist in the region.

- (F) A description of how the Local Board will utilize Local Adult Funding, based on adult priority groups as specified in the State Plan.



The Local Board will use Local Adult Funding to provide Title I Adult services targeting priority groups aforementioned in Section 3 (K). The focus will be on serving the most vulnerable workers (those who have limited skills, lack work experience and face other barriers to economic success); expanding education and training options to help participants access good jobs and advance in their careers; and helping disadvantaged and unemployed adults through effective employment and training activities, including supportive services. The integration and alignment of services across core, required WIOA partners and other partner organizations programs and services will be facilitated. The implementation of career pathway approaches and sector initiatives that support postsecondary education and training for adults will be encouraged.

Title I customer services will include an array of Career Services and Training as defined in WIOA that may include but are not limited to:

- Outreach, intake and orientation
- Initial assessment
- Labor exchange services
- Eligibility for services
- Referrals to programs
- Performance and cost information
- Information on unemployment insurance
- Financial aid information
- Follow-up services
- Labor Market Information
- Supportive Services Information
- Comprehensive Assessment
- Individual Employment Plan
- Career Planning, counseling
- Short-term prevocational services
- Internships, work experience
- Out-of-area job search
- Financial literacy services
- English Language acquisition
- Workforce preparation
- Occupational Skills Training
- On-the-Job Training
- Programs that combine Workplace training with Related Instruction
- Training Programs by Private Sector
- Skill Upgrading and Retraining
- Entrepreneurial Training
- Customized Training
- Incumbent Worker Training
- Adult Education and literacy activities
- Job Readiness Training

(G) A description of how the Local Board will utilize Local Dislocated Worker Funding;

The Local Board use of Dislocated Worker funding provides Title I Dislocated Worker services to workers impacted by lay-offs, downsizings and business closures. The focus will be on re-employment services that will return impacted workers to career oriented, in-demand and growing occupations that will return them to self-sufficiency. Additionally, dislocated worker resources will be utilized to expand education and training options to help participants access good jobs and advance in their careers; provision of support services, provide effective employment based activities; encourage the implementation of career pathway approaches and sector initiatives that support postsecondary education and training for dislocated workers.

Dislocated Worker customer services will include an array of Career Services and Training as defined in WIOA that may include but are not limited to:

- Outreach, intake and orientation
- Initial assessment
- Labor exchange services
- Eligibility for services
- Referrals to programs
- Performance and cost information
- Information on unemployment insurance
- Financial aid information
- Follow-up services
- Labor Market Information
- Supportive Services Information
- Comprehensive Assessment
- Individual Employment Plan
- Career Planning, counseling and advising
- Short-term prevocational services
- Internships and work experience
- Out-of-area job search
- Financial literacy services
- English Language acquisition
- Workforce preparation
- Occupational Skills Training
- On-the-Job Training
- Programs that combine Workplace training with Related Instruction
- Training Programs by Private Sector
- Skill Upgrading and Retraining
- Entrepreneurial Training
- Customized Training
- Incumbent Worker Training

- Adult Education and literacy Activities
- Job Readiness Training

(H) A description of how the Local Board will define “self-sufficiency” for employed Adult and Employed Dislocated Worker participants.

The Local Board will define self-sufficiency for Adults as an annualized income level that is at least 200% of the Health and Human Services poverty guidelines or Lower Living Standard Income Level (whichever is higher) based on family size.

The dislocated worker self-sufficiency definition is a wage equal to at least 80% of the workers wage at dislocation.

(I) A description of the Local Board’s definition of “unlikely to return to previous industry or occupation” when required for eligibility for Dislocated Worker services.

A customer is unlikely to return to previous industry or occupation if any of the following conditions exist: the previous occupation was in a declining industry; the workers skill sets are considered obsolete; is an individual no longer able to work in the industry due to illness or injury; is an individual no longer interested in working in the industry; if the labor market is saturated with similar skill sets making job acquisition difficult; and career services and/or retraining would increase the workers likelihood of securing employment.

(J) A description of how the Local Board will interpret and document eligibility criteria for “requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment” as set forth in the State’s Youth Policy and WIOA Sections 129(a)(1)(B)(iii)(VII) and (a) (1)(C)(iv)(VII);

The eligibility regarding “requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment” will be based on the State’s Youth Policy. This is defined as economically disadvantaged, 70% of Lower Living Standard. Criteria for “requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment” due to income may include the need for supportive services such as transportation assistance, childcare or tutorial services.

(K) A description of the documentation required to demonstrate a “Need for Training.”

"Need for Training" is a multifaceted discussion with the job seeker which is documented on the job seeker’s Employment Plan as well as recorded in case notes. Customers are assessed for basic skill levels, interests, capabilities, occupational skills and credentials as needed for available jobs in the labor market. Additionally, the job seeker’s job search activity, competencies and tactics as well as their understanding of the labor market are evaluated. Further, their work history and

potential barriers to employment are analyzed and goals are identified. Importantly, goals and potential training plans are evaluated based on the ability of the training and skill acquisitions to progress the customer to an improved quality of life and self-sufficiency. Examples of tools utilized include Labor Market Research, ACINET, Interest Inventories, Employer Inquiries, and Career Assessments.

- (L) A description of how the Local Board will provide the fourteen required program elements for the WIOA Youth program design.

The Local Board competitively procures youth services utilizing a Request for Proposal (RFP). In the RFP, the statement of work requires each proposer to provide the required youth elements or to indicate community resources that will assist them in the provision of the elements. Staff employed by the SWN provide work experience and entrepreneurial services to the youth funded through WIOA.

Each youth vendor describes how they will ensure that all fourteen elements are provided to the youth in their contracts. Community resources have been identified to support the delivery of these elements.

- (M) A description of the steps the Local Board will take to ensure at least 20% of Youth Funds are used for work-based training activities;

The SWN employs a Youth Work Experience Specialist to provide workplace readiness activities to the WIOA funded youth. The Specialist is responsible for developing appropriate work experiences for the youth and transitioning them to the Workforce Centers for additional employability development activities.

- (N) A description of the Local Board's plan to serve 75%+ out of school youth and identify specific steps that have been taken to meet this new goal; and

The SWN has been providing 100% out of school youth services since 2006. The Local Board plans to continue to utilizing the same proven strategies to serve 100% out-of-school youth through partnerships with the public schools, community colleges (Adult Education), Departments of Social Services, DORS and community based organizations.

- (O) If the Local Area has contracted with youth service providers, provide a list and description of services.

The youth segments targeted through a competitive procurement are youth who have dropped out of the public schools, youth who have graduated high school or have a GED but are basic skills deficient, youth in need of supervision and youth with disabilities. The Request for Proposal (RFP) specifies the population segments targeted, requires adherence to Youth Program Design and the delivery of elements from a menu of the required fourteen program elements.

The Program Design must include an objective assessment, the development of Individual Service Strategies (ISS), preparation for post-secondary/employment individual needs assessment by identifying linkages between academic and occupational learning, linkages to the Workforce Centers and how the menu of program elements will be delivered and by whom.

The basic skill assessment must be one of the approved academic assessment instruments. The Individual Service Strategy instrument is standardized for all youth vendors to insure the elements are documented and the service strategies are conducted in collaboration with the youth.

Youth vendors may provide comprehensive guidance and counseling, case management services, tutoring services as needed, ABE/GED as applicable, occupational skill training as applicable, adult mentoring, leadership development, financial literacy and one year of follow-up services after the completion of their intensive year of service delivery.

The Susquehanna Workforce Network's Youth Work Experience Specialist will provide basic entrepreneurial training, labor market information, preliminary career interest assessments and work experience services to youth enrolled in the year-round program.

- (P) A description of how the Local Board will provide basic and individualized career services to customers. The description should explain how individualized career services will be coordinated across program/partners in the American Job Centers, including Vocational Rehabilitation, TANF, and Adult Education and Literacy activities. This description should specify how the Local Area will coordinate with these programs to prevent duplication and improve services to customers.

All job seeking customers will be provided basic and individualized career services at Workforce Center locations in the workforce area. Career services may also be provided at WIOA partner locations as capacity and capabilities exist and are developed. The Local Board and WIOA Partners, through the development, negotiation and execution of MOUs and Resource Sharing Agreements will identify these capabilities, coordinate delivery, ensure alignment and access, enhance quality and prevent duplication.

- (Q) Describe the Local Board's follow-up services policy. This should include follow-up requirements, frequency of contact, and required documentation.

Follow-up services may be provided for up to 12 months after the first day of employment. Workforce Center staff will perform follow-up through a variety of means that will include telephone, email, personal contact and mailings. These services are designed to assist the customer in obtaining and retaining employment. Follow up services are intended to provide assistance and guidance after entering employment such as tracking progress on the job, referrals for additional services, and other assistance that may increase employment success. Title I funded staff provide follow-up at least quarterly for one year following exit. This information is tracked in the participant's records.

## Section 5 – Wagner-Peyser Functions

This Section should include --

- (A) A description of plans and strategies for, and assurances concerning, maximizing coordination of services provided by the State employment service under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) and services provided in the Local Area through the American Job Center delivery system, to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services.

The Susquehanna Workforce Network staff and the Wagner-Peyser (WP) staff have co-operated the three Workforce Centers in the region since 2000. This history of coordination will facilitate the continued harmonization of WIOA Career Services and Wagner-Peyser Act staff functions through the workforce delivery system. The Memorandum of Understanding between the Local Board and Partners will further promote and describe service delivery functions; avoiding duplication of services. Further WIOA Partner and Operator meetings provide and support effective communications that facilitate planning, revisions and enhancement to service delivery.

As identified in the Maryland State Plan, Wagner Peyser functions will include labor exchange services and career guidance that are included as career services under Title I, and activities that assist workers in identifying and obtaining jobs in in-demand industries and occupations. The State Plan further recognizes staff development opportunities that are focused on developing Wagner-Peyser staff capabilities to operate in a number of disciplines and flexibility to move between functions, locations, and funding streams to provide seamless delivery of services. This will increase potential to further maximize and align seamless services across partner programs while minimizing potential duplication and supporting quality services to job seekers throughout the workforce area. In accordance with the US Department of Labor’s current guidance in TEGL 3-15, the primary services provided by WP staff are Basic Career Services and may include Individualized Career Services. As the aforementioned are advanced, service delivery designs will be of continuous discussion among the WIOA Partners and adherence to MOUs will be tracked and monitored via the Operator. Both of these mechanism will support quality service delivery and avoid unnecessary duplication of services.

- (B) A description of how the Local Board will utilize the Wagner-Peyser program to provide access to local workforce development services for Unemployment Insurance claimants.

A priority identified in the MD State Plan is the provision of ongoing information and training to Wagner-Peyser staff regarding the Unemployment Insurance program. As such, the WP program will lead the efforts for making Unemployment Insurance available throughout the local delivery system. WP staff will also ensure access of unemployed individuals receiving Unemployment Insurance through the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment Program (RESEA). This program is currently offered only in

Harford County. The Wagner-Peyser staff also currently conduct the Reemployment Opportunity Workshop (ROW) for profiled Unemployed Insurance recipients in the workforce area. These programs place a greater emphasis in connecting unemployment insurance claimants to workforce system services.

(C) If applicable, a description of how the Local Board will ensure that migrant and seasonal farm workers in its Local Area will be provided employment services.

➤ Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW) Program

The MSFW program will be included in the Local Board's Memorandum of Understanding and Resource Sharing Agreements which will identify MSFW services, referral and service processes and be a primary mechanism to report and ensure the provision of MSFW employment services.

- The Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker Program (MSFW) is monitored by the State Monitor Advocate. Locally the program is serviced by a DLLR/WP staff member currently located in Cecil County.
- To provide access to the full array of services at the One Stop that is afforded to non-migrant workers to include outreach to work sites; provision of written materials regarding One Stop Locations; Community Resources; Educational services; Job Search and Placement; Training information; Usage of office equipment. May include access to services to remedy language barriers.
- Conduct field visits to include camp inspections to ensure workers are knowledgeable of One Stop Services, and provide community service information.
- Provide services to both farm owners/operators and workers by ensuring H2A clearance orders are properly entered into the state computer system, and by performing pre-season housing inspections.
- Compile appropriate reports.

## Section 6 – Title II – Adult Education and Family Literacy Functions

This Section should include --

- (A) A description of how the Local Board will coordinate workforce development activities in the Local Area integrating the provision of adult education and literacy activities under Title II of WIOA, including, but not limited to, the implementation of the career pathways model. The description should include a discussion of how the Local Board will comply with requirements to review local applications submitted under Title II as set forth in guidance provided by the Division of Workforce Development’s Office of Adult Education and Literacy Services. Once review has been conducted, the Local Board will submit documentation (DLLR WIOA Alignment Form) of the review and any recommendations for increased alignment to the applicant for Title II services in a timely manner;

A priority for alignment and collaboration was established in 2011 with the Consolidated Adult Education and Family Literacy Service Grant. This alignment and coordination initiative includes activities that will integrate adult education and workforce services including Career Pathways initiatives. The Local Board, will coordinate and integrate Core Partner services to ensure that Title II participants maximize the opportunities available in the area. The Local Board will establish a review process of the applications that is consistent with DLLR guidance to ensure alignment with the Local Workforce Plan and priorities.

- (B) A description of how the Local Board will coordinate efforts with Title II providers to align basic skills and English language assessments. The description should include:
- An outline of the agreed upon steps that will be taken to align basic education skills and English language assessments within the local area, including, but not limited to, any Memoranda of Understanding entered into by the workforce development and adult learning partners;
  - An identification of how assessment scores will be shared among WIOA Title I areas and Title II providers (Consideration must be given to the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA));
  - An identification of who will conduct which of the approved assessments (including for Trade Participants) and when such assessments will be conducted, consistent with this policy;
  - An outline of how the local area will coordinate testing between workforce development and adult education providers; and,
  - An outline of how the local area will ensure that test administrators are to be trained in accordance with this policy and applicable testing guidelines as set forth by the applicable test publisher.

Title II representatives will be included as part of the discussion and negotiations of the MOUs. The adult education partner will provide assessment, advising, and instructional services in adult basic and secondary skills and/or English language skills. The workforce system will utilize compatible and approved assessment instruments when identifying the basic education needs of customers. The workforce staff will be trained in administering the common assessments utilized by Title II providers.



The sharing of assessment scores is currently done in a youth funded program and with the informed consent of the customer. A formal agreement will be executed to include the sharing of assessment scores for the adult and dislocated worker populations. Title II providers will request that students sign FERPA release forms so that educational records, including assessment data, can be shared. Assessments conducted in the Workforce Centers will be administered by trained staff.

Wagner Peyser staff who specialize in services to Trade participants facilitates the delivery of services related to the Trade Program. Based on the training services requested, arrangements for assessments will be arranged.

The workforce center staff has the capability of administering basic education, career and skill assessments. Once it is determined through a customer's Employment Plan their training choice, the occupational training provider may require occupational specific assessments which they will administer.

Test administrators will be trained annually, or as necessary, by college staff or directly from the testing system (TABE or CASAs). These assessment systems have online certification opportunities that create the potential flexibility needed for test administration. The primary partners administering assessments will be Adult Education and WIOA Title I.

- (C) A description of how the Local Board will ensure that the individual appointed to represent Title II services on the Board will coordinate with all Title II Grant Administrators in the Local Area in a uniform, regular and consistent manner.

The Title II services are currently provided by the two community colleges in the Susquehanna Workforce Area. Currently the presidents of both community colleges are appointed to the Board. Additionally, Title II Grant Administrators and/or other representatives of the community colleges actively participate on various subcommittees of the Board. These include the Business Engagement Committee, Youth Committee and Economic Competitiveness described in Section I. Title II Representatives are apprised of the Local Boards schedule and participate on the area's Youth Committee. Additionally, the Local Boards meetings are open to the public. The Title II representatives are accessible through standard communications channels such as phone, email and in-person. Additionally, the Title II representative is responsible to attend all local WIOA Partner meetings. This affords routine and effective coordination amongst partners.

Further, there exists multiple levels of coordination between Title II and the workforce system: youth vendors have direct and indirect relationships with the workforce staff: Workforce Center staff routinely work with the Deans of Career and Continuing Education and other program staff.

(D) A description of how adult education services will be provided in the American Job Center system within the Local Area.

Adult education services will be provided through the existing established referral systems. There are ample opportunities scheduled throughout the year to inform each partner of the comprehensive services that each partner delivers. The local MOUs specify the responsibilities of each partner. Through cross training and multiple partner engagement opportunities the local partners have developed and will make direct referrals to Title II services.

## Section 7 – Vocational Rehabilitation Functions

This Section should include --

- (A) A description of the replicated cooperative agreements (as defined in section 107(d)(11)) between the Local Board or other local entities described in section 101(a)(11)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 721(a)(11)(B)) and the local office of a designated State agency or designated State unit administering programs carried out under title I of such Act (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.) (**The Maryland State Department of Education’s Division of Rehabilitation Services**) (other than section 112 or part C of that title (29 U.S.C. 732, 741) and subject to section 121(f)) in accordance with section 101(a)(11) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 721(a)(11)) with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination.

SWN has a long standing collaborative relationship with DORS. DORS staff provide assistance to SWN customers when their disability is beyond the capability of SWN staff. Specialized assessments are provided to SWN customers when required. As a partner, all employability development efforts are shared and participation of partners is highly encouraged.

The Maryland State Department of Education/Division of Rehabilitative Services, in accordance with 29 U.S.C. 721(a)(11) will provide the following services to individuals with disabilities:

- Provide intake, orientation and assessments for disabled job-seekers;
- Promote employment of persons with disabilities;
- Based on a comprehensive assessment of an individual’s disabilities, determine an individual’s eligibility for services in accordance with the Division’s Order of Selection Criteria;
- Develop an Individualized Employment Plan;
- Provide guidance and counseling, physical restoration, and training to financially eligible persons with disabilities;
- Provide follow-up services to enhance job retention;
- Provide other services as may be available and appropriate;
- Provide Pre-employment Transitioning Services to students with disabilities, as defined by WIOA;
- Provide Supported Employment Services for youth and adults with disabilities as defined by WIOA;
- Provide independent living services to enhance the capacity of persons with disabilities to live unaided in the community;
- Provide performance information as required by WIOA;
- Provide cross training of Workforce staff on disability related issues;
- Provide technical assistance on disability related issues and on assistive technology;
- Engage employers through the Divisions Business Liaisons;
- Work in a collaborative manner to coordinate services among the Workforce Partners for individuals with disabilities.

(B) A description of how individuals with disabilities will be served through the American Job Center system in the Local Area.

Individual with disabilities have always been served at the Workforce Centers in the SWN workforce area. Adaptable equipment and software have been purchased and is available for use at Centers. Through cooperative agreements with DORS, individuals that need specialized equipment not available at the Workforce Centers are referred to DORS.

Youth with disabilities are encouraged to participate in youth funded programs. Two DORS employees serve on the Youth Committee and are aware of youth services provided through the WIOA funded programs and youth job fairs held throughout the year.

As with all individuals, regardless of disability status, who access the Workforce Centers, the goal is to have a universal referral form, which will enable individuals to connect with the services they need. In addition, the goal is to ensure that all information and services provided are accessible, regardless of the individual's disability. DORS will provide training to partners in such areas as: programmatic and physical accessibility, serving individuals with disabilities that require support services, disability etiquette and sensitivity training and assistive technology.

## Section 8 – Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Functions

DHR, in partnership with the 24 Local Departments of Social Services (LDSS) and the WIOA Partners, will implement this new mandated partnership using a phased in approach over the four year period of Maryland’s WIOA Combined Plan in all 12 Workforce Development Areas Statewide. This will allow for strategic and thoughtful roll-out, flexibility based on crucial local needs and input, evaluation and ability to change course as needed. With guidance and technical assistance from DHR and DLLR, Local Areas will work to implement a functional approach to integration which may include revised practices and policies related to:

- Eligibility
- The range and sequent of services
- The use of funds for supportive services
- Income support
- Performance measurement
- Reporting requirements
- Administrative structures and decision making

The phased in schedule will be informed by the WIOA/TANF readiness assessment data gleaned from both the LDSS and Workforce Development Areas.

This Section should include-

- (A) A description of the Local Board’s implementation timeline and planning activities for TANF (e.g., strategies for improving customer intake, service coordination, client monitoring and tracking, targeting employment services to low-skill, low-wage workers, etc.).

The Susquehanna Workforce Area has been selected for Phase One implementation based on the data from the TCA/WIOA Readiness Survey. This data included current levels of coordination in assessment tools, data sharing, co-location of staff, shared performance goals, cross training, braiding/blending of funding, involvement on the local workforce development board, and shared innovative strategies.

- (B) A description of the implementation and coordination process to enhance the provision of services to individuals on TANF that includes:

- Potential co-location of LDSS and/or WIOA Partners at AJCs or LDSS depending on the nature of local partnerships and operations
- Leverage existing financial and in-kind contributions to the WIOA system to ensure coordination of services provided by multiple programs, creating a seamless approach to delivering services
- Cross train and provide technical assistance to all WIOA Partners about TANF
- Ensure that activities are countable and tracked for the TANF Work Participation Rate (WPR)
- Access to business services and employer initiatives to attract and better serve employers by marketing joint services, minimizing the burden on employers who use the centers, and provide employer-focused services through a single point of entry rather than through all partnering programs
- Contribute and provide baseline outcomes data to the WIOA system through strategies for collecting and reporting varied program reporting requirements.

The Local Board and LDSS are committed to build upon existing relationships and service coordination. Currently SWN staff provided work-based training services, follow-up services and job placement services funded through DSS in Harford County. This includes entering and narrating activities into CARES and WORKS as well as job placement and work experience opportunities. Throughout the region TANF customers are referred to and participate in activities at the Workforce Centers. Through engagement with the Business Service Team and Business Engagement Committee of the Local Board, the LDSS are apprised of all employment recruitment activities conducted in the region and needs of employers through participation on the Business Engagement Committee of SWN.

It is anticipated that through the development of the Memorandum of Understanding and Resource Sharing Agreement additional implementation, coordination and opportunities to leverage resources and contribute to outcomes will be identified. It is envisioned that the MOUs will address topics such as:

- Referral mechanisms and access to TCA services
- Cross training and technical assistance opportunities
- Business services and engagement
- Co-location and/or access to TCA services
- Contributions to system infrastructure costs
- Data sharing, performance tracking and reporting

(C) A description of the LDSS representation on the Local Board to ensure that TANF expectations, roles, and responsibilities are addressed in the Local Area.

The Local Board structure includes a seat designated to represent TANF. This seat is currently held by the Director of Harford County Department of Social Services and is appointed according to WIOA requirements and the Memorandum of Agreement between the Chief Local Elected Officials and the Local Board. Additionally, the LDSS's (Cecil and Harford) are members of the WIOA Partner Group which meets quarterly, and are apprised of the Boards meeting schedule. Both are encouraged to participate on subcommittees of the Local Board and have participated at Local Board meetings.

## Section 9 – Jobs for Veterans State Grants Functions

This Section should include --

- (A) A description of how the Local Board will provide priority of service to veterans and their eligible spouses.

The Workforce system in the Susquehanna region will comply with Policy Issuance 2016-04- Employment Services for Veterans-February 24, 2016.

The Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) - a federal program of the Department of Labor - provides funding to State Workforce Agencies through the Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) program. Through these grants, the state funds positions located at the Workforce Centers. Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialist provides intensive services to veterans with significant barriers to employment to facilitate the transition into meaningful civilian employment. The Local/Regional Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) performs outreach to local businesses and employers to advocate for the hiring of veterans.

Workforce Center staff provides priority of service (POS) to veterans in all Department of Labor job training programs. Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER), Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program Specialist (DVOP), and Workforce Center Staff are partners in the developing solutions for businesses and job seekers. These include career services such as case management, career counseling, transition assistance, individual job development, and referrals to employment. Referral mechanisms connect eligible veterans with local programs that will support the acquisition of training, licenses, and certifications for in-demand occupations.

The Veterans Program offers assistance from a DVOP specifically to veterans with significant barriers to employment. Workforce Center staff provide services to all other veterans. This includes access to various training and targeted programs designed to prepare veterans for civilian careers. Also provided is access to assistance with government job applications and federal resumes, and priority hiring through federal contractors.

A screening procedure has been implemented to identify veterans as they come into any Workforce Center. There are specific criteria which determine if a veteran or qualifying spouse are eligible to receive intensive services from a DVOP, or other services (basic or individualized) through the Center staff.

The United States Code Title 38 Chapter 41 defines an eligible spouse as: (A) The spouse of any person who died of a service-connected disability, (B) the spouse of any member of the Armed Forces serving on active duty who, at the time of application for assistance under this chapter, is listed, pursuant to section 5 the following categories and has been so listed for a

total of more than ninety days: (i) Missing in action, (ii) Captured in line of duty by a hostile force, or (iii) Forcibly detained or interned in line of duty by a foreign government or power, or (C) The spouse of any person who has a total disability permanent in nature resulting from a service-connected disability or the spouse of a veteran who died while a disability so evaluated was in existence. Detailed MWE reports of newly enrolled vets are available to JVSG staff and are utilized to connect veterans to the Centers and the menu of services available. Upon visiting a Workforce Center veterans are advised of and receive priority of services (POS). Brief screenings are completed to help determine employment needs and eligibility for specific services. Services at entry include enrollment in the Maryland Workforce Exchange, completion of Veteran Eligibility Questionnaire which assist staff in clarifying and identifying eligibility, significant barriers to employment, job readiness, and subsequent steps for our veteran customer.

The Veteran Eligibility Questionnaire is a set of questions designed to determine if the veteran meets JVSG or WIOA priority of service definitions. If the veteran meets JVSG priority of service on the Veteran Eligibility Questionnaire, then the Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) checklist is utilized to determine the need for intensive services from the DVOP. Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) include (but are not limited to) service-connected disability, homelessness, prior incarceration, age 18-24, and income. Veterans that have an SBE are eligible for intensive services with the Disabled Veteran's Outreach Program Specialist (DVOP). When veterans do not have an SBE, they are eligible for career and potential intensive services with the Workforce Center staff. Veterans are encouraged to participate in the menu of seminars and services available that will assist them with their job search and reemployment.

- (B) A description of how the Local Board will engage Local Veterans Employment Representatives in engaging and providing services to local businesses.

Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER) conduct outreach to employers and engage in advocacy efforts with hiring executives to increase employment opportunities for veterans and encourage the hiring of veterans. The Local Board will promote LVER services as appropriate through its communications strategies that include social media, job fairs and email blasts based on information provided to the Local Board by the LVER. The LVER is included and participates in the Local Boards Business Engagement Committee and collaborates with the region's Business Services staff in appropriate business meetings convened in support of determining employer needs related to Career Services, Training Services, or Educational Services. The LVER will be included in applicable meetings and efforts convened by and on behalf of the WIOA Partners and system planning meetings.



## Section 10 – Fiscal, Performance and Other Functions

This Section should include --

- (A) An identification of the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in section 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III), as determined by the chief elected official or the Governor under section 107(d)(12)(B)(i)

The Chief Local Elected Officials, Harford County Executive and the Cecil County Executive, executed a Memorandum of Agreement that establishes Harford County Government as the Grant Recipient and the Susquehanna Workforce Network, Inc. as the Fiscal Agent and Administrative Entity authorized to oversee and manage WIOA resources on behalf of the CLEO's.

The SWN Board of Directors oversees workforce area operations and establishes policy through sub-committees. The day-to-day operation of the Local Board is provided through a hired staff. The Executive Director is directly responsible to the Board of Directors, has signature authorities as designated by the Susquehanna Board and supervises and manages employment and training services and activities in the Workforce Area.

- (B) A description of financial sustainability of the American Job Center services with current funding levels, and a description of the ability to make adjustments should funding levels change.

WIOA allocation formula(s) are a significant factor in the sustainability of the regions Workforce Centers. MOU's/RSA's with WIOA Partners will also support Center operations. The Susquehanna Workforce Network evaluates the sustainability of the Workforce Centers on an annual basis and monitors revenues and expenses on a monthly bases to determine if adjustments need to be made. Adjustments are made by examining all options to include analyzing costs, budget availability, and availability of additional resources and appropriateness of cost distribution/allocation methodologies. This may result in adjustments to the budget and/or services as necessary.

- (C) A description of the competitive process to be used to award the subgrants and contracts in the Local Area for activities carried out under this title, including risk assessment of potential subgrantees and contractors;

The SWN has established a Service Provider selection process that conforms with acceptable procurement standards. The primary solicitation instrument that will be utilized is a Request for Proposal (RFP). This RFP and its corresponding evaluation criteria will ensure a competitive that includes:

- Demonstrated performance is a primary consideration

- Non-duplication of facilities or service
- Opportunity to provide educational services by appropriate education agencies
- Employment and training services which meet SWN guidelines

In determining "demonstrated performance," the SWN primarily will utilize the following evaluation criteria:

**POINTS**

**AWARD CRITERIA**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 5 | Consistent ability to exceed contractually required outcomes and performance standards, as demonstrated by success for 3 or more consecutive years. |
| 4 | Consistent ability to exceed contractually required outcomes and performance standards, as demonstrated by success for one or two years.            |
| 3 | Has met contractually required outcomes and performance standards for at least two years.   |
| 2 | Has met contractually required outcomes and performance standards during the previous year of operation.  |
| 1 | Sporadic ability in meeting required outcomes and performance standards.  |
| 0 | Consistent failure to meet performance expectations.  |

The primary consideration in selecting providers will be the effectiveness of the agency or organization in delivering comparable or related services, based on the above. Additional evaluation criteria will include, but not be limited to, ability to meet program design requirements; relevance and reasonableness of costs and cost justification; past performance and experience; adequacy of financial resources; satisfactory record of integrity, business ethics, and fiscal accountability; necessary organization, experience, accounting and operational controls; the technical skills to perform the work.

In using the RFP process, which provides for notification of its availability through the development of RFP mailing lists of those agencies wishing to receive the RFP, the SWN will provide for the opportunity for community-based organizations to be considered, as well as

providing the opportunity for appropriate education agencies in the Region to provide educational services.

### Appeals Procedure

Respondents dissatisfied with any SWN procurement recommendation who seek to appeal the matter to the SWN Executive Committee must file a written appeal with the SWN Executive Director. All appeals must be received by dates and times specified in the relevant Request for Proposal. The Executive Committee, at its discretion, will decide whether to grant the appellants an open hearing.

### YOUTH SERVICE PROVIDERS:

The selection of youth service providers is primarily conducted through a RFP process. The RFP will reflect the eligibility categories and program models that reflect Best Practices. This competitive process will allow for the specific delivery of services, targeted to a specific youth segment, identified by the Youth Committee. Final approval of the proposals will rest with the Local Board, upon recommendations from the Youth Committee.

### ADULT & DISLOCATED WORKER SERVICE PROVIDERS:

With the LEO's and Local Board's approval, the SWN will provide career services. The SWN and Workforce Center Operators have responsibility for identifying eligible providers of services. The State administers the list of eligible training providers, which the Local Board expands upon based on local needs.

- (D) A description of the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official pursuant to section 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the Local Area and to be used by the Local Board for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under subtitle B, and the American Job Center delivery system, in the Local Area;

The Local Board, chief elected official and the Governor shall annually negotiate and reach agreement on local levels of performance based on the State adjusted levels of performance established. In negotiating the local levels of performance, the local board, chief elected official and the Governor shall make adjustments for the expected economic conditions and the expected characteristics of participants to be served in the local area, using the statistical adjustment model developed pursuant to WIOA subsection (b)(3)(A)(viii).

The negotiated local levels of performance applicable to a program year shall be revised to reflect the actual economic conditions experienced and the characteristics of the populations served in the local area during each program year using the statistical adjustment model.

Additionally, Administrative and/or Program staff representing the Local Board may develop

performance measures for the Workforce Centers Operator and other service providers.

The following are the current negotiated performance measures:

Adult Measures

Employment Rate 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter after exit	69%
Employment Rate 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter after exit	69%
Credential Attainment	51%

Dislocated Worker Measures

Employment Rate 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter after exit	74%
Employment Rate 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter after exit	70%
Median Earnings	\$7,887
Credential Attainment	50%

Youth Measures

Employment/Placement 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter after exit	57%
Employment/Placement 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter after exit	57%
Credential Attainment	57%

- (E) A description of the actions the Local Board will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing board, consistent with the factors developed by the State board pursuant to Section 101(d)(6); This should include a description of the process used by the Local Board to review and evaluate performance of the local American Job Center(s) and the One-Stop Operator.

The Susquehanna Workforce Network's Board has a significant history of strategic leadership, accountability, financial performance and reputation for aligning services and programs to execute effective solutions addressing local priorities. SWN is a member for the National Associations of Workforce Boards (NAWB) and routinely will access the assets and best practices that this membership provides. In previous years, the Board assessed their capabilities as compared with NAWBs Gold Standard Board criteria that included:

- Strategic Management
- Financial Diversification
- Strategic Convening and Partnerships
- Labor Market Analysis
- Communications, Advocacy and Outreach
- Performance Measurement

In Dec 2014, the Board once again developed and Action Plan that focused on 5 similar categories that included:

- System Capacity Building
- Financial Diversification
- Strategic Convening and Partnerships
- Labor Market Information

➤ Communications, Advocacy and Outreach

The Local Board has utilized both Federal performance and local metrics to evaluate performance of the regions Workforce Centers and operations. Through its NAWB membership, the Local Board plans to take advantage of resources and other technical assistance related to the review and evaluation of the One Stop Operator; if sufficient technical assistance and local funds are available. Otherwise technical assistance and/or resources will be sought through State resources.

- (F) A description, including a copy of, of the Local Area's Individual Training Account policy. The description should include information such as selection process, dollar limits, duration, etc.

The SWN shall enter into a financial agreement with each vendor that it will be using for ITA programs. This agreement will describe the roles and responsibilities of the vendor, including dollar limits, duration, type of training, name of participant, payment terms and approvals. After the agreement is received by vendor, invoice can be submitted to the SWN. Payment for properly charged amounts shall be made by the SWN in a timely manner.

Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) will be provided to eligible individuals through the one-stop delivery system for occupational specific training programs "in-demand" occupations.

Participants will have completed services, which may include an initial assessment, basic skill and aptitude assessments, interest inventories, labor market research, support needs and/or job search and placement assistance, which has resulted in or identified the participant's inability to retain employment. Additionally, the participant will develop an employment plan that identifies training as a necessary service to gain or retain employment. Financial assistance options are provided to participants such as Pell Grants and other forms of financial assistance.

ITAs may be used to access training from vendors who are listed on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Currently, the Board has identified \$4,500 as the dollar limitation for an ITA. Exceptions to the policy (dollar limitation and ETPL) will be allowed for certain occupations that are in high demand and for occupations that are designated priority industries in the local area. ITAs will be allowed for programs that are occupational specific. Degreed programs beyond an Associate's Degree will not be eligible for an ITA. Exceptions may be made for completion of certifications in high demand occupations. The length of training can be up to two years or until the cap is reached. Participants shall maintain good academic standing and be making satisfactory progress to remain in their selected program.

The Board reserves the right to adjust the aforementioned ITA dollar limitations during the term of this Plan if it would be deemed in the best interest of the customer and the Local Board.

(G) A description of how training services under chapter 3 of subtitle B will be provided in accordance with Section 134(c)(3)(G), including, if contracts for the training services will be used, how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of individual training accounts under that chapter and how the Local Board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided;

The delivery of training services will be made to eligible customers in a manner that will ensure customer choice and is consistent with priority and/or demand industries and occupations in the region. Individuals may benefit from training services that may include:

- Training Vouchers for Occupational Skills Coursework
- On-the-Job Training
- Customized Training
- Incumbent Worker Training
- Transitional Employment
- Training by Community Based Organizations or other organizations to serve individuals with barriers to employment
- Internships and Work Experience
- Training through Pay for Performance Contracts

(H) A description of the process used by the Local Board, consistent with subsection (d), to provide an opportunity for public comment, including comment by representatives of businesses and comment by representatives of labor organizations, and input into the development of the Local Plan, prior to submission of the plan;

The Local Board will post online, social media, and the local newspaper to notify the public that the Local Plan is available for comment. The public comment period was August 17 to September 15, 2016. No negative comments were received. The Local Plan will always be available online or made available in hard copy upon request.

(I) A description of how the American Job Centers are utilizing the Maryland Workforce Exchange as the integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA and programs carried out by American Job Center partners;

The Maryland Workforce Exchange (MWE) is the labor exchange, case management and performance accountability platform for the Workforce Centers. MOU discussions and development will include utilization of MWE capabilities by all MOU Partners, and other employment and training partners who have a written data sharing agreements. The Local Board will encourage the integration of labor exchange, case management and performance accountability toward MWE as a common technology platform.

(J) A description of the Local Board's procedures for conducting oversight and monitoring of its WIOA activities and those of its subgrantee and contractors. The monitoring plan shall address the monitoring scope and frequency and shall include the following:

- The roles and responsibility of staff in facilitating this procedure;
- A requirement that all subgrantee agreements and contracts be monitored at least annually;
- Procedures for determining that expenditures have been made against the cost categories and within the cost limitations specified in the Act and WIOA regulations;
- Procedures for determining compliance with other provisions of the Act and regulations and other applicable laws and regulations, including the method of monitoring to be used for subgrantees and contractors;
- Provisions for the recording of findings made by the recipients' monitor(s), the forwarding of such findings to the subgrantee or contractor for response and the recording of all corrective actions;
- Provisions of technical assistance as necessary and appropriate; and
- Specific local policies developed by the Local Board for oversight of the American Job Center system, youth activities and employment and training activities under Title I of WIOA.

All subrecipients' agreements and contracts will be monitored on-site at least annually. The purpose of the monitoring will be to determine compliance with the agreements and WIOA rules and regulations. The monitoring will consist of a desk and on-site review, and a fiscal monitoring.

The procedure for determining that expenditures have been made against the cost categories and within the cost limitations specified in the Act and WIOA regulations are as follows:

1) A fiscal desk monitoring occurs every time a payment is made to subrecipients, vendors or contractors. Expenses are compared to approved budgets before payments are made. All costs are evaluated to determine whether expenditures are in compliance with the applicable uniform cost principles included in the appropriate circulars of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), for the type of entity receiving the funds. Supporting documentation such as invoices, ITAs and time sheets are collected and reviewed to ascertain compliance and validity. The Department Manager and then the Fiscal Manager review and approve all requests for payment before submission to the Executive Director. The Executive Director is responsible for final approval of all payments. When discrepancies arise, they are addressed and resolved prior to compensation. When a question arises regarding the proper allocation and/or allowability of costs, the Executive Director will make the final decision.

2) Monthly financial reports are processed from the accounting system for all expenses incurred for the period by title, grant or funding source and sub-item.

3) The Executive Director, as well as other management staff, analyzes the fiscal reports prepared by the Fiscal Manager on a monthly basis. Any problems that are identified are corrected immediately. The Treasurer and Board of Directors also review the monthly reports.

4) The computer-generated monthly fiscal report reflecting expenditures through the end of each quarter is used to prepare the DLLR/DWD WIA Quarterly Status Reports. All other financial reports required by DLLR are completed utilizing the accounting information system as described, which is in full compliance with State requirements. Financial reports for DLLR will be completed in the format requested by DLLR and furnished to DLLR in a timely manner.

5) As required, the Fiscal Manager, under the authority of the Executive Director, will assign control and assignment of new general ledger accounts.

Monitoring will be accomplished through the Local Board's staff. The Local Board sub-committees, through assigned staff, are responsible for reviewing overall performance for their respective areas of oversight. This may be completed via staff input at sub-committee meetings, at Local Board meetings, or committee on-site visits. Specific contract or subrecipient monitoring may be initiated if routine oversight indicates a need.

#### Desk Monitoring

For program monitoring, the desk review includes enrollment reports, performance status reports, customer satisfaction data, project schedules and due date.

#### On-Site Monitoring

Project management reports, enrollment/eligibility accuracy, and maintenance of required documents in records, ability to track chronological activity through the filed documentation, a posted WIOA Policy on Non-Discrimination in Employment and Training Services, and an adequate and appropriate quality control system.

A written monitoring report will be forwarded to the recipient. If there are findings through the monitoring, the monitoring report will specify the findings and provide a timetable for corrective action. The contractor will be required to submit a written response indicating the corrective actions that will be instituted to address deficiencies and a time-frame for instituting the corrective actions. The plan will be reviewed by the Local Board and mutually agreed upon between the Local Board and provider.

The SWN will notify the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation regarding technical assistance needs relative to the implementation and operation of WIOA. Technical assistance will be provided by SWN staff to sub-recipients and WIOA partners as needed. Cross-disciplinary training will be provided in WIOA regulations.



(K) A description of the Local Board's policy and procedures regarding the handling of personally identifiable and confidential information.

SWN utilizes a Confidentiality Certification Policy/Form which states and informs all SWN staff that they may be exposed to certain confidential data which could include data related to participants and businesses and such data may not be discussed with or revealed to anyone, in any manner, except to other persons also having authorization to the same data. Information is to be used only for purposes of performing duties on the job.

The Local Boards procedures will comply with TEGL 39-11. Local WIOA Partners will ensure referral processes, data sharing, case records and other PII data and processes being jointly developed comply with partner agency requirements.

(L) A description of the Local Board's procedures for handling grievances and complaints from participants and other interested parties affected by the local American Job Center system, including partners and service providers. Provide a separate description for the:

- Complaints alleging discrimination on the ground of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, and for beneficiaries only, citizenship or participation in any WIOA Title I – financially assisted program or activity;
- Complaints and grievances not alleging illegal forms of discrimination. This includes grievances from individuals alleging labor standards violations.
- Remedies that may be imposed for a violation of any requirement under WIOA Title I, limited to, suspension or termination of payments under the title; prohibition of placement of a participant with an employer that has violated any requirement under WIOA Title I; reinstatement of an employee, payment of lost wages and benefits, and reestablishment of other relevant terms, conditions, and privileges of employment (where applicable); and other equitable relief as appropriate.

The Susquehanna Workforce Network's procedures for handling grievances and complaints from participants and parties of the workforce system, including one-stop partners and service providers, are described in SWN's Grievance and Complaint procedure. This procedure is to ensure the principles of equal opportunity and nondiscrimination in administration and operations of all programs and activities delivered by SWN and its partners. This procedure describes processes for both complaints alleging discrimination and complaints and grievances not alleging discrimination.

All SWN participants in WIOA funded programs are entitled to Civil Rights under Federal Law while enrolled in an employment and training program. Participants cannot be discriminated against because of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, political affiliation, belief, or participation in Title 1 Programs. Included in the general policy regarding all complaints, is that complaints shall be resolved informally between parties involved, when possible. Complaints which may be processed using these procedures will be classified by the Local Board as one of two types upon review of the complaint's content. Each type of complaint

will be handled in the appropriate manner pursuant to WIOA regulations. These policies are intended to be in compliance with WIOA Section 188, and Title 29 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 38, and Title 20 CFR Part 683.60.

### **Type I Complaint Procedure: Formal Complaints Alleging Discrimination**

Complaints alleging discrimination on the basis of race, sex, color, nation origin, religious belief, age, political affiliation, citizenship, disability and participation in WIOA Title I program, may be reported in writing to the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Officer at SWN, the State Equal Opportunity Officer or the Civil Rights Center (CRC) U.S. Department of Labor (DOL).

#### 1. Filing the Complaint

- a. The Susquehanna Local Board encourages all persons with complaints to first discuss their concerns with the persons who have caused those concerns. However, if after discussing the problem the individual still wishes to formally pursue resolution of his/her complaint, he/she may choose to pursue resolution through the Local Board
- b. All complaints alleging discrimination must be filed within 180 days of the event which triggered the complaint.
- c. Complaints filed with the Local Board WIB must be documented on the Complaint Procedures Form.

#### 2. Resolving the Complaint

- a. Directorate of Civil Rights (DCR) Investigation – A complainant may file a Type I complaint with the DCR at any time. There is no waiting period or lower level hearings which must precede this filing. Details on the steps which the complainant must follow in filing a complaint with the DCR will be provided to the complainant when requested.
- b. Susquehanna Local Board/Subrecipient Procedures - If a complainant wishes to first seek a resolution of his/her complaint through the Local Board, and are participants in the Local Board's subrecipient programs, the complainant must file their complaint in accordance with the procedures established by the subrecipient.
- c. Representatives of subrecipients or other interested persons have the option of either filing their complaint with the subrecipient (e.g. for interested persons) or with the Local Board.

Subrecipient procedural guidelines – Subrecipients of the Local Board must immediately notify the Local Board of all complaints received in writing which allege discrimination on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, religious belief, age, political affiliation, citizenship, disability, or participation in a WIOA program. The Local Board will immediately notify the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation of the complaint's existence and content.

Subrecipients are permitted 30 days to attempt a resolution of the complaint using the procedures

developed by the subrecipient. If after 30 days from the date of filing the complaint, the complainant has not achieved a satisfactory resolution of his/her complaint, he/she may file the complaint with the Local Board. The complaint should be filed on the Complaint Documentation Form.

Susquehanna Region Local Board Procedures – Upon receipt of a written Type I complaint, the Local Board will convene a hearing to which the complainant and other person(s) involved in the complaint are invited. The Local Board will hold this hearing within fifteen (15) days of receipt of the complaint, and will identify a person who is not involved in the complaint to preside as the hearing officer.

The hearing officer will issue a written description of his/her judgment regarding the complaint, including his/her recommendation for resolving the complaint, within thirty (30) days of the date that the complaint was first filed (either at the subrecipient level or with the Local Board).

**Type II Complaint Procedure: Complaints NOT Alleging Discrimination**

This procedure may be used to provide resolution of complaints arising from action taken by SWN with respect to investigations or monitoring reports of sub-grantees, contractors, and other sub-recipients. SWN and other sub-recipients will assure that employers, including private for profit employers of WIOA participants will also be provided with this procedure which may be used for complaints relating to the terms and conditions of employment for WIOA participants

1. Filing the Complaint

The Local Board encourages all persons with complaints to first discuss their concerns with the persons who have caused these concerns. However, if after discussing the concern the individual still wishes to formally pursue resolution of his/her complaint, he/she must adhere to the following guidelines.

- a. Complainants who are participants in the Local Board's subrecipient programs must file their complaint in accordance with the procedures established by the subrecipient. Representatives of subrecipients or other interested persons have the option of either filing their complaint with the subrecipient (e.g. for "interested persons") or with the Local Board.
- b. All complaints not alleging discrimination must be filed within one (1) year of the event which triggered the complaint.
- c. Complaints filed with the Local Board must be documented on the Complaint Documentation Form.

2. Resolving the Complaint

- a. Subrecipient Procedural Guidelines – Subrecipients are not limited by time in their handling of non-discrimination complaints. The existing complaint procedures adopted

by the subrecipient should be followed. If after exhausting the subrecipient's procedure a complainant is dissatisfied with the proposed solution to his/her complaints, he/she may file the complaint with the Local Board. The complaint will be documented on the Complaint Documentation Form.

- b. Susquehanna Local Board Procedures – Upon receipt of a written Type II complaint, the Local Board will convene a hearing to which the complainant and other persons involved in the complaint will be invited. Written notices (invitations to attend) about the hearing will include the date, time and location of the hearing. The Local Board will hold the hearing within thirty (30) days of the date on which is received the written complaint, and will identify a person who is not involved in the complaint to preside as the hearing officer.

At the hearing, an opportunity will be provided for all parties (persons) involved in the complaint to present evidence. An audio tape of the complete hearing will be made and maintained for possible review by the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR).

A written decision on the complaint, arising from the hearing, will be issued to all persons at the hearing within sixty (60) days of the date on which the WIB received the complaint.

- c. Additional Procedures – If a complainant does not receive a decision by the Local Board within sixty (60) days from the date he/she filed the complaint with or receive a decision satisfactory to the complainant, the complainant (only) has the right to request a review by DLLR. A request for this review must be made within ten (10) days from the date on which the complainant should have received a decision (60 days after filing with the Local Board). Details on how to file a request for a DLLR review will be provided in the written decision rendered by the Local Board, or on request from the Local Board.

#### Other Complaint Procedures

Complaints arising from action taken by the grantee with investigation or monitoring reports of subgrantees, contractors and other subrecipients will follow the course of Type II complaints.

All employers of participants under WIOA programs will be requested to have a complaint procedure related to the terms and conditions of employment available to participants.

#### Discrimination/Complaint Coordination Policy – Susquehanna Workforce Centers

The dissemination of all potential discrimination/complaints are to be initially directed to the Workforce Center Coordinators. The Coordinators will then direct them to the appropriate discrimination/complaint regional contact.

### Special Considerations

The Maryland Workforce Exchange is a shared system. If there is an inappropriate request spotted in the system, it is brought to the attention of the Workforce Center Coordinator.

Complaint procedures will be made available to:

- Participants, upon enrollment into or first contact with WIOA services
- Subrecipients and subcontractors, prior to the signing of grant agreements or contracts
- Other interested parties, upon their request to the Local Board.

Documentation of the receipt of the complaint procedures information will be maintained in the appropriate file(s) of the Local Board.

(M) A description of the Local Board's policy and procedures with regard to aid, benefits, services, training, and employment, include a statement of assurance that you will provide reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals with disabilities unless providing the accommodation would cause undue hardship.

The Local Board assures that each program or activity, when viewed in its entirety, will be accessible to qualified individuals with disabilities in accordance with ADA. With regard to aid, benefits, services, training, and employment, the Local Board will ensure reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals with disabilities unless providing the accommodation would cause undue hardship. Undue hardship implies that there may necessarily be some hardship in accommodating someone's disability, but unless that hardship imposes an undue or unreasonable burden, it yields to the need to accommodate.

(N) A description of how the Local Board will be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The description should include how the Local Board will provide reasonable accommodations regarding materials, technology, and physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities. The description should also include how the Local Board will provide staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.

The SWN will ensure that services will be accessible to qualified individuals with disabilities in accordance with ADA. A coordinated referral process between the Job Centers, DORS and other organizations that provide specialized services to individuals with disabilities will streamline services. Through DORS, eligible job seekers with disabilities will have access to specialized employment related services.

(O) A description of the Local Board's policy and procedures in place to ensure that communications with individuals with disabilities, including individuals with visual or hearing impairments, are as effective as communications with others.

Consultation with DORS has resulted in a coordinated referral process to facilitate the delivery of services to individuals with disabilities, including visually and hearing impaired. DORS will provide the Local Board with technical assistance to assure that services are accessible to individuals with disabilities.

Workforce Center staff will ensure that communications with individuals with disabilities, including individuals with visual or hearing impairments, are as with non-impaired customers. Staff will provide appropriate accommodations, equipment or interpreters needed by individuals with disabilities as deemed appropriate and reasonable.

(P) A description of the steps the Local Board will take to meet the language needs of limited English speaking individuals who seek services or information. The description should include how the Local Board proposes that information will be disseminated to limited-English speaking individuals.

The Board and Title 1 programs will ensure reasonable steps are taken to provide access to all programs and activities and assure that limited English speaking persons can effectively participate in and interact with programs and activities. Services for limited English speaking persons will include: resource information designed for those with limited English skills; referral to Adult Education providers of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes; and the Continuing Education Departments of Cecil and Harford Community Colleges who provide interpreters for a variety of languages. Information will be conveyed to limited English speaking individuals through the use of signage, free or low cost interpreters obtained through DLLR/DWDAL, the community colleges and/or other available sources.

(Q) A description of the Local Board's procurement system, including a statement of assurance that the procedures conform to the standards in DOL regulations set forth in 29 CFR Part 95, Part 97 and 2 CFR 200.

The Local Board assures the its procurement procedures conform to the standards in DOL regulations set forth in 29 CFR Part 95, Part 97 and 2 CFR 200.

#### Policy for Purchasing Supplies, Equipment and Services

The Executive Committee is designated Procurement Authority, within the policies stated herein, and is authorized to delegate this responsibility to the Executive Director.

The procurement authority of the Executive Director shall be limited to the approved budget amount

for each category and shall not be exceeded without the approval of the Executive Committee.

Such authority includes the right and responsibility to question specific quantities, quality and necessity for items requested, in order that the best interests of the SWN may be served.

It is the objective to procure necessary supplies, equipment and services at reasonable prices, in adequate quantities, of satisfactory quality and on schedule from reliable suppliers.

Supplies, construction, lease/rental, equipment and services, including policies of insurance or surety company bonds, services of members of the medical or legal profession, or other personal services involving professional expert advice, costing less than \$3,000 may be purchased without solicitation of competitive quotations. Prices may be established through verbal contacts with potential suppliers or other means of obtaining quotations.

#### Policy for Purchasing Small Purchase Items

Supplies, construction, lease/rental, equipment and services, including policies of insurance or surety company bonds, services of members of the medical or legal professionals, or other personal services involving professional expert advice, costing \$3,000 or more, but less than the Simplified Acquisition Threshold, may be purchased after soliciting written quotations from two (2) or more qualified suppliers.

Purchases of equipment of \$5,000 or more require written approval from DLLR.

#### Bid Solicitation

Competitive bids, as appropriate, will be obtained in keeping with prudent procurement practices. A designated staff person shall prepare the bid specification and general conditions.

#### Policy for Purchasing by Sealed Bids

Typically Sealed Bids are for fixed price amounts, either lump sum or unit prices.

Supplies, construction, lease/rental, equipment and services, including policies of insurance or surety company bonds, services of members of the medical or legal professionals, or other personal services involving professional expert advice, costing the Simplified Acquisition Threshold, or more may be purchased by Sealed Bid from the lowest responsible bidder meeting specifications after advertising for bids.

Whenever bids are advertised and solicited in accordance with these regulations, the bid proposals must be received by the Executive Director or his/her designee in sealed form. The bids will be opened publicly in accordance with the general conditions and specifications prepared by the SWN. After they are opened, they will be referred to the appropriate SWN committee by the Executive

Director for final analysis and recommendation for awarding and will be subsequently awarded by the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall accept the lowest bid or bids, kind, quality, and materials being equal, but have the authority to reject any or all bids or select a single item from any bid.

#### Policy for Procurement by Competitive Proposals

Typically Competitive Proposals are for cost reimbursement amounts or fixed price contracts.

Supplies, construction, lease/rental, equipment and services, including policies of insurance or surety company bonds, services of members of the medical or legal professionals, or other personal services involving professional expert advice, costing the Simplified Acquisition Threshold, or more may be purchased by appropriately publicized Competitive Proposals. Contracts will be awarded to the responsible firm whose price and other factors are considered most advantageous.

Advertisement shall mean a notice published at least ten (10) days before the award date of any contract in one or more newspapers qualified to accept legal advertising, of general circulation in the Susquehanna Workforce Area. In addition to public advertisement, bids may be solicited directly from such persons as may be deemed reliable and competent to furnish the item or items required.

Notwithstanding the other provisions of this policy, the Executive Committee may, upon affirmative vote of the majority of the Committee, permit advertisement for bids on an emergency basis at such times as the Executive Committee determines that the best interest of the SWN warrants the shortening of the time for advertisements of bids otherwise provided. In such circumstances, bids may be solicited by advertisements published and made available electronically at least two (2) separate days prior to the opening of bids.

#### Exceptions to Bid Solicitation Requirements/Sole Source Procurements

Provisions as to advertising and bidding set forth above shall not apply to the following classes of purchases or others as the SWN may from time to time adopt:

1. Lease/Rental of real property.
2. Purchase of potential or manufactured products offered for sale on a non-competitive market or solely by a manufacturer's authorized dealer.
3. Purchases made through the State or against Federal purchase contracts.
4. Contracts with public utility service companies under tariffs on file with the Public Utility Commission, contracts made with another subdivision of the State of Maryland, the Federal Government, and any agency of the State of Maryland or any municipal or county authority.
5. Purchase of supplies and equipment requiring parts or components being procured as replacement parts in support of equipment specifically designed by the manufacturer,



where data available is not adequate to assure that the part or component is identical with the part it is to replace or where contemplated procurement is to match or complement equipment or components previously purchased.

6. Purchase of technical, non-personal services in connection with the assembly, installation or servicing, or instruction of personnel therein, of equipment of a highly specialized or technical nature.

(R) A description of any documentation to demonstrate that the acquisition, management, and disposition of property adhere to the Property Management Procedures taken from DOL regulations 29 CFR Part 97 and 29 CFR Part 95

The SWN assures that procedures related to the contracts for acquisition, management and disposition of property adhere to the standards in the Property Management Procedures taken from DOL regulations 29 CFR Part 97 and 29 CFR Part 95. All property is tagged and logged into inventory that contain; description, serial number, acquisition date and cost, location, funding and vendor from which purchased.

(S) A description of any policies or procedures the Local Board adopted to avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance of such conflicts in the exercise of their responsibilities, particularly those related to the awarding of contracts.

No officer, employee or agent of the Local Board shall:

Solicit or accept gratuities, favors or anything of monetary value, except meals, from suppliers or participate in the selection or award of procurement where to the individual's knowledge of the following has a financial or other substantive interest in any organization which may be considered for an award:

The officer, employee or agent, any member of his/her family, his/her partner, a person or organization which employs any of the above with whom any of the above has an arrangement concerning prospective employment.

Local Board members must:

- Recuse themselves from participation if there is a real or perceived conflict of interest;
- Advise the Board of any potential or perceived conflicts of interest;
- Ask the Board for guidance if there is doubt as to whether a specific situation involves or constitutes a real or perceived conflict of interest;
- Complete and sign the Board conflict of interest policy and acknowledgement form annually.

(T) A description of the Local Board or fiscal agent's accounting procedures, including the procedures used in preparing reports to the State. In addition to the requirement that all financial transactions be conducted in compliance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), the fiscal management system must include the following in the accounting procedures. This description must address how the fiscal system:

- tracks funding types, funding amounts, obligations, expenditures and assets.
- permits the tracking of program income, stand-in costs, and leveraged funds.
- is adequate to prepare financial reports required by the State.

The SWN, as the fiscal agent, utilizes the SAGE AccPac ERP accounting system. The system tracks grants by cost center numbers.

This system tracks assets, liabilities, expenditures and program income. Obligations are tracked by supplemental Excel worksheets. Stand-in costs and leveraged funds tracked manually.

Financial reports will be processed on the accounting system for all expenses incurred by the grant or funding source and by sub-item. State required financial reports are prepared based upon the monthly financial reports.

(U) An identification of key staff who will be working with WIOA funds.

The Local Board staff working with WIOA funds will include a Fiscal and Human Resources Manager and a Fiscal Specialist. The oversight of all fiscal functions is the responsibility of the Executive Director.

(V) A description of how the Local Board's (or fiscal agent's) financial system will permit tracking of funds to a level adequate to establish that funds have not been used in violation of WIOA standards or DOL regulations.

The Local Board's financial system will permit tracking of funds to a level adequate to establish that funds have not been used in violation of WIOA standards or DOL regulations by the following established procedures:

**REVENUE:** When revenue is received, it is recorded by Administrative Assistant then forwarded to fiscal department. Fiscal and Human Resource Manager codes the item to the appropriate cost center and enters it into the system.

**PURCHASE ORDERS:** utilizes a purchase order system which includes review and approval by the Department Manager, the Fiscal and Human Resource Manager and the Executive Director.

**ACCOUNTS PAYABLE:** SWN utilizes an accounts payable system whereby purchase orders are matched to invoices by the Fiscal Specialist. The invoices are then checked for accuracy by the Fiscal and Human Resources Manager and entered into the accounting system by the Fiscal Specialist. Each batch is then checked by the Fiscal and Human Resource Manager before the checks are generated. The checks, invoices and related purchase orders are forwarded to the

Executive Director for review and approval. Upon signature, the Fiscal Specialist prepares the checks to be mailed and files the backup. Non-purchase order items (i.e. contract payments) are processed similarly except invoices are matched to original contracts instead of purchase orders.

(W) Provide a brief description of the following:

- Fiscal reporting system
- Obligation control system
- ITA payment system
- Chart of account system
- Accounts payable system
- Staff payroll system
- Participant payroll system
- Participant stipend payment system

Obligations are tracked monthly by utilizing an Excel spreadsheet which identifies the amount of funds restricted for training and each obligation. The report is prepared by the Fiscal Specialist and reviewed by the Fiscal and Human Resources Manager. Copies are available to be shared on a monthly basis.

The Fiscal and Human Resources Manager is responsible for the obligational control.

The Local Board's obligational control system provides the ability to compare, on a monthly basis, actual accrued expenditures and current budgeted amounts for each of its State of Maryland DLLR/DWDAL funded grants.

All journal entries are approved by Management and entered into the system by the Fiscal Department. Periodically during the year, the Executive Director will review all journal entries. Deobligation requests are generated by staff and reviewed, approved and coded by the appropriate manager/coordinator. The documents are forwarded to the Fiscal and Human Resources Manager, who then reviews the deobligation for accuracy and completeness. The Fiscal and Human Resources Manager then forwards the requests to the Fiscal Specialist to enter into the Excel obligational control spreadsheet.

The SWN shall enter into a financial agreement with each vendor that it will be using for ITA programs. This Agreement will describe the roles and responsibilities of the training provider, including the ITA payment system. Upon the enrollment of a WIOA client into a training program with an eligible ITA training provider, the SWN will provide the selected training provider with an authorization form for that individual. The authorization form will include the total amount of costs for tuition and fees that will be paid by the SWN. After the authorization form is received, the training provider can submit an invoice form to the SWN, which sets forth all approved tuition and fees for the WIOA client. Payment for properly charged tuition and fees shall be made by the SWN in a timely manner.

The chart of accounts is set up by cost center. Each grant has its own cost center code. In addition, each grant has a revenue and program income account. The chart of accounts is structured as follows:

Account Series

1000	Assets
2000	Accounts Payable/Liabilities
3000	Payroll
4000	Fund Balances
5000	Revenues
6000 – 9000	Expenses

The Fiscal Department verifies that invoices are accurate according to the quantity received as compared to the quantity invoiced. The prices charged are checked against the purchase order. The Fiscal and Human Resources Manager verifies the accuracy of codes and computations on all vouchers. The vouchers are entered into the computer system, after which the accounts payable batch is checked and verified by the Fiscal and Human Resources Manager, and checks are then printed and forwarded to the Executive Director for signature. The batches are then posted to the General Ledger.

Time and attendance reports are completed by each employee and verified by the employee's supervisor. All leave requests are approved by the supervisor. The time and attendance report is entered into the computer payroll system and a payroll register is generated by the Fiscal Specialist. The payroll register is then checked by the Fiscal and Human Resources Manager. The checks are generated and forwarded to the Executive Director for signature. Payroll is then posted to General Ledger. Periodically during the year, the Executive Director reviews the Payroll Control Sheet, Payroll Register and the Direct Deposit Deduction Summary.

Any participant payroll will be processed in the same manner as staff payroll.

Upon enrollment of the participant, the counselor completes support services determination form. An obligation and expenditure record is established for the participant. Timesheets, signed by the participant and the instructor, are forwarded to the Fiscal Specialist. The payments are calculated based on actual attendance. The information is then entered into the accounts payable system and checks are processed according to the accounts payable system. The checks are mailed to the participants.

Financial reporting will be processed on SWN's accounting system (SAGE AccPac ERP) for all expenses incurred by the grant or funding source and by sub-item. State required financial reports are prepared based upon monthly financial reports.

(X) A description of the Local Board's (or fiscal agent's) cash management system, providing assurance that no excess cash will be kept on hand, and that procedures are in place to monitor cash.

The Fiscal and Human Resources Manager generates and reviews status of funds reports several times each week. The review of the status of funds on a monthly basis by the Fiscal and Human Resources Manager, Executive Director, and Chair of the Local Board's Finance Committee will ensure that no excessive cash will be held by the Local Board, in accordance with Federal and State regulations. Bank statements are reconciled by the Fiscal and Human Resources Manager and approved by the Executive Director generally within 10 days of receipt. Outstanding checks are resolved and/or written off after 3 years.

The Local Board requisitions funds from the State on an as-needed basis. The requisitions are completed by the Fiscal & Human Resources Manager and submitted on behalf of the Harford County Government to DLLR. State funds are received through ACH (Automatic Clearing House) by Harford County Government, who then releases funds by ACH to the Local Board based on a direct payment request completed by the Fiscal & Human Resources Manager. Vendors are paid on a weekly basis; staff payroll is paid on a bi-weekly basis. All vendors and subgrantees are paid on a reimbursement basis. Certain subgrantees may be paid using a cash advance method. Payments are reimbursed in accordance with the terms outlined in each specific Agreement.

(Y) A description of the Local Board's cost allocation procedures including:

- Identification of different cost pools
- Procedures for distribution of staff costs between cost categories (Administrative cost, program cost and indirect cost).
- Procedures used for distribution of funds from each cost pool.
- Description of funds included in each cost pool.
- Description of cost allocation plans for American Job Centers.

### **Cost Pools**

The Local Board currently has the following cost pools: Administrative, Program, fringe benefit, and building cost pools. The Local Board reserves the right to develop additional cost pools as needed.

### **Distribution of staff costs**

Personnel serving one funding source are directly charged to that funding source. The personnel costs that cannot be directly charged to one funding source are distributed to the cost pools.

The distribution of staff costs from the cost pools is determined by the hours reported on time sheets. Staff salaries will be charged to the appropriate funding source based on hours worked. Leave will be distributed using the same percentage as hours worked for the period.

Fringe benefits will be pooled and a monthly distribution of costs will be made to each funding source based on the percentage of hours worked in each month. The percentage of the staff hours will be used to determine the distribution of the cost of operating the Administrative Office and Counseling Offices.

### **Distribution of funds from each cost pool**

**Administrative Cost Pool:** On a monthly basis, program expenditures for each funding source are totaled. These expenditures are then divided into categories, which consist of the aggregate of all program expenditures for each individual funding source. The totals of these expenditures are then utilized to determine the percentage each individual WIOA and non-WIOA funding source will be charged. After the percentage of program expenditures is determined, the administrative costs are then tracked to each funding source on a monthly basis. On an annual basis, the administrative cost pool department is allocated to the various funding sources.

**Program Cost Pool:** Like administrative costs, the program costs are captured in a separate department in the automated accounting system. The procedure for allocating the program costs will consist of one of the following methods:

The procedure currently in use for allocating program costs is based on percentage of direct program expenditures for each grant.

Program costs may be charged based on total number of participants. A percentage for each grant is calculated and indirect costs allocated accordingly.

Program costs may be charged based on total number of terminations. A percentage of terminations for each grant is calculated and indirect costs allocated according to those percentages.

### **Funds included in each cost pool**

In the Administrative cost pool are WIOA funds and all other funds. Currently, the Program cost pools are WIOA Adult, and WIOA Dislocated Worker.

### **Cost allocation plans for Workforce Center**

- 1) Costs will be allocated proportionally across funding sources.
- 2) Once the total cost of the system has been determined, each partner's financial obligation is assessed. Costs are proportionally distributed among partners who may pay their fair share:
  - a) in cash
  - b) through contributions, or
  - c) through a combination of cash and contributions.
- 3) A three-step process to allocate system costs, including costs of services:
  - a) Shared system and service costs will be allocated by an appropriate methodology as outlined in the Partner Agreement, to assign costs to partners.

- b) Assess affordability, resources, etc. If costs do not appear to be affordable, review service plan to determine potential adjustments. If costs can be covered, proceed with allocation from partners.
- c) Conduct periodic reviews of the cost of operating the workforce center system and how costs are being allocated. Revise the allocation plan as appropriate.

NOTE: Budget line items are addressed in Section W. Codes for specific funding sources are addressed in Section T. The obligational control system provides the ability to compare actual accrued expenditures against current approved budgets for all grants and Administrative and Program cost pools. The chart of accounts is set up by cost center. Each grant has its own cost center code and has its own revenue and program income account.

(Z) A description of the Local Board's (or fiscal agent's) procedure for collecting debts involving WIOA Funds

In the event that a debt is established with a subcontractor as a result of an audit or error, the first preference is to collect cash. Such a request will be made by a registered letter if collection cannot be made via informal means. The second preference will be through a reduction in payment if the subcontractor is still providing services. However, if debt cannot be collected through both preferences, the Local Board will forward the case to its attorney for collection proceedings.

## 2016-2020 Local Plan Assurances

Check the following boxes to accept the assurances listed below.

		<b>Assurance</b>	<b>References</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1.	The Local Board has processes and timelines, consistent with WIOA Section 108(d), to obtain input into the development of the local plan and provide the opportunity for comment by representatives of business, labor organizations, education, other key stakeholders, and the general public for a period that is no less than 30 days.	WIOA Sections 108(d); proposed 20 CFR 679.550(b)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2.	The final Local Plan is available and accessible to the general public.	Proposed 20 CFR 679.550(b)(5)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	3.	The Local Board has established procedures to ensure public access (including people with disabilities) to board meetings and information regarding board activities, such as board membership and minutes.	WIOA Section 107(e); proposed 20 CFR 679.390 and 679.550
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	4.	The Local Board makes publicly-available any local requirements for the Local Area, such as policies, including policies for the use of WIOA Title I funds.	Proposed 20 CFR 679.390
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	5.	The Local Board has established a written policy or procedure that identifies circumstances that might present conflict of interest for any local workforce investment board or entity that they represent, and provides for the resolution of conflicts.	WIOA Section 107(h); proposed 20 CFR 679.410(a)-(c)
<input type="checkbox"/>	6.	The Local Board has copies of memoranda of understanding between the Local Board and each American Job Center partner concerning the operation of the American Job Center delivery system in the Local Area, and has provided the State with the latest versions of its memoranda of understanding.	WIOA Section 121(c); proposed 20 CFR 678.500-510 *MOU's Under development
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	7.	The Local Board has written policy or procedures that ensure American Job Center operator agreements are reviewed and updated no less than once every three years.	WIOA Section 121(c)(v)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	8.	The Local Board has procurement policies and procedures for selecting One-Stop operators, awarding contracts under WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker funding provisions, and awarding contracts for Youth service provision under WIOA Title I in accordance with applicable state and local laws, rules, and regulations, provided no conflict exists with WIOA.	WIOA Sections 121(d) and 123; proposed 20 CFR 678.600-615 and 681.400



<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	9.	The Local Board has procedures for identifying and determining the eligibility of training providers and their programs to receive WIOA Title I individual training accounts.	WIOA Sections 107(d)(10), 122(b)(3), and 123; Proposed 20 CFR 679.370(l)-(m) and 680.410-430
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	10.	The Local Board has written procedures for resolving grievances and complaints alleging violations of WIOA Title I regulations, grants, or other agreements under WIOA and written policies or procedures for assisting customers who express interest in filing complaints at any point of service, including, at a minimum, a requirement that all partners can identify appropriate staff contacts and refer customers to those contacts.	WIOA Section 181(c); proposed 20 CFR 683.600
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	11.	The Local Board has established at least one comprehensive, full-service American Job Center and has a written process for the local Chief Elected Official and Local Board to determine that the center conforms to the definition therein.	WIOA Section 121(e)(2)(A); proposed 20 CFR 678.305;
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	12.	All partners in the local workforce and education system described in this plan ensure the physical, programmatic and communications accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology and materials in the Local Area's American Job Centers for individuals with disabilities.	WIOA Section 188; 29 CFR parts 37.7-37.9; 20 CFR 652.8(j)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	13.	The Local Board ensures that outreach is provided to populations and sub-populations who can benefit from American Job Center services.	WIOA Section 188; 29 CFR 37.42
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	14.	The Local Board implements universal access to programs and activities to individuals through reasonable recruitment targeting, outreach efforts, assessments, service delivery, partner development, and numeric goals.	WIOA Section 188; 29 CFR 37.42
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	15.	The Local Board complies with the nondiscrimination provisions of Section 188, and assures that Methods of Administration were developed and implemented.	WIOA Section 188; 29 CFR 37.54(a)(1)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	16.	The Local Board collects and maintains data necessary to show compliance with nondiscrimination provisions of Section 188 of WIOA.	WIOA Section 185; 29 CFR 37.37

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	17.	<p>The Local Board complies with restrictions governing the use of federal funds for political activities, the use of the American Job Center environment for political activities, and the Local Board complies with the applicable certification and disclosure requirements</p>	<p>CFR Part 230 Appendix B; 48 CFR 31.205-22; RCW 42.52.180; TEGL 2-12; 29 CFR Part 93.100</p>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	18.	<p>The Local Board ensures that American Job Center staff, along with the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker program partner agency, will continue to provide services to agricultural employers and MSFWs that are demand-driven and consistent with ESD's mission.</p>	<p>WIOA Section 167</p>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	19.	<p>The Local Board follows confidentiality requirements for wage and education records as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), as amended, WIOA, and applicable Departmental regulations.</p>	<p>WIOA Sections 116(i)(3) and 185(a)(4); 20 USC 1232g; proposed 20 CFR 677.175 and 20 CFR part 603</p>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	20.	<p>The Local Board has a written policy and procedures to competitively award grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities (or applicable federal waiver), including a process to be used to procure training services made as exceptions to the Individual Training Account process.</p>	<p>WIOA Section 108(b)(16); proposed 20 CFR 679.560(a)(15); WIOA Title I Policy 5601; WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(G); proposed 20 CFR 680.300-310</p>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	21.	<p>The Local Board has accounting systems that follow current Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and written fiscal-controls and fund-accounting procedures and ensures such procedures are followed to insure proper disbursement and accounting of WIOA adult, dislocated worker, and youth program and the Wagner-Peyser Act funds.</p>	<p>WIOA Section 108(b)(15), WIOA Title I Policy 5230; WIOA Title I Policy 5250</p>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	22.	<p>The Local Board ensures compliance with the uniform administrative requirements under WIOA through annual, on-site monitoring of each local sub-recipient.</p>	<p>WIOA Section 184(a)(3); proposed 20 CFR 683.200, 683.300, and 683.400-410</p>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	23.	<p>The Local Board has a written debt collection policy and procedures that conforms with state and federal requirements and a process for maintaining a permanent record of all debt collection cases that supports the decisions made and documents the actions taken with respect to debt collection, restoration, or other debt resolution activities.</p>	<p>WIOA Section 184(c); 20 CFR Part 652; proposed 20 CFR 683.410(a), 683.420(a), 683.75</p>

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

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	30.	The Local Board has developed plans and strategies for maximizing coordination of services provided by the State employment service under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) and services provided in the Local Area through the American Job Center delivery system, to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services.	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	31	The Local Board will provide reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals with disabilities unless providing the accommodation would cause undue hardship.	

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Tari Moore, County Executive, Cecil County

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Barry Glassman, County Executive, Harford County

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Terry Lovell, President, Susquehanna Workforce Network, Inc.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Bruce England, Executive Director,  
Susquehanna Workforce Network, Inc.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\* Signature pages and Statement of Concurrence available on PDF Version