

DWD Memo 2023-16
Attachment A- Planning Template

PY2024 – PY2027
Workforce and Innovation Opportunity Act
(WIOA) Plan

Region 8/South Central Region 8 Workforce Board

Regional Four-Year Plan

9/27/2024

Plan Contents

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Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) Approval

LWDB/Local Area Information

LWDB/Local Area Name	South Central Region 8 Workforce Board
LWDB Chair	Brenda Reetz
LWDB Executive Director	Robert E. King
One-Stop Operator	Susan Neal
Regional Chief Elected Official	Dustin Gabhart

By signing below, the LWDB Chair signifies approval of this Plan and authorizes its submission to the Indiana Department of Workforce Development.

Brenda Reetz

Board Chair Printed Name



Board Chair Signature

9/24/2024

Date

Executive Summary

Region 8 is committed to the same philosophy as the Indiana State Unified Plan in terms of a strategic vision that supports the idea of creating a statewide workforce system that connects employers and skilled workers while also supporting the critical need for jobs of today. Region 8 understands the importance of preparing for emerging industries such as Tech opportunities and the upcoming Microelectronic/Semiconductor expansion in the very near future. Over the past few years, Region 8 has adopted a successful operational pathway to achieving this overarching vision that provides regional employers with the talent to grow and diversify their workforce. Region 8 strives to meet the following pillars as outlined in the State Plan to include:

- 1) *Meeting Hoosiers where they are and removing obstacles to work and learning;*
- 2) *Delivering the training and skills needed for a modern workforce; and*
- 3) *Providing employers with the talent needed for the economy of today and tomorrow*

The South Central Region 8 Workforce Board envisions a workforce development system that:

- *Helps employers to identify the skilled workers needed to successfully maintain and expand their companies; and*
- *Makes education and training opportunities available to prepare workers to successfully compete for jobs with wages that allow for self-sufficiency.*

The Region 8 Workforce Board accepts the responsibility of ensuring that all local partners work together and partner to make South Central Indiana an economically viable place to live and takes pride in its quality of life and friendly atmosphere we have come to enjoy ourselves. We will continually strive to effectively partner with all supporters of the Workforce System to include Economic Development, Higher Education, Career & Technical Education, Adult Education, Community Action, Mental Health, Childcare, Vocational Rehabilitation, Youth Organizations, K-12, and all other Economic Growth Regions as well.

In addition, Region 8 will look for new ways to grow outside of our “normal funding sources” and be willing to partner with other agencies or regional partners to bring education and training programs to South Central Indiana that are desperately needed by local employers. We are capable of delivering many programs on behalf of this great state and are the premier advocates for our local areas, as it should be in the overall plan.

Region 8 continues to embrace the idea of “Putting People First” and believe this plan successfully lays out an appropriate course of action to continue the great work we have always done, currently do, and will carry on in the years to come. We are appreciative of our partnership with the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) and look forward to working with our state leaders moving forward.

Section 1: Workforce and Economic Analysis

Please answer the following questions. The Department of Workforce Development has assigned regional labor market analysts to assist the Regions. These experts can help develop responses to questions 1.1 through 1.3 below. **Questions that require collaborative answers for planning regions are**

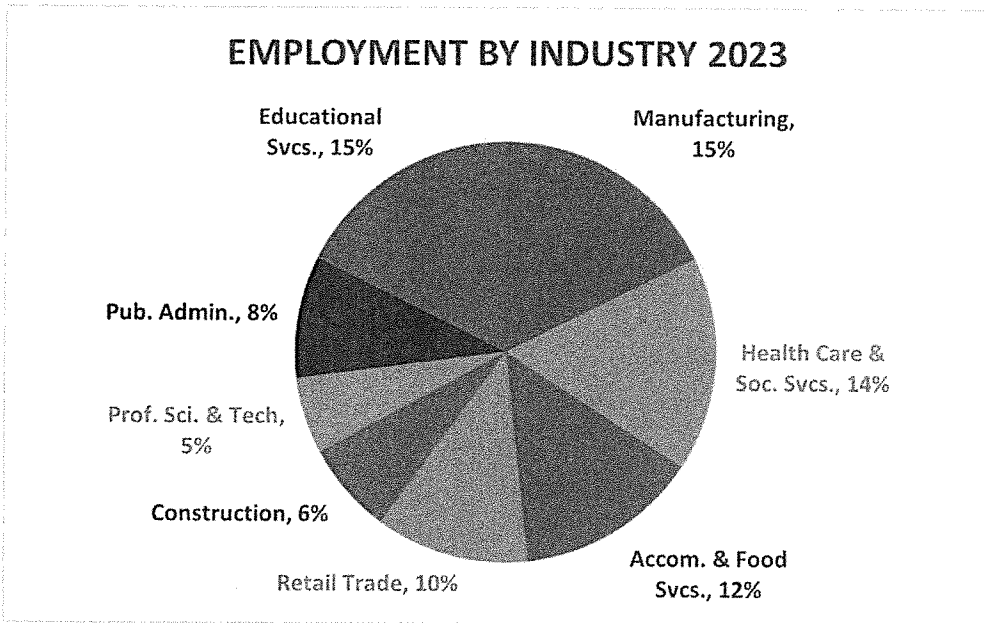
designated with an asterisk (*). See the Regional Plan Subsection of Memo 2023-16 for more information.

1.1* A regional analysis of the economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations and the employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations. As appropriate, a local area may use an existing analysis, which is a timely current description of the regional economy, to meet these requirements. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(A) and 20 CFR 679.560(a)(1)]

Region 8 comprises Brown, Daviess, Greene, Lawrence, Martin, Monroe, Orange and Owen Counties in South Central Indiana. The population of Region 8 has consistently experienced slow growth (less than 1% per year) mixed with minor declines (less than 1% per year). After a significant decline in 2021, the population is very slowly increasing. 2023 shows a population total of 315,998. According to data from Lightcast, the region is expected to show a continued slow decrease over the next 5 years

The unemployment rate IN Region 8 has traditionally been higher than the State unemployment rate. During the last ten years, Region 8 has experienced a stabilizing of the Annual Unemployment Rate. As of 2023, the region UI Rate is on par with the state average of 3.3 % and has maintained that level for the last two years.

According to the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages report from DWD, in 2023 there were 122,864 jobs in the eight counties of Region 8. According to recent data from Lightcast, there were about 18,000 additional jobs in the eight counties of Region 8. Much of that discrepancy in employment is due to Self-Employment data which is included as well as farm employment. Although a slower growth rate than the national growth rate over the past five years, the forecast is for continued growth and an increase of over 6, 000 jobs in the next five years. The top industry sectors include Manufacturing, Educational Services, Government, Public Administration Health Care, Accommodation and Food Services, Retail Trade, Public Administration, Construction and Professional, Scientific, and Technical. These industries account for almost 85% of the total employment opportunities within the region. Health Care employment in the area is consistently expanding according to information from the DWD Labor Market Analysts' regular reports. It usually leads the Region in numbers of Jobs to be filled in each quarter at over 1500.



There are several business assets that make Region 8 unique from other parts of the State. These industries are key components of the regional economy and represent opportunities for the region to build upon its existing strengths to create future economic growth.

The strong presence of life science related jobs, many of which are in the manufacturing sector, is key to the region's economy and it presents a significant opportunity for economic growth. These advanced manufacturing jobs are located primarily in Monroe and Owen Counties and have replaced many of the traditional manufacturing jobs that were lost over the past two decades. Recent mergers and acquisitions have resulted in new companies locating in the area. Many of these companies are committing resources and expanding their footprints within the region. According to job postings, continued growth in the Medical Manufacturing industry could result in over 100 jobs per year in each of the next 5 years.

Westgate Crane at Technology Park, developed because of the efforts of local economic development representatives, elected officials, regional business leaders and civic organizations, presents the region. The region also serves as a tourist destination due to the many recreational opportunities that are available. The numerous state parks, reservoirs, and forests make the region an ideal place to enjoy the outdoors. Indiana University's variety of cultural activities and sporting events draw thousands of visitors to the area each year. The shops and restaurants in Brown County and the hotels and casino in Orange County also help to make the region an enjoyable place to relax. Tourism is important to the region since it attracts large numbers of individuals from outside the region who contribute to the regional economy by supporting local hotels, restaurants and shopping establishments during their visits. The completion of the I-69 corridor has already benefited the entire region and will allow businesses and workers to expand their opportunities reaching both north and south.

The presence of NSA Crane is also a unique and significant part of the regional economy. In addition to the approximately 5,000 jobs that Crane directly provides, numerous other companies contract to provide goods and services to Crane creating even more jobs. The with a rare opportunity to capitalize on the economic benefits that the development of the new I-69 corridor can bring. Again, I-69 has

already increased opportunities for workers to improve their commute to jobs and an expansion of business opportunities in the Crane area. The area is starting to see an increased demand with the development of a semiconductor facility and Chips Manufacturing near the Westgate Park and in the Bloomington area. Region 8 anticipates a possible increase in this sector of over 100 jobs in the Bloomington and Crane areas of the region. Existing and emerging jobs are identified in Section 1.2 as part of the Region 8 Demand Occupations.

Entrepreneurship is also an important part of the regional economy. Approximately 87% of businesses in the region have fewer than 20 employees. The presence of the Gayle and Bill Cook Center for Entrepreneurship at Ivy Tech Bloomington provides current and future business owners with valuable assistance to prepare for successful entrepreneurial endeavors that will create more jobs for the region.

1.2 An analysis of the knowledge and skills required to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, including employment requirements for in-demand industry sectors and occupations. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(B) and 20 CFR 679.560(a)(2)]

Utilizing state and federal funds as well as employer participation combined with an Improved connectivity with Adult Education and Post-Secondary certifications have resulted in increases in skilled workers

Region 8 regularly reviews data from Indiana Business Research Center, Stats Indiana, and DWD's Hoosiers by the Numbers OEWS to determine local demand occupations. In addition to data, leadership asks for input from employers, educational administrators, staff and community groups for their perspectives on demand occupations.

INDemand Jobs, an Indiana Department of Workforce Development data tool, provides information on high-demand, high-wage jobs for the current and future job market. The demand indicator used is based on a methodology that ranks all Indiana jobs based on total job openings, growth openings, percentage change, real time labor market information, and wages for both short term and long-term outlooks and regional wage estimates. An occupation will be assigned a flame designation between 1 and 5 flames depending on how in-demand that occupation is in Indiana. This has proved to be a useful tool for students and job seekers as they choose a career pathway to pursue and will regularly be utilized by staff to assist customers. In addition, Region 8 staff and partners such as ABE programs, also utilize Indiana Career Explorer with customers to identify their interests, skills, and abilities to assist in the development of an individual employment plan.

The Top Occupational groups in Region 8 extracted from the Demand Occupation List and aligned with the data from INDemand Jobs include:

- Business Operations Specialists & Accountants
- Computer Occupations and Managers
- Electrical & Electronic Engineering Technologists and Technicians
- Life, Physical and Social Science Technicians
- Primary, Secondary, and Special Education School Teachers
- Registered Nurses and Licensed Practical Nurses
- Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technicians and Technologists

- Paramedics and EMT
- Nursing Assistants (CNA) & Home Health Aides
- Certified Clinical Medical Assistant (CCMA) & Certified Medical Administrative Asst. (CMAA) & Medical Records Specialist
- Fire Fighters & Police Officers
- Customer Service Reps. & Administrative Assistants
- Carpenters, Operating Engineers & Construction Laborers
- Electricians & Plumbers
- Heating, Air Conditioning, And Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers
- Welders, Cutters, Solderers & Brazers
- Computer Controlled Machine Tool Operators
- Maintenance & Repair Workers
- Truck Drivers, Heavy and Tractor Trailer

According to the Stats Indiana report for 2023, the Region 8 average weekly earnings rate is \$1,045 per week, or \$54,365 annually. This is lower than the state average of \$1,147 per week (\$59,664 annually). And both are significantly below the national average of \$1391 per week (\$72,357 annually). Data from Lightcast indicates significantly higher wages at all levels due to inclusions of all types of employment including self-employment.

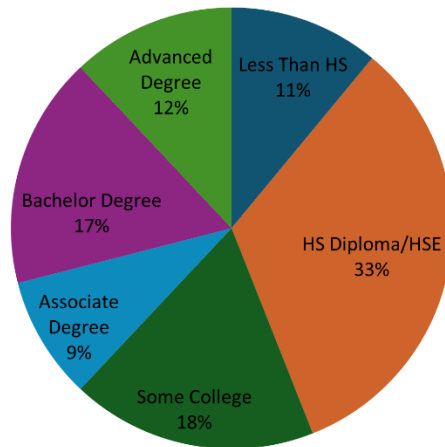
EDUCATIONAL LEVELS NEEDED TO FILL 2026 + JOBS

HS Diploma	43%
Some College/Post Sec. Cert.	7%
Associate Degree	6%
BS Degree	22%
Advanced Degree	8%

Current short-term projections through 2026 indicate there will be over 140,000 jobs (compared to the 123,000 current) in the region. It is anticipated that over the years 2024, 2025, and 2026, employers will need over 4,000 skilled workers per year to fill new and replacement job openings.

According to this data, employment prospects will be limited for those who lack a high school diploma or HSE. 86% of the region's jobs will require at least a high school diploma, and 43% will require a degree, some college or a post-secondary certification.

2022 Educational Levels Region 8 Workforce Age 25+



It is likely many of the degrees and certifications that workers currently possess may become irrelevant and their skills may not align well to the jobs of the future without additional training. Regardless of educational level, an important challenge for the region in the upcoming years will be to ensure workers have the specific job skills needed by employers to fill the projected jobs.

The Regional Workforce Board will utilize labor market information and employment projections to identify a list of in demand occupations for which WIOA funds may be used to provide financial assistance with training. As employment projections and demand for specific skills change, the Board will modify its demand occupation list to use the limited resources available for training to effectively prepare workers to fill these anticipated future job openings. The Board's most recent demand occupation list is included as Exhibit.

In addition to required educational levels, degrees, and certifications, employers also need employees to have specific abilities that better enable them to perform their job duties successfully. These generally are referred to as Employability Skills or "Soft" Skills and are generally transferable from one job to another. An analysis of available data resulted in identification of the top areas of knowledge, skills and abilities desired by employers who will hire workers in the region's occupations. Employers in the region also frequently cite the lack of workers with these "employability skills" as a significant problem which often leads to high turnover rates.

Employability Skills

Communication

Problem Solving

Active Listening

Teamwork

Detail Orientation

Creativity & Critical Thinking

And may include Basic Skills such as:

Reading Comprehension

Data Analysis

Physical Abilities

Organizational Abilities

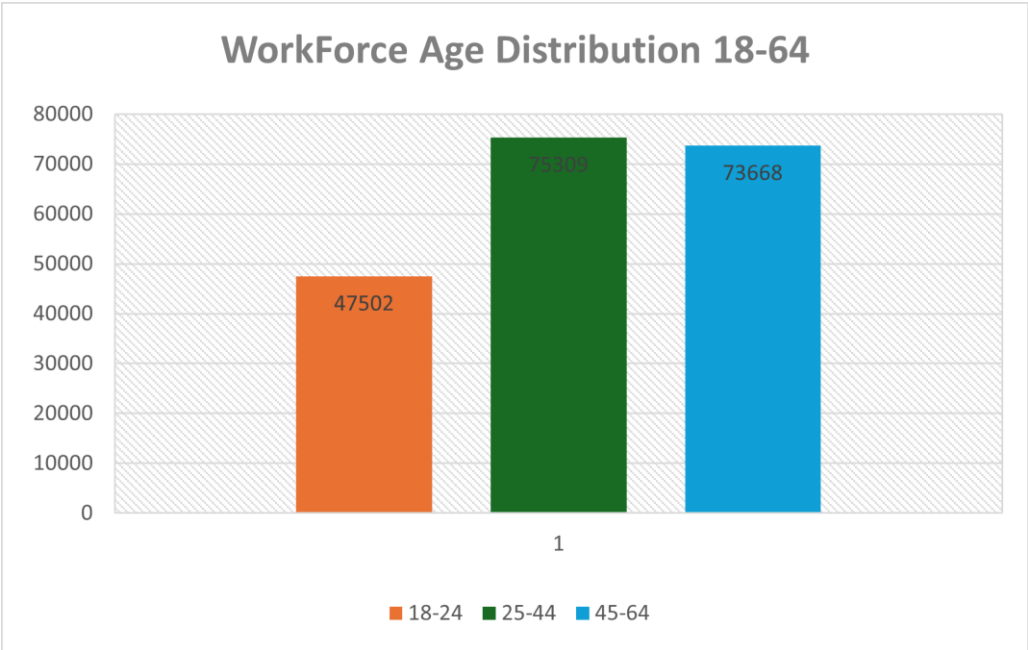
Judgment

Attendance/Punctuality

1.3 An analysis of the regional workforce, including current labor force employment and unemployment data, information on labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment and youth. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(C) and 20 CFR 679.560(a)(3)]

According to DWD’s Hoosiers by the Numbers data, for the year 2023, the region had 152,288 individuals in the labor force. Of the total labor force, 147,242 were employed and 5,046 were unemployed resulting in a regional unemployment rate of 3.3% for the year 2023. The unemployment rate in the region has remained stable around 3.0% for the last two years after significant declines following the Pandemic.

The region’s population is well balanced between age groups. The chart below shows the age distribution of the almost 200,000 residents potentially in the labor force.

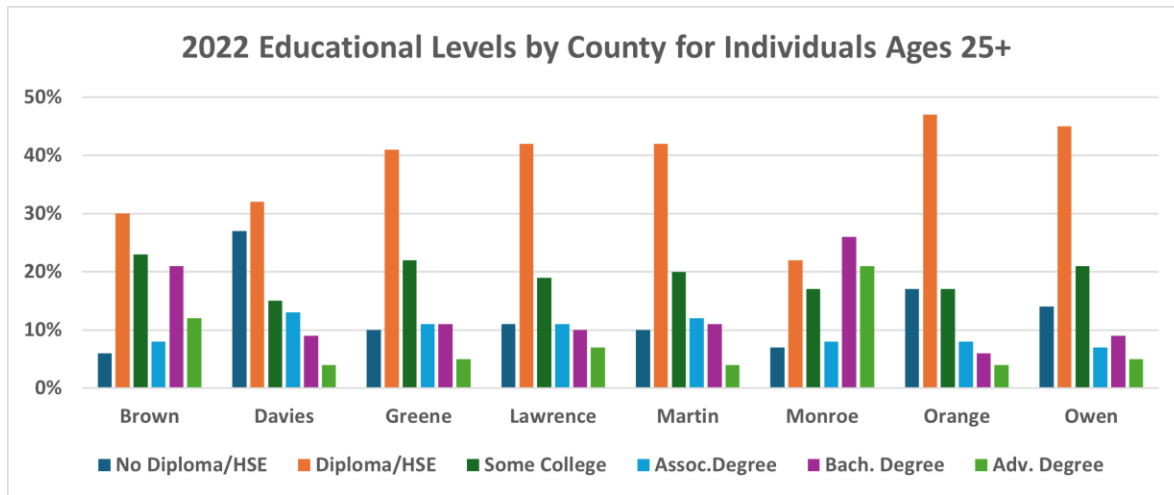


With over 47,500 people in the 18-24 age group, and many of those in school, there are almost 173,000 individuals available for potential employment. 152,288 of those individuals are active in the labor force. This means approximately 20,000 residents are of working age but are not working or looking for work. These individuals are a potential untapped source of additional workers to fill future job openings.

According to data from IBRC for 2022, almost 19,000 people (9.6%) over the age of 18 lack a high school diploma or equivalent. The high number of workers who lack any education beyond high school likely explains why the region’s average wage of \$1045 per week is well below the national (\$1391) weekly earnings. As the region continues to reduce the number of individuals with less than a HS/HSE there are more candidates to fill future job openings

To fill the projected jobs in the upcoming years, Region 8 will need to increase the number of workers with post-secondary certifications and degrees. Even with a reduction to less than 10% of working aged adults lacking a high school diploma or HSE, the dropout rate poses a significant challenge for employers in the region to find skilled workers. Although the region has done a commendable job in reducing the percentage of adults with less than a HS/HSE, it is critical that more individuals earn a high school diploma or HSE so they can utilize existing educational opportunities within the region to advance in their chosen career pathway.

While all counties of the region need to increase educational levels, there is quite a disparity between Monroe County and the rest of the region. The chart below shows a more detailed picture of the educational levels of each county in the region as of 2022.



The small, rural counties of Region 8 face a significant challenge in preparing their workforce for the jobs of the future. Monroe County accounts for 60% of the degrees held by residents of the region. And, only about 4% of those who reside in Monroe County lack a high school diploma.

The low educational levels combined with the lower-than-average weekly wages offer a likely explanation for the numbers of individuals who receive public assistance in the region. While the number of residents receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) continues to drop between 2017 and 2022 and is very low at only 117 families as of 2022, there has been an increase from 17,600 to 21,800 families who receive Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. Many of those receiving SNAP assistance are likely working but their earnings are not enough to allow them to become self-sufficient so they must continue to rely on public assistance programs to help meet their basic needs. These individuals and family members are excellent candidates to be considered for WorkOne services and additional training if needed.

Section 2: Strategic Vision and Goals

Please answer the following questions. Section 2 responses should reflect input from members of the local workforce development board and other community stakeholders. **Questions that require collaborative answers for planning regions are designated with an asterisk (*). See the Regional Plan Subsection of Memo 2023-16 for more information.**

2.1 Provide a description of the board’s strategic vision to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. This must include the board’s vision and goals for its local workforce system in preparing an educated and skilled workforce in the local area, including goals for in-school and out-of-school youth and individuals with barriers to employment. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E) and 20 CFR 679.560(a)(5)]

The South Central Region 8 Workforce Board envisions a workforce development system that (1) helps employers to identify the skilled workers needed to successfully maintain and expand their companies and (2) makes education and training opportunities available to prepare workers to successfully compete for jobs with wages that allow for self-sufficiency.

With this vision in mind, the Board has the following goals:

1. Region 8 residents will have accessible services from WorkOne partners available close to their homes.
2. Services will be provided through a coordinated WorkOne system where staff are knowledgeable about services available from partner agencies and share resources to effectively meet the needs of job seekers and employers.
3. Customers of the WorkOne system will have an identified career pathway and a plan to help them prepare for regional in-demand occupations by gaining the education and skills needed by employers.
4. Work-based learning opportunities will be available to those who lack the skills necessary to compete in the labor market.
5. Individuals who lack basic literacy skills and/or a high school diploma or HSE will be connected with Adult Education and Literacy programs in the region so they can focus on earning a diploma or HSE while improving their skills to a level where they can be competitive in the labor market.
6. In-School Youth will complete high school and graduate with a plan for postsecondary training or employment. The WorkOne system will coordinate with local schools to ensure high school seniors have an opportunity to connect with WorkOne services.
7. Out-of-School Youth who lack a high school diploma or HSE will be encouraged to enroll in Adult Education to earn their diploma or HSE and improve basic skills. They will also be

encouraged to pursue postsecondary training that aligns with the region’s in-demand occupations so they can prepare for their future and compete for jobs.

8. Individuals with disabilities, those who are deficient in basic skills, and/or customers with other barriers to employment will be connected with appropriate resources to assist them to overcome their barriers and participate successfully in labor force.
9. Targeted efforts will be made to identify, recruit, and develop individuals who are unemployed or underemployed and engage them in WorkOne services to assist them in finding suitable employment.

2.2 Describe how the board’s vision and goals align with and/or support the State’s strategic vision as set out in the [WIOA Unified State Plan](#). Specifically address how the local area will align with the pillars and goals outlined below as well as the action steps included in the WIOA State Plan, where applicable.

Pillar 1: Removing barriers for workers to meet Hoosiers where they are and help remove obstacles to work and learning.

Goal 1: Harness opportunities through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), which includes the

The vision of the South Central Region 8 Workforce Board aligns closely with the GWC’s vision for both businesses and individuals.

In an effort to help employers find and develop skilled talent and maintain a competitive advantage in a global economy, the WorkOne Business Services Team will ensure all businesses have the opportunity to post jobs on the state’s automated labor exchange system to identify skilled individuals for job openings. Employers will also have access to labor market information that can be used to make their business more competitive and more successful in hiring, developing, and retaining employees. The Business Services Team will also work with Employers to assist with incumbent worker and new hire training activities through the Next Level Jobs, all other state initiatives, and the federal Infrastructure Investment Jobs Act.

Business services team members will also work with employers and education and training partners to develop and implement work-based learning opportunities, including apprenticeships, for job seekers as appropriate. These work-based learning activities are often an effective method for businesses to find and develop skilled employees.

In an effort to help individuals have career success, all citizens of Region 8 will have the opportunity to understand and improve their skills through the local workforce system. Individuals will have access to information about educational opportunities, career pathways, and available job opportunities including labor market information about demand occupations in the region and statewide. This information will be provided by the WorkOne through collaborative partnerships with area education providers and community organizations. Coordination among area partners will allow an improved approach to meeting the needs of the regional economy and strengthen the overall state economy.

The Board intends for services to be provided through a coordinated WorkOne system where staff are knowledgeable about services available from partner agencies and work in collaboration to meet the

needs of job seekers and employers. As such, the region will work to promote all partners collectively as a unified WorkOne system.

Properly trained staff are key to a coordinated WorkOne system. The region will conduct cross-training sessions where subject matter experts from WorkOne partners and Community Service will provide training on the basic eligibility requirements and services available from their respective programs. This will ensure WorkOne partner staff have the basic knowledge necessary to make appropriate referrals and assist customers in getting connected to services from which they can benefit regardless of which partner agency they encounter first. Partner staff will work to provide coordinated case management services for mutual customers to ensure an individualized career plan is developed and available resources are used efficiently to help the customer successfully implement the plan.

To address our customers' social and economic mobility issues, all WorkOne staff providing case management activities will be effectively able to manage the comprehensive array of services available to all customers through each County office including any additional WIOA and partner agency resources as appropriate. Customers will be provided with personal service from a Career Advisor and be able to coordinate with just one WorkOne representative as opposed to meeting with multiple representatives requesting similar information thus avoiding any unnecessary duplicative services. This will allow WorkOne representatives to properly meet the individual needs of each customer and align impactful program services and referrals directly related to their specific social and economic needs appropriately. Properly trained staff knowledgeable to social and economic impacts affecting Hoosiers combined with a co-location of partner agency services as appropriate will be the foundation upon which Region 8 delivers services in South Central Indiana.

Co-location of partners is one of the most effective methods to achieve a well-coordinated service delivery approach. This is particularly true in Region 8 due to the rural nature of the counties in our region and the lengthy distance customers may potentially need to travel to access available services and resources. Goal # 1 in Section 2.1 of this plan reflects the Board's desire for residents of the region to be able to access services from WorkOne partners without having to drive long distances. The region will explore ways in which to use technology to improve customer access to services. However, limited computer skills of many customers coupled with limited availability of computers, printers, and internet access in their homes often makes it difficult for some of the individuals who most need assistance to access services electronically. To address the improvement of individuals without necessary digital skills, the WorkOne system will continue its history of providing digital skills training in the WorkOne Centers throughout the region and will provide a local site where individuals can access services provided from a variety of WorkOne partners in a location that is convenient for them

In support of this goal, Region 8 has already made efforts toward co-location of services with key partners in the WorkOne Centers throughout the region. Adult Education classes are currently available on-site in seven WorkOne Centers and are closely coordinated with WorkOne in the remaining county. WorkOne staff in Bloomington are now co-located in a common facility with all other state staff including Vocational Rehabilitation staff, DFR staff, DCS staff, and IMPACT staff. VR staff utilize space in WorkOne Centers throughout the region as needed to meet with customers. The region will continue to explore options for further co-location or on-site service delivery options.

WorkOne staff provide referrals to individuals experiencing childcare and other barriers including adequate housing, clothing, food, transportation, involvement in the justice system and veterans with barriers (such as recent separations or disability). Staff have access to our Regional Resource Guide on

Google Drive for Community Resources to address these issues for each county when a resource is available. When Adults and DW are unable to obtain assistance from one of these resources, then supportive services can be provided if eligible. Youth do not need to seek assistance elsewhere and can receive supportive services for these needs if eligible.

All WorkOne staff have information regarding training opportunities for childcare workers and childcare certifications and how those interested individuals can access the training and resources. Region 8 staff will assist the individual in accessing Next Level Jobs resources to learn about the various providers and to gain training needed. Business Services staff will work with community organizations and businesses to assist them in establishing training that fits their needs.

To get the greatest impact out of co-located services and well-trained staff, management staff from the various partner agencies must also work to coordinate services and resources. For approximately the past 16 years, all key programmatic decisions in Region 8 for WIA (and now WIOA), Wagner Peyser, TAA, RESEA, and Veterans Services have been made by the regional Leadership Team. This team, composed of staff from the One-Stop Operator, the WIOA Service Provider, Business Services, Rapid Response, DWD's Regional Service Manager, and JAG, meets regularly to discuss available resources, staffing, professional development and training needs, program performance, and any other challenges or opportunities that exist within the region. Partner agency management staff will be invited to participate in meetings of the Leadership Team to ensure there is ongoing communication, problem solving, and joint planning between partners. In addition to improved coordination, this will also reinforce the message to staff of each partner agency that we are a unified WorkOne system.

In addition, representatives of most core programs have participated in the Region 8 Adult Education Consortium for the past several years. Additional members from other WorkOne partner agencies will continue to be invited to participate.

The South Central Region 8 Workforce Board is committed to maintaining a WorkOne system where the customer, not the programs or funding sources, is the primary focus. As indicated previously in this plan, the Board has established a number of goals that support the GWC's goal of a client-centric approach.

In Section 2.1, all identified goals support a system where the customer is at the center of service delivery. Coordination between partner agencies is an essential part of providing customers a positive and productive experience with the WorkOne system. As appropriate, customers will have individual career plans that lay out the steps needed for success in a career pathway. These plans will be designed with the needs of the customer in mind.

All WorkOne partners involved with each client will work to present a unified effort to maximize available resources. To the extent possible, customer flow procedures will be designed to avoid duplication of effort from the various partners and unnecessary collection of redundant information from the customer. As a part of their individualized plan, each customer will have access to assessment, career counseling, educational and training assistance, supportive services, work-based learning opportunities, and job placement assistance as appropriate. Throughout the implementation of the plan and duration of participation with the WorkOne system, staff from the WorkOne partners will communicate regularly and exchange information as allowed by confidentiality guidelines to ensure programs and funding sources are coordinated for the benefit of the customer.

Specific efforts will be made to help youth, individuals with disabilities or basic skills deficiencies, and those with other barriers to employment connect with resources that can help them become successful members of the labor force. WorkOne staff will maintain current knowledge of all available services with their communities and will work to establish referral processes with these organizations to assist customers in gaining access to services from which they can benefit.

The South Central Region 8 Workforce Board is also committed to providing as much direct financial assistance as possible to assist customers with the costs of tuition, books, transportation, child care and other items that are necessary for them to successfully complete education and training activities that will help them gain marketable job skills. As evidence of this commitment, the Board will establish a target expenditure goal for these direct client costs. This goal is included in the WIOA service provider contract language and progress toward meeting the goal will be reviewed quarterly by the Board as part of their ongoing review of financial reports.

To address the worker shortage and meet the challenge associated with the anticipated future job openings, it is imperative to tap into additional pools of workers who have not previously been equipped with the skills needed by employers for these emerging jobs. While the WorkOne system will help job seekers with preparation to find careers, there are several groups of potential workers that will be targeted by these efforts. Region 8 will use two primary strategies. One strategy will be to better engage workers who may not have been in the labor force in the past or who may have been employed but lack the skills needed to become self-sufficient and/or retain employment at a high wage. The second strategy will be to collaborate with employer-based entities, economic development organizations, educational institutions, sector partnerships and others to maximize available funding sources and work together toward the common goal of helping employers in the region find skilled workers.

The overall makeup of the Region 8 population outside of Bloomington is quite unique. Workers from rural areas often cannot financially afford to relocate to more metropolitan areas where they do not have family members and friends to help with childcare or transportation needs that enable them to work. This worker shortage also presents opportunities for many workers in the region, particularly those who in the past may not have been able to compete in the labor force. With the help of the WorkOne system and educational and community partners, these workers can learn about employer needs, gain relevant skills, and prepare for careers in these in-demand occupations of the future.

Individuals who have lost their jobs and are receiving Unemployment Insurance benefits are a valuable source of potential workers for employers. Typically, these individuals have at least some work experiences and a work history but may lack the specific job skills needed to remain employed as workforce needs change. Rapid Response, TAA, RESEA and Jobs for Hoosiers programs are designed to capture unemployed workers prior to layoff or early in their Unemployment Insurance claim, engage them throughout the duration of their claim, and encourage them to develop a plan to become re-employed. The WorkOne system will ensure participants of these programs are aware of all the services available to assist them in preparing for their next job. These workers will be screened for eligibility for all applicable programs, especially dislocated worker programs, and will be able to access resources seamlessly through an integrated service delivery model. As appropriate, these dislocated workers will be encouraged to pursue training that leads to a credential which makes them more marketable to employers.

Veterans are an excellent pool of workers for employers. Most veterans leave military service with valuable skills that can be transferable to educational programs and/or to the workplace. Often with minimal training, skills gained from military service can be built upon or enhanced to align with the needs of area businesses. WorkOne staff will provide assessments, labor market information and career counseling as appropriate to help Veterans identify potential career pathways and training options that can prepare them for successful careers as a part of the civilian workforce. Staff of the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) are available to provide additional assistance to veterans who have disabilities and significant barriers to employment.

It is also important to note that not all these projected jobs will require advanced degrees and high-level skills. Many of the jobs will require only an associate degree or perhaps even short-term training. But all jobs are likely to require a high school diploma or HSE and basic skill levels that enable an employee to continue to learn and advance on the job. Thus, all individuals who lack these skills and credentials will be targeted as candidates to receive WorkOne services. These workers will be encouraged to earn their high school diploma or HSE and pursue training appropriate to their chosen career path. While many of these individuals may already be employed, they likely have not reached their earnings potential due to their lack of educational credentials and/or low basic skills. Through coordination with Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), efforts will be made to engage individuals with mental and physical disabilities. If VR is unable to provide the needed assistance to help these customers prepare for employment, referrals will be made to other service providers as appropriate.

The Board and WorkOne staff have already been working in close partnership with Employers and Adult Education providers in the region to operate a successful Next Level Jobs (NLJ) program, including effective WRG and ETG programs, and more recently a strong start to the QUEST program. These programs encourage students and job seekers to work with Adult Education staff on earning a HSE if needed and improve basic skills while also attending short term training that results in a certificate or credential in a demand occupation. The WorkOne system in the region will continue to promote Adult Education services and utilize the State and Federal programs, as well as work based learning, apprenticeships, WIOA funding, and private and employer scholarships and funding. We will further explore opportunities to expand the occupations eligible for various training programs funding and work with providers to make more training options available at locations within the region that are easily accessible for customers.

In-school and out-of-school youth are a critical part of the solution to the challenge of filling the Region 8 projected jobs through 2026. These youth represent the labor force of the future and it is important for them to gain skills that are relevant to emerging careers in the region. Career Advisors from the WorkOne system will work with in-school youth and encourage them to complete high school and identify a career plan that prepares the student for a successful employment future. As appropriate, WorkOne resources will be coordinated with JAG resources for students who are JAG participants. Out-of-school youth will be encouraged to return to school and pursue their HSE or high school diploma if they have not received it. Out-of-school youth who already have a secondary credential will be encouraged to enroll in either traditional degree or certificate programs or short-term training through the available funding sources to earn a credential that prepares them for in-demand job openings.

Collaboration with other entities in the region is a key part of the Board's strategy to prepare workers for the new and replacement jobs of the future. WorkOne system staff, especially Business Services staff, will work with employer organizations, including Chambers of Commerce and local economic

development organizations, to maintain an awareness of the needs of local businesses and emerging occupations for which workers are needed. Partnerships with educational institutions including Vincennes University, Ivy Tech, private training vendors, Adult Education providers and others will be crucial to the region's ability to prepare workers for future jobs. WorkOne system staff members already have close working relationships with these entities and will continue to work with these providers to ensure they are aware of the training programs needed for in-demand occupations. These providers will be encouraged to include contextual learning activities as part of the curriculum to reinforce the connection between coursework and the needs of employers in the workplace.

The Board and the WorkOne system will also work in cooperation with other entities such as Radius, Regional Opportunity Initiative (ROI), AHEC and other community and economic development groups that receive grants focused on workforce development issues to ensure WorkOne customers can take advantage of opportunities for training. The WorkOne Centers have collaborated with Southern Indiana Development Corporation (SIDC) in the past to administer an OCRA Workforce Development grant to provide short term training to eligible individuals within the region and Industrial Maintenance Training.

Region 8 will monitor all measurable outcomes for any services delivered throughout the area and adjust and/or change program delivery of these services to maximize results most beneficial to the customers we serve. Additionally, regional employers will be actively involved and work collaboratively with WorkOne staff to identify and implement programs in most demand.

The goal of the Board is to facilitate the involvement of regional employers in workforce development and having businesses collaboratively, along with the Board, community partners and State agencies, guide the overall regional direction involving programmatic assistance with current and future job openings. The Board also wants to ensure that funds used to support customer participation in education and training activities will be focused on preparing workers to have skills that are not only needed by area employers, but also skills identified by area employers as well. The Board intends for customers to have career plans that will lead to employment in occupations that are in-demand in the region. In support of this goal, the Board will review and approve the region's demand occupation list. This list will be created using available labor market information, occupational projections and other available data as well as knowledge and input of the needs of local businesses.

The demand occupation list will also consider the needs of current or emerging sector partnerships throughout the region that represent opportunities for economic stability and/or growth within the region. Under the Board's oversight, the WorkOne system will engage employers from these sector partnerships and maintain knowledge of sector strategies to ensure resources are used to support training and education that addresses the skill needs of these sectors.

Current sector partnerships in Region 8 with which the Board and WorkOne system is involved include:

Regional Opportunity Initiative (ROI) in partnership with Radius Indiana and the Community Foundation of Bloomington and Monroe County, received a \$42 million grant from Lilly Foundation. There is a sector focus on advanced manufacturing, defense contractors and the Crane Naval Surface Warfare Center. In addition, ROI is involved in numerous community projects to include:

- IT Coded Academy in partnership with Dimension Mill

- Modern Youth Apprenticeships
- Micro-Electronics Project with Purdue University & Crane NWS
- Career Coaching Fellowship with Commission for Higher Education
- STEM Fellowship (K-6 Focus)
- Digital Fabrication Labs
- Readi-Schools (K-12)
- Student Ran Businesses

Radius Indiana is a regional partnership representing 8 counties in South Central Indiana: Crawford, Daviess, Dubois, Greene, Lawrence, Martin, Orange, and Washington Counties. Formed in 2009, Radius Indiana also serves as a primary point of contact in Indiana for Crane.

South Central Indiana Area Health Education Center (SCI AHEC) is a program designed to improve healthcare through community and academic partnerships. Indiana's third AHEC was established in the South Central region of the state in the fall of 2003 under the guidance of Hoosier Uplands Economic Development Corporation. The community based non-profit organization has forged successful partnerships within the 12-county region by creating an advisory board to guide the development of programs to address the unique needs of the region. Counties represented include Brown, Clark, Crawford, Floyd, Harrison, Jackson, Lawrence, Martin, Monroe, Orange, Scott, and Washington.

WestGate@Crane - Professionals, elected officials, business leaders, and civic figures worked for the development of a technology park adjacent to NSWC-Crane Division. WestGate@Crane Technology Park partners with organizations and businesses such as local and state economic development corporations, NSWC-Crane Division, I-69 Innovation Corridor, Indiana Office of Defense Development, and WorkOne.

Southern Indiana Development Corporation (SIDC) is an EDA focused upon providing economic and community development services for residents, businesses and government within a five-county area with funding from federal and state resources including OCRA. Counties served are Daviess, Greene, Knox, Lawrence, and Martin.

Bloomington Life Science Partnership (BLSP) BLSP is focused on Life Science companies in the Bloomington area including surrounding counties. BLSP is a partnership formed by Bloomington Economic Development Corporation (BEDC) which includes employers, government, workforce development representatives, and educational representatives. The Bloomington Life Sciences Partnership is a collaborative effort dedicated to continued life sciences business growth in greater Bloomington, Indiana - a nationally recognized leading metro area in medical devices, contract pharma, biotechnology, basic research and life sciences workforce development.

Bloomington Tech Partnership (BTP) is a collaboration to foster innovation and growth across the local tech sector. Composed of the Bloomington Economic Development Corporation (BEDC), the City of Bloomington, Indiana University, Ivy Tech, The Mill, and the Bloomington tech leaders, this partnership creates the connective tissue to drive economic development in the region.

The Trades District offers a rare mix of shovel ready land in *downtown Bloomington* in addition to renovated historic buildings and opulent new construction. One of its most important buildings is *The Mill*, a startup incubator and accelerator, and the city's largest coworking space. Founded as 501(c)3 nonprofit in 2018, *The Mill's* mission is to spark *Bloomington's* innovation economy. Once startups are ready, they move to Class A Office space in *The Forge*, a new 22,000-square-foot building. BEDC is proud to have raised the money to build *The Mill*, and written the grant that funded *The Forge*.

Indiana University, with the *Luddy School of Informatics, Computing, and Engineering*, *Kelley School of Business*, and *O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs*, is home to nationally-ranked programs in innovation and technology. *Ivy Tech's* broad array of training programs address ever-evolving, real-world industry needs. Meanwhile, *The Mill* and *Trades District Technology Center* are growing startups and expanding companies in *The Trades District*.

Industry Leaders Are Growing in Monroe County and Target Industries include:

- Life Sciences
- Technology
- Defense
- Advanced Manufacturing
- Green Energy
- Microchip & Semiconductors

Business services staff in Region 8 will develop expertise about labor force needs and strategies of key sectors in the region and will share their knowledge with partners of the WorkOne system. WorkOne partners will work together to coordinate activities of the various programs and funding sources to help employers in these sectors find skilled workers. The WorkOne system will also serve as a broker of information on labor market information, existing education and training initiatives, grants and other workforce development opportunities that exist within the region. WorkOne staff will work to facilitate an increased awareness about ongoing initiatives and help promote collaboration and build partnerships to maximize the effectiveness of resources throughout the region. Ongoing activities to examine and review common skills information between WorkOne and partners will take place during this plan

2.3* Describe how the board's goals relate to the achievement of federal performance accountability measures. See 20 CFR 677.155 for more information on the federal performance accountability measures. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E) and 20 CFR 679.560(a)(5)]

Federal performance accountability measures for WIOA are well aligned with the South Central Region 8 Workforce Board's goals and expectations for the WorkOne system. These federal standards focus on measuring the extent to which WIOA participants get jobs and retain employment, earn good wages, demonstrate measurable skill gains, and earn educational credentials. The standards also will measure the effectiveness of the services provided by the WorkOne system to employers.

As indicated in Section 2.1, the South Central Region 8 Workforce Board envisions a workforce development system that: 1) Helps employers to identify the skilled workers needed to successfully

maintain and expand their companies; and 2) Makes education and training opportunities available to help workers prepare themselves to successfully compete for jobs with wages that allow for self-sufficiency.

Key strategies that will be used to work toward meeting the expectations of the Board include:

- Implementing a WorkOne system that is accessible to employers and individuals and utilizes a streamlined and coordinated approach to delivery of partner services with customer needs as the primary focus.
- Development of individualized plans for education and training that lead to identified career pathways for customers.
- Effective use of available assessment tools, educational resources, career readiness services, and work-based learning strategies to equip customers with the skills to perform tasks needed by employers.
- Providing the support and encouragement needed by in-school and out-of-school youth to help them earn secondary school credentials and make a smooth and successful transition into postsecondary education, employment or military service.
- Development and improvement of coordinated activities with community partners, educational providers, and businesses.

The Board will use the federal performance accountability measures as one method to determine if WorkOne system services are being delivered to effectively meet the goals of the Board. If the WorkOne system is helping workers gain the skills needed to successfully find and retain employment, assisting employers to find the skilled employees they need, and helping youth to earn a high school diploma or HSE and successfully prepare for future careers, the region will be well positioned to meet the federal standards.

2.4* Describe any additional indicators used by the local board to measure performance and effectiveness of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), contracted service providers, and the one-stop delivery system in the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(17) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(16)]

In addition to federal performance measures, the board will also use a number of additional indicators to measure effectiveness of the WorkOne system in Region 8. Working with the fiscal agent, the board will regularly review expenditure rates and service levels to ensure funds are being spent effectively to serve customers and meet desired expenditure rates. As previously mentioned, at the start of each program year the Board will establish a goal for the amount of funding that is spent directly on customers to assist them financially with costs related to their attendance and completion of education, training, and employment preparation activities. Progress toward meeting this goal will be reviewed by the Board as a part of the financial report given by the fiscal agent each Board meeting. This direct client costs expenditure goal is based on available funds for each program year. As part of negotiating the contracts for WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth services, the Board establishes service-level

goals for each of these programs. Progress toward meeting these goals is monitored regularly by the One-Stop Operator and corrective action is taken to address any deficiencies.

It is essential that Business Services staff continue to increase awareness among local employers regarding the valuable services that exist to help employers find skilled workers. The Board will also regularly review reports of how many employer visits that are made, the number of job orders that result from these contacts, and the extent to which the employer contact plan aligns with the sector demands within the region.

Section 3: Local Area Partnerships and Investment Strategies

Please answer the following questions. Many of the responses below, such as targeted sector strategies, should be based on strategic discussions with the local board and partners. **Questions that require collaborative answers for planning regions are designated with an asterisk (*). See the Regional Plan Subsection of Memo 2023-16 for more information.**

3.1 Taking into account the analysis in Section 1, describe the local board’s strategy to work with the entities that carry out core programs (*Core programs include Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth Services, Title II Adult Education and Literacy, Title III Wagner-Peyser, and Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation*) and required partners to align resources in the local area, in support of the vision and goals described in Question 2.1. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(F) and 20 CFR 679.560(a)(6)]

As explained in Section One, the South Central Region 8 Workforce Board supports cross-training of WorkOne system staff and co-location of programs and services whenever possible. This allows for a better understanding of services and programs by each partner agency and fosters a much better referral system. These are important parts of the Board’s strategy for creating a system where resources are client supported and used effectively.

Under the oversight of the Board, WorkOne system staff representing at a minimum WIOA, Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education and Literacy, Wagner-Peyser, and Veterans Employment and Training Services will participate in cross-training activities designed to increase awareness of all partner programs available through the WorkOne system. The goal of these trainings will be to provide all staff with a basic understanding of program eligibility and referral processes, as well as services available to benefit the customer. Meeting Hoosiers where they are and removing obstacles to work and learning, aligns perfectly with the ideal of the “Putting People First” approach to services, and it is important to have well trained staff that can direct the customer seamlessly through the maze of resources and services available without duplication of required information and unnecessary office visits by the customer.

The WorkOne centers throughout the region serve as sites where partner staff and resources can be co-located. Every effort will be made to consolidate as many partners as possible in each facility for the benefit of customers throughout the region. When partner staff have been cross-trained and core partner services are housed in the same facility, alignment of resources is much more effective. Co-located partner resources and well-trained staff will position the WorkOne system in Region 8 to meet the Board’s goals described in Section 2.1. As a result, customers will be able to identify career pathways and access well-coordinated services in a location that is convenient for them. Region 8 believes that having an Adult Education presence on-site at office locations is an effective way to identify and recruit appropriate Adult Education students into the system. The presence of Adult

Education in the WorkOne Centers allows customers who lack a high school diploma or have low basic skills to attend class in a convenient location where they can improve their skills in an environment that is often more effective for adult learners than a school facility.

Because the WIOA Service Provider for Adult and Dislocated Worker Services is also the provider of Youth services in the region, staff who provide case management can effectively manage the comprehensive package of services available to youth and adults to include any additional WIOA resources as appropriate. This eliminates the need for customers to meet with multiple Career Advisors and provide repetitive information during service delivery. This method aligns well with the State Unified Plan goal of ensuring we closely track customers from the time they walk into a WorkOne office until they attain suitable employment which includes receiving appropriate services and referrals. In addition, close coordination with Vocational Rehabilitation services will provide increased access to WorkOne system services for individuals with disabilities.

Region 8 continues to embrace the concept of co-location and has negotiated arrangements in most counties of the region for multiple programs and agencies to provide services from WorkOne offices. Arrangements developed within the past 24 months include:

WorkOne Lawrence County - In 2023, we successfully partnered with the Stonegate Arts & Education Center to offer all WorkOne services at their Bedford location. The WorkOne office is co-located within the Stonegate Arts & Education Center along with Adult Education services and has thus far been an excellent partnership that aligns well with the State Plan concept of mobile locations.

WorkOne Greene County – In 2024, the Greene County office was relocated to allow for better resource costs and enhanced partnerships for the region. WorkOne Greene County is partnered with Vocational Rehabilitation and also works closely with the Wagler Education & Training Center to provide client services throughout the region.

Although not a new arrangement, the **State Government Center in Bloomington** opened its doors on the West Side of Bloomington back in 2018. This Center provides community services from a true one-stop perspective. The State Government Center houses the following agencies: WorkOne Bloomington, Vocational rehabilitation (FSSA), Bureau of Motor Vehicles, Indiana Department of Revenue, DFR, and DCS. WorkOne Bloomington provides access to the following services: WIOA, WP, TAA, Veterans, Unemployment Insurance (Bat Phones available for UI – Direct Access to representatives at DWD), RESEA and Adult Education. Note: Section 3.3 contains further details about co-location efforts within each county of the region.

3.2* Identify the programs/partners that are included in the local workforce development system. Include, at a minimum, organizations that provide services for relevant secondary and post-secondary education programs, provision of transportation, Adult Education and Literacy, Wagner-Peyser, Trade Adjustment Assistance, Jobs for Veterans State Grant, Senior Community Service and Employment Program, Vocational Rehabilitation, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program, and programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006. Describe how the local board will coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(2), (10), (11), (12) & (13), 20 CFR 679.560(b)(9), 20 CFR 679.560(b)(10), 20 CFR 679.560(b)(11), and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(1)(i)]

Partners in the Region 8 workforce development system include the following organizations:

- Wagner-Peyser provided by WorkOne staff
- As indicated in the WorkOne Center tables located in Section 3.3 of this plan, Vocational Rehabilitation Services are available on a full-time basis from VR staff who are co-located at WorkOne Bloomington and Linton. VR staff also visit WorkOne offices in Brown, Daviess, Lawrence, Martin, Orange and Owen Counties on an itinerant basis to meet with customers and provide services as needed
- WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth services provided by Vincennes University
- TANF and SNAP provided by Division of Family Resources offices in Brown, Daviess, Greene, Lawrence, Martin, Monroe, Orange and Owen Counties
- Adult Education and Literacy provided by the following entities and their connections to local literacy programs: Broadview Learning Center (Monroe), Brown County Career Resource Center, Owen County Learning Network, Wagler Training (Greene), and Vincennes University (Daviess, Lawrence, Martin, and Orange)
- Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education postsecondary programs provided by Vincennes University and Ivy Tech Community College
- Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG)
- Transportation Services are only provided in Monroe County via bus passes through the City of Bloomington Transportation Department for eligible program participants. However, Region 8 does have a robust supportive services program and offers assistance to eligible participants.
- SCSEP Partners include AARP Foundation and National Able

Per the IFA Region 8 Partner Agreement, community partners will coordinate on a direct basis with each other to appropriately coordinate services delivered and avoid duplication of similar services. Region 8 communicates on a regular and as-needed basis, sometimes intensive basis, to properly assist partners with providing eligible services to customers without requiring extraneous activities that have already been completed. In March of 2020, the SCSEP program saw an immediate cessation of older workers/trainees due the COVID-19 Pandemic and it has taken a bit for this program to build back up. Currently, Region 8 works with AARP Foundation and provides training for a couple of participants in its Linton WorkOne Office. National Able places trainees in our Paoli WorkOne Office when they have placements. In addition, the Region 9 Workforce Board recently received a SCSEP Grant to provide trainees/workers to local offices and Region 8 is coordinating placements for up to two SCSEP trainings at their Bloomington WorkOne location.

3.3* Describe how the board will support the strategy identified in the WIOA Unified State Plan and work with the entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs, including programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 to support service alignment. Describe efforts to work with each partner identified in 3.2 to develop plans, assurances, and strategies for maximizing coordination, improving service delivery, and avoiding duplication of the Wagner-Peyser Act services and other services provided through the one-stop delivery system. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(2), (10), (11), (12) & (13), 20 CFR 679.560(b)(1)(ii), (b)(9) and (b)(11)]

According to the State Unified Plan, the GWC goal of creating a talent system that affords all Hoosiers equitable opportunities for lifelong learning and provides employers with the skilled workers needed for the economy of today and tomorrow is supported by the following four strategies:

1. To develop a common understanding among partners as to what the “one-stop system” is in Indiana and foster impactful relationships between businesses, community partners and government agencies;
2. To increase service integration among partner agencies within the one-stop system and allow for greater access to information, resources, and services for constituents, businesses, state personnel, career coaches or navigators, and case managers;
3. To simplify the process for customers in order for services to be accessible when, where, and how they are needed; and
4. To ensure the culture of the one stop system promotes knowledge transfer across partner programs, such that staff embraces the “putting people first” philosophy and are capable of providing information on services across programs and making appropriate referrals.

Efforts will be made to develop and maintain a one-stop system throughout Region 8 that implements these strategies. Region 8 continues to make great strides toward cross-training of staff. Once each year, a joint training session has been held to provide a brief overview of Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, Wagner-Peyser, and WIOA services. These sessions have been attended by front-line staff representing all of the aforementioned programs. In addition, small workgroups have been formed within some of the counties to discuss mutual customers and how services from Adult Education and WorkOne can be blended to benefit those individuals. Intensive collaborative efforts have been developed between WorkOne staff and Adult Education agencies including Vincennes University, Broadview Learning Center, Wagler Education & Training, Brown County Adult Ed Center and the Owen County Public Library. Region 8 makes these joint training sessions available at least twice per Program Year to ensure partner staff have a chance to attend the training session. These training sessions are offered in the Spring and the Fall of each Program Year. Additionally, and as mentioned in Section 3.2, Region 8 works with AARP Foundation and provides training for a couple of participants in its Linton WorkOne Office. National Able places trainees in our Paoli WorkOne Office when they have placements. This spot is currently vacant, but we will work with National Able to make a placement in the near future. In addition, the Region 9 Workforce Board recently received a SCSEP Grant to provide trainees/workers to local offices and Region 8 is coordinating placements for up to two SCSEP trainings at their Bloomington WorkOne location

One of the most effective methods to cross-train staff is co-location of partner agencies. While training sessions are informative, constant first-hand exposure in a co-located facility is often the most valuable learning experience. Work based learning is often recognized as a beneficial tool to help customers prepare for jobs in their chosen career pathway. This method is also an effective way for partners of the workforce development system to become knowledgeable about programs and services. When staff representing various programs and agencies are housed in the same facility and have an opportunity to observe implementation of partner programs first-hand, participate in frequent programmatic discussions, and ask real-time questions of one another to assist customers, it is much easier to learn about the full array of services available and how to make appropriate customer referrals.

Region 8 has made considerable progress since 2018 in working with workforce development partners to establish co-location arrangements within all regional WorkOne Centers. For management purposes, the region has organized these WorkOne Centers into three smaller groups focused around our three

main service WorkOne Centers located in Bedford (affiliate), Bloomington (comprehensive) and Linton (affiliate). WorkOne Centers from Orange and Martin County are aligned with WorkOne Bedford, Brown and Owen County WorkOne Centers are aligned with WorkOne Bloomington and the Daviess County WorkOne center is aligned with WorkOne Linton location. Region 8 Business Services staff also work closely with regional businesses and provide on-site services when appropriate and necessary. Under this structure, the service provider regional Operations Manager serves as functional supervisor for all WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, JVSG, RESEA, TAA, and Jobs for Hoosiers programs and the staff who provide them. Having one Manager to oversee the daily schedules, work assignments, staff meetings, and productivity of these funding sources has allowed for a more coordinated customer flow and significant system alignment of these resources. Current co-location and integration arrangements for each WorkOne center and future goals for additional activities to promote system alignment are described in the following tables on the next three pages:

WorkOne Bloomington, Brown and Owen County WorkOne Centers

		Co-located Services available onsite during regular office hours	Partial Co-location Services available onsite on itinerant basis or by appointment	Not Co-located On-going coordination exists between partners and referral process in place	Not Co-located Informal communication exists.
Brown County WorkOne Center	Wagner-Peyser		X		
	Vincennes University -WIOA Adult, DW and Youth	X			
	Vocational Rehabilitation		X		
	Brown County Career Resource Center -Adult Ed	X			
	Brown Co Division of Family Resources -TANF and SNAP				X
	Carl Perkins CTE Postsecondary Programs (VU and Ivy Tech)			X	
Owen County WorkOne Center	Wagner-Peyser		X		
	Vincennes University -WIOA Adult, DW and Youth	X			
	Vocational Rehabilitation		X		
	Owen County Learning Network - Adult Ed			X	
	Owen Co Division of Family Resources -TANF and SNAP				X
	Carl Perkins CTE Postsecondary Programs (VU and Ivy Tech)			X	
Bloomington WorkOne	Wagner-Peyser	X			
	Vincennes University -WIOA Adult, DW and Youth	X			
	Vocational Rehabilitation	X			
	Broadview Learning Center Adult Ed	X			
	Monroe Co Division of Family Resources -TANF and SNAP	X			
	Carl Perkins CTE Postsecondary Programs (VU and Ivy Tech)			X	

WorkOne Bedford, Martin and Orange County WorkOne Centers

		Co-located Services - available onsite during regular office hours	Partial Co-location Services available onsite on itinerant basis or by appointment	Not Co-located On-going coordination exists between partners and referral process in place	Not Co-located Informal communication exists. The region will formalize the referral process.
Martin County WorkOne Center	Wagner-Peyser		X		
	Vincennes University -WIOA Adult, DW and Youth	X			
	Vocational Rehabilitation		X		
	Vincennes University -Adult Ed		X		
	Martin Co Division of Family Resources -TANF and SNAP				X
	Carl Perkins CTE Postsecondary Programs (VU and Ivy Tech)				X
Orange County WorkOne Center	Wagner-Peyser		X		
	Vincennes University -WIOA Adult, DW and Youth	X			
	Vocational Rehabilitation		X		
	Vincennes University -Adult Ed	X			
	Orange Co Division of Family Resources -TANF and SNAP				X
	Carl Perkins CTE Postsecondary Programs (VU and Ivy Tech)				X
	National Able – SCSEP Program (when active)	X			
Bedford WorkOne	Wagner-Peyser	X			
	Vincennes University – WIOA, Adult, DW and Youth	X			
	Vocational Rehabilitation		X		
	Vincennes University -Adult Ed	X			
	Lawrence Co Division of Family Resources -TANF and SNAP				X
	Carl Perkins CTE Postsecondary Programs (VU and Ivy Tech)				X

WorkOne Linton and Daviess County WorkOne Center

		Co-located Services available on-site during regular office hours	Partial Co-location Services available onsite on itinerant basis or by appointment	Not Co-located On-going coordination exists between partners and referral process in place	Not Co-located Informal communication exists. The region will formalize the referral process.
Daviess County WorkOne Center	Wagner-Peyser		X		
	Vincennes University WIOA Adult, DW and Youth	X			
	Vocational Rehabilitation		X		
	Vincennes University Adult Ed		X		
	Daviess Co Division of Family Resources -TANF and SNAP				X
	Carl Perkins CTE Postsecondary Programs (VU and Ivy Tech)				X
Linton WorkOne	Wagner-Peyser	X			
	Vincennes University WIOA Adult, DW and Youth	X			
	Vocational Rehabilitation		X		
	Wagler Education Center -Adult Ed	X			
	Greene Co Division of Family Resources -TANF and SNAP				X
	Carl Perkins CTE Postsecondary Programs (VU and Ivy Tech)				X
	AARP Foundation -- SCSEP Program	X			

3.4 Identify how the local board will coordinate WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with adult education and literacy activities under WIOA Title II. This description must include how the local board will carry out a review of local applications submitted under WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy, consistent with the local plan and state provided criteria. See the [Multi-Year Adult Education Competitive Grant Application \(Request for Application\)](#). [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(13) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(12)].

The Region 8 Workforce Board Executive Committee is responsible for reviewing Adult Education Applications for the provision of appropriate services within the Region and makes a final Application recommendation upon completion of the review process. The Executive Committee is comprised of the Region 8 Workforce Board Officers and includes the Board Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Regional Local Elected Official as Application reviewers. Each Officer reviews the Applications independently and records whether or not each Adult Education Provider meets the Regional Checklist Criteria in the following four areas:

- Needs Assessment
- Alignment with Local Plan Strategies and Goals
- Coordination of Services
- Training Services Alignment with WIOA 134 (c) (3) (D)

Once the Regional Checklist is completed, an open forum is allowed for Officers to discuss each Adult Education Provider Application and agree on a final recommendation. The final step is to complete the Local Workforce Development Board AEFLA Application Recommendation for each applicant and submit to the DWD Adult Education Team in Indianapolis.

In coordination with Adult Education providers in Region 8, Business Services staff present employers the opportunity to utilize the HSE Pathway program and English Language Learners program as a work and learn opportunity to attract workers for high wage and high demand jobs. Recent initiatives include:

Boston Scientific Earn While You Learn: In collaboration with Monroe County Community Schools Adult Education to provide English language instruction and employability skills training to employees with limited English proficiency. Clients have an opportunity to join a global company with strong local roots. Employees are afforded the chance to learn English while growing their career. Employees attend two classes per week with each session lasting 2 hours via Zoom.

PrintPak HSE Program -Working closely with Broadview Learning Center, this program is for customers wanting to complete their High School Equivalency (HSE) degree while working part-time in a manufacturing setting. Customers must be available to work morning or late afternoon shift part time, 28 hours per week while attending HSE classes through Broadview Learning Center Adult Education. Those who pass the HSE test at the end of seven weeks will be considered for full-time operator careers. Customers can earn \$14.37 an hour while enrolled in this program with the potential to earn more as a full-time associate after successful completion of the program.

Cook Medical/Cook Urological - This new HSE Program in Region 8 allows students to work 28 hours per week and take classes for ten hours a week to prepare for the TASC test at Bloomington and Ellettsville locations. Once they pass the TASC and demonstrate success in part-time work, the student will be offered full-time work in Production, Quality Control, Packaging or Warehouse.

Vincennes University (VU) Allied Health Programs - In partnership with Brown County Community School Adult Education, VU continues to offer two Allied Health program certifications that began back in 2021. Certifications are offered in Phlebotomy and Dental Assisting with more programs to be offered in the near future.

Lawrence County Workforce Coalition (Adult Education and Training Initiatives) - In partnership with Vincennes University Adult Education and Broadview Learning Center, Lawrence County has increased HSE obtainment by local participants through targeted recruitment efforts and increased local advertisements sponsored by the Lawrence County Growth Council. Lawrence County hosts 3-Day HSE Bootcamps and continues to increase HSE completions significantly in the Lawrence County area. Partnering with AT&T, and Human I-T, 100 Laptops were donated in July of 2024 to the Economic Growth Council for distribution to pre-selected organizations that assist local families in need. The Lawrence County Council also approved \$30,000 for the continuation of the highly successful Introduction to Local Jobs and Skills (ILJAS) program. To date, more than 150 local residents have learned the basics of Construction, Machining and Welding.

Academic Partners Project Team - Created in the Fall of 2021, this initiative includes several regional academic and training institutions including Vincennes University, Ivy Tech Community College, Indiana Wesleyan University, Purdue University Extension, Region 8 Workforce Development Services, Hoosier Hills Career Center, North Lawrence Career Center, and the Lost River Career Cooperative. Representatives from Mitchell High School, Bedford-North Lawrence High School, Stonegate Arts and Education Center, the Dimension Mill (Bloomington), COSMOS and the Bedford Mayors office participate in this group as well. This project team addresses training issues in and around the Lawrence County area with the goal of making this area a major training hub in the southern counties of Region 8. Initially, this group coordinated efforts to create and implement a Regional “Live” Course scheduler for all training providers, including Adult Education and Career and Technical Education institutions, to properly list all regional training opportunities within Region 8. This was launched in 2022 and has thus far been a successful coordination resource for all involved. Partners develop training programs and partnership opportunities among service/training providers that effectively utilizes all available employment and training resources for participants of the WorkOne system. One of the PY24 goals is to facilitate partnerships that allows members to actively seek Grant opportunities at the State and Federal Levels in hopes of bringing additional project funding to the region.

Wagler Education and Training Center - This Adult Education Service provider, located in Greene County, focuses on providing High School Equivalency and certification education within Welding, Nursing Assistant, Teaching Assistant, CNC Machine Production, CDL A & B training, EMT, Heavy Equipment Operation and Introduction to Construction Skills. Wagler Education and Training programs rival many CTE programs and delivers quality training in these high-demand industries in Region 8. Wagler provides training in Daviess, Greene and Lawrence Counties. Wagler currently partners with the North Lawrence Career Center (NLCC) to provide Welding and CNC Machining classes.

Additional Adult Education and Community Agency Partnerships include:

Brown County Career Resource Center (BCCRC) – Co-located with WorkOne office in Nashville, Indiana, the BCCRC provides Training Certifications in CAN, CCMA, HVAC/A+ Comp Tia (with

Broadview Learning Center), Phlebotomy (with Vincennes University). Plans to partner with Purdue University for Manufacturing and OSHA Certification is planned for 2025. –

Collaboration of Shoals, Mitchell and Orleans Schools (COSMOS) – Provides a wide variety of training opportunities in Lawrence, Martin and Lawrence Counties such as Smart Manufacturing, Industrial Robotics, Agri-Science, Construction Trades, Business Technology, Education Professions, CNA/CCMA, Hospitality Management, Human and Social Services, Design Technology, Engineering and Welding. COSMOS is also partnering with ROI to provide Career Coaching for High School students. –

Grow Lawrence County (GLC) - is the workforce and education arm under the umbrella of the Lawrence County Economic Growth Council (LCEGC). While GLC, with over 40 community stakeholders, focuses on birth to post-secondary initiatives, K-12 and adult education are a significant part of their work. With partners Indiana University Health Community Impact Invest Fund and Vincennes University, GLC has significantly increased the number of HSE's attained in the community by using digital sign ups with www.getmyhse.org. That effort continues systemically and is sustainable well into the future. To create an adult education funnel, GLC holistically created the three-week Introduction to Local Jobs and Skills (ILJAS) class initially with those involved in the justice system. There have been 17 cohorts and nearly 200 graduates with less than a 10% recidivism rate. These graduates then have a next step plan which can include a job, HSE attainment, Next Level Jobs adult education classes in partnership with Ivy Tech Community College, Vincennes University, Wagler Education Center and others. The North Lawrence Career Center and StoneGate Arts and Education Center are the main hubs for these trainings. Grow Lawrence County has funded a unified College and Career Awareness Continuum that all schools will use to explore careers from kindergarten to high school graduation. The advisory working groups continue to focus on 21st Century Scholarship sign-ups and FAFSA completion. In this program year, there are efforts to develop an Introduction to Local Jobs and Skills class for Health Sciences in partnership with Vincennes University and explore another ILJAS effort, with support from Duke Energy, focusing on the juvenile justice population, led by a collaboration of the justice system. Grow Lawrence County works with all partners that have the same goal of enhancing our resident's quality of life.

Martin County Alliance – Provides strategic planning for Workforce Development, Housing Development, Quality of Life/Place, Business Attraction, BR&E, Marketing and Community development. Part of Choose Southern Indiana Program, Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities (CEO) program, Code/IT Academy to Martin County project, and work with local schools for Manufacturing Day. –

Dimension Mill – Strong partner for Coded/IT Academy in Monroe, Washington, Crawford, Orange Daviess, and Dubois Counties. Will launch additional sites in Lawrence and Martin Counties in Fall of 2024. Also plan to include Brown, Owen and Greene Counties by Summer of 2025. Certification Courses include Cloud Services, Cybersecurity, Web Development and Project management.

Orange County Economic Development Partnership – Provides trainings in ServSafe with Ivy Tech Bloomington, Quickbooks, Code/IT with The Mill and Ivy Tech Bloomington, GED classes with WorkOne Orange County, and host Small Business Hours.

3.5* Describe how the local boards will coordinate local workforce investment activities with regional economic development activities that are carried out in the local area and how the local board will promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(5) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(4)]

Local economic development organizations are valuable partners of the WorkOne system since they share the goal of having a skilled workforce available to local employers. The Board and staff of the WorkOne offices work in coordination with local economic development organizations in a variety of ways. An economic development representative serves on the Board, and other board members also participate actively with economic development organizations located in their communities. These board members provide knowledge and expertise by sharing regional economic and workforce goals and concerns during planning discussions. WorkOne staff also serve on a variety of advisory boards and committees related to economic development initiatives.

The Workforce Board will work closely with Economic Development Organizations to ensure collaborative efforts among those agencies that are involved with systemic Workforce Development efforts such as the Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC), the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD), and other State agencies as appropriate.

The Region is fortunate to have the Gayle & Bill Cook Center for Entrepreneurship located at Ivy Tech Bloomington. The Center provides practical tools to help entrepreneurs from South Central Indiana to start and grow their businesses. The Cook Center developed entrepreneurship courses designed to give students practical skills in business planning, marketing, accounting, taxes, finance, and more. WorkOne staff will make referrals to these classes and/or to the entrepreneurship certificate program offered by the Cook Center. The Board and WorkOne system will consult with staff of the Cook Center to determine additional ways to help promote entrepreneurship and microenterprise services to customers. The Center will also be a valuable resource in assisting WIOA Youth staff to identify materials and activities that can be used to help incorporate an increased awareness of entrepreneurship into the delivery of the Youth Program Elements.

3.6 Based on the analysis described in Section 1.1-1.3, describe how the one-stop operator will ensure priority for adult career and training services will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient. Include any locally identified priority of service populations. [WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(E) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(21)]

WIOA legislation is designed to increase access to opportunities for employment, education, training and supportive services that individuals, particularly those with barriers to employment, need in order to become successful. According to WIOA requirements and state policy, Region 8 will have a target goal of at least 50.1% of the participants enrolled on the WIOA Adult program must be individuals who meet low-income criteria, receive public assistance, are homeless, are basic skills deficient, lack a high school diploma or equivalent, or are individuals with a disability whose own income meet low-income guidelines. Region 8 will strive to meet the DOL vision of providing these employment, education, training and supportive services to 75% of the individuals that meet this priority.

Region 8 should have no difficulty finding individuals who need help with developing a career plan and improving their skills so they can become employed in demand occupations that pay decent wages. As

described in Section One of this plan, the region has more than 19,000 residents who are 18 years or older and lack a high school diploma or equivalent. In addition, due to the low average wages earned by workers in the region, 21,800 families received public assistance in the form of Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP). A review of these statistics, along with the numbers of individuals who are either homeless or have a disability that is a barrier to employment, leads to the conclusion that Region 8 should have no shortage of customers who meet priority of service criteria as described above and need assistance preparing for career success.

Beyond the requirements of WIOA and state policy, the region will focus resources on these population groups because they are the individuals who are most in need of employment and training assistance as they prepare to become competitive members of the labor force needed to fill projected jobs through 2026. As indicated in Section 1.2 of this plan, it is anticipated that during the period 2024-2026 employers in Region 8 will need over 4,000 workers each year to fill new and replacement job positions. Projections indicate that 86% of the region's jobs will need at least a high school diploma or equivalent and 43% will require some college or post-secondary certification. As indicated in Section 1.1 of this plan, many of these job vacancies will be in Government, Manufacturing, Health Care, Public Administration, Scientific, Construction and Professional, Educational Services, and Technical Services, Accommodation and Food Services, and Retail Trade. Based on employment numbers, these top industries account for 85% of the total employment opportunities available within the region. As it has for the past few years, the regional employment projections pose both an opportunity and a challenge. These jobs represent valuable employment options for job seekers, but finding skilled workers to fill these open positions will be a challenge for employers. As a part of the regional strategy to address these worker shortages, efforts will be focused upon increased engagement of the priority of service populations described in the paragraphs above. Many of these individuals likely need to increase their basic skills and/or earn a high school diploma or equivalent and complete at least short term post-secondary training to become more employable.

These priority customers will all have an opportunity to meet with a Career Advisor to receive individualized career services that can help them prepare to obtain or retain employment. Specific recruitment efforts will be made to target individuals from these priority groups to increase their awareness of how services available through the WorkOne system can help them become self-sufficient.

Partnerships with community organizations who specialize in serving individuals with these barriers will be developed and maintained to enhance recruitment efforts of these targeted populations and facilitate the process of making and receiving appropriate customer referrals. WorkOne staff may also provide services on site at local community service organizations as needed to allow priority populations to access programs and services in locations that are more convenient for them.

Individuals who meet priority of service criteria and lack marketable skills to be competitive in the labor force will be encouraged to earn their HSE as appropriate and will also be offered assistance to attend training to gain the skills necessary to find suitable employment. This approach will not only benefit the individual job seekers, but it will also help increase the number of workers who have skills needed by regional employers.

The focus on serving these priority groups will be managed using DWD's case management system. Data on the enrollment levels of these populations will be regularly reviewed. In the unlikely event that less than 50.1% of those enrolled on the WIOA Adult population meet the priority of service criteria, corrective action will be taken and targeted recruitment efforts will be increased.

3.7* Based on the analysis described in Section 1.1-1.3, identify industries where a sector partnership is currently being convened in the local area or where there will be an attempt to convene a sector partnership and the timeframe. Describe how you will be partnering to achieve defined goals.

As described in Section One, current sector partnerships in Region 8 with which the Board and WorkOne system is involved include:

Regional Opportunity Initiative (ROI) in partnership with Radius Indiana and the Community Foundation of Bloomington and Monroe County received a \$42 million grant from Lilly Foundation back in 2016. Forming what is now known as “Hoosier Uplands,” ROI has worked on several initiatives assisting businesses and organizations throughout Region 8 to identify, target, and recruit talent from across the area and country to South Central Indiana. Work continues today with a sector focus on advanced manufacturing, defense contractors and the Crane Naval Surface Warfare Center, and the large Life Science sector in the region. In addition, ROI, in partnership with Ivy Tech Community College in Bloomington, is preparing for the Tech Expansion that will be occurring over the next several years within the Microelectronics and Semiconductor fields. Expansion is expected to occur in the Monroe County area and at Crane NWS in South Central Indiana. Board members and the Director of the Board have participated actively with this initiative by providing information about existing workforce development needs and giving input and feedback on program design. Workforce development is a key factor of this endeavor and new partnerships are being formed with WorkOne Centers, the Board, and the Workforce and Education component of ROI.

Radius Indiana is a regional partnership representing 8 counties in South Central Indiana: Crawford, Daviess, Dubois, Greene, Lawrence, Martin, Orange, and Washington Counties. Formed in 2009, Radius Indiana also serves as a primary point of contact in Indiana for Crane. The Workforce Board Director and Business Services Director serve on Radius committees and workgroups to identify educational and workforce issues important to the counties within the Radius region. Region 8 works closely with Radius Indiana to identify, attract and recruit talent from across the country to relocate and work in South Central Indiana.

WestGate@Crane - Professionals, elected officials, business leaders, and civic figures worked for the development of a technology park adjacent to NSWC-Crane Division. WestGate@Crane Technology Park partners with a variety of organizations and businesses such as local and state economic development corporations, NSWC-Crane Division, I-69 Innovation Corridor, Indiana Office of Defense Development, and WorkOne. Other partners include, Indiana University Bloomington, Purdue University, Ivy tech community College, Rose-Hulman, and Vincennes University.

Bloomington Life Science Partnership (BLSP) BLSP is focused on Life Science companies in the Bloomington area including surrounding counties. BLSP is a partnership formed by Bloomington Economic Development Corporation (BEDC) which includes employers, government, workforce development representatives, and educational representatives. The Bloomington Life Sciences Partnership is a collaborative effort dedicated to continued life sciences business growth in greater Bloomington, Indiana - a nationally recognized leading metro area in medical devices, contract pharma, biotechnology, basic research and life sciences workforce development. WorkOne staff provide labor market data, information on skills of the workforce and ongoing assistance to coordinate economic

development and workforce development efforts. WorkOne and BLSP representatives will continue to meet on a regular basis. Ongoing recruitment and job postings are planned for the next year. Over the past two-years, WorkOne has partnered with Ivy Tech Community College, Hoosier Hills Career Center, Boston Scientific, Baxter International and Catalent on the **Biomanufacturing Technician Apprenticeship Program**. This Program offers the opportunity for individuals interested in starting a career as a Technician with a life science company in the Bloomington and Spencer area. WorkOne partners continue to work with all industry partners with a focus on the medical work environment, culture and career advancement opportunities in Life Science companies. Training covers relevant information with hands-on experiences and content related to bio-pharmaceutical and medical device production. Successful completion of the course will allow individuals to earn a certification. Students may also have the opportunity to interview for a direct hire position with local companies and potentially enter into a US Department of Labor Registered Apprenticeship as a Bio-manufacturing Technician. Region 8 is working toward a company sponsored Registered Apprenticeship with hopes of providing a consisting stream of candidates in the near future.

Electricom Fibertech Partnership is a newly formed alliance forged this year. Specialists and Technicians have already started to be enrolled into a company sponsored Registered Apprenticeship with plans to continue ongoing enrollments of two to ten new apprentices each month moving forward. Additional plans include expanding apprenticeship opportunities within the Region to Hoosier Energy, REMC, Commercial Services, and Heidelberg Materials.

Bloomington Tech Partnership (BTP) is focused on the development and growth of technology in the South Central area of Indiana. This partnership was formed by BEDC in conjunction with the growing Tech companies, Indiana University, Ivy Tech, The Mill, and the City of Bloomington as well as other community partners and workforce development. The Bloomington Technology Partnership fosters the growth of Bloomington's emerging high-tech economy through talent recruitment, networking opportunities and technical assistance. WorkOne is a regular sponsor and participant in two annual Career and Internship Fairs to attract skilled IT workers to the expanding IT community in the area. As a result of the coordination between WorkOne, the BTP and local businesses, additional jobs are posted, connections of businesses to skilled workers are increasing, and the number of new entrepreneurial IT businesses is growing. WorkOne continues to be a partner in marketing and attracting individuals to participate in Bloomington Tech Partnership efforts. To encourage the growth of tech companies, WorkOne has developed partnerships with the Dimension Mill Code School to provide technology training to support local tech companies and provide high wage and high demand jobs for the regional workforce. Expansion efforts include the Southern part of Region 8 to include Lawrence, Orange and Martin counties.

3.8 A-D

Responses to the following questions should include the implementation of incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, work-based learning programs, apprenticeship models, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies that support the local board's strategy in 3.1 and meet the needs of regional employers. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(4)(A) & (B) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(3)]

Identify and describe the strategies and services that are and/or will be used to:

A. Facilitate engagement of employers in workforce development programs and targeted sector strategies, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

The WorkOne Business Services Team has been established to ensure a coordinated approach to assisting and engaging **all businesses, including small business**, throughout the region to utilize the services available through the WorkOne offices. This team meets regularly to share information and coordinate business contacts with area employers and to discuss employer engagement strategies. The Business Services Team will collect intelligence and information by engaging individual employers and attending Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development meetings. Information from businesses and other sources of Labor Market information will be actively compiled and analyzed by Business Services staff to identify any changes in economic conditions and will target industry sectors that have the most impact on regional economy.

Business Services staff will identify potential industry sector partners with the goal of identifying common needs and workforce issues. Sector experts within the Business Services Team will develop and maintain expertise on the needs of specific targeted sectors by collecting information from sector employers about their current and future needs. The WorkOne system will actively participate in the development of sector partnerships by bringing together employers within industry sectors, labor organizations, and educational institutions to identify strategies to address employer needs and develop solutions to common problems. The creation of these sector partnerships will benefit the involved employers and workers within the Region by increasing employment opportunities.

Members of the Business Services team also participate actively with area Chambers of Commerce, local economic development entities, and employer organizations such as local human resources staff associations to ensure area businesses are aware of the many valuable services they can access through WorkOne offices. Members of the Business Services Team make on-site visits to local businesses every month to learn more about the needs of these businesses and to help them devise recruitment, retention, training and employee development plans. Engagement of employers in work-based learning opportunities is an effective way for job seekers to gain skills and for employers to find desirable candidates for vacant positions within their companies. During employer visits, Business Services Team members will explain On-the-Job Training and Work Experience/Internship opportunities available through the WorkOne system making sure employers are aware of how these services benefit not only job seekers but employers as well.

Region 8 Business Services staff will also encourage employers to participate in the Next Level Jobs Workforce Employer Training Grant program approved by the 2017 General Assembly. This workforce development program is part of Governor Eric Holcomb's Next Level Indiana Agenda to continue the

positive momentum in Indiana. The goal of this grant program is to focus on high-priority industries and the high-demand jobs driving Indiana's 21st century economy forward. This Grant reimburses employers in high-demand business sectors up to \$5,000 for each new employee that is trained, hired and retained for six months. There is a \$50,000 cap for each employer and covered training must be associated with high-demand, high-wage jobs that require more than a high school diploma, but less than an Associate's Degree. Next Level Jobs Employer Training Grant is expected to continue for Program Year 2024 and beyond depending on funding.

B. Support a local workforce development system as described in 3.2 that meets the needs of businesses.

In addition to the Business Services Manager and Business Services staff, the Business Services team is comprised of local staff representing the WIOA service provider, Veterans (JVSG) program staff, and local DWD staff who regularly assist employers. Staff from Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education, TANF, SNAP, and WIOA Youth programs will be invited to participate on this team as appropriate to increase employment opportunities for all populations. In addition to the initiatives described above, WorkOne offices throughout the region provide a variety of services designed to meet the needs of businesses by assisting them with job recruitment, job posting, and job matching, including the following:

Business contacts – Staff make individual contact with businesses to increase awareness of Indiana Career Connect and encourage them to post their job openings through the WorkOne and utilize other available resources.

Technical assistance to businesses – Staff members advise businesses on how to post jobs and screen applicants using ICC.

Business Account Representatives – To ensure excellent customer service, large employers and businesses who utilize WorkOne services frequently have a designated WorkOne Business Account Representative who is familiar with the individual needs of their business.

Job Fairs – Organize, develop and participate in local and regional job fairs for multiple businesses, including Virtual Job Fairs.

Mini Job Fairs – To assist with recruitment, WorkOne offices host smaller job fairs that are targeted primarily to one employer or a small group of employers from the same industry.

Labor Market Information – WorkOne staff help businesses access information available on DWD's Hoosiers by the Numbers website.

Office space – WorkOne provides office space and support to employers for recruitment, job fairs, and interviews as needed.

WorkKeys – Numerous employers in the region rely on WorkKeys test scores to assist with job matching and recruitment. A priority of the Board is to continually increase the number of businesses who use the WorkOne system to help meet their employment needs.

Employer engagement will continue to be a focus of the WorkOne Business Services team with a sustained goal of having more companies use WorkOne as a primary resource for employee recruitment. An enhanced marketing plan using e-mail, newsletters, partnerships with Chambers of Commerce and Economic Development, and other strategies will continue to be implemented to help more employers understand how the services available through the WorkOne system can help them reduce employee turnover and find the right workers for their business.

C. Better coordinate workforce development programs with economic development partners and programs.

Staff to the Board and members of the Business Services team have regular contact with economic development officials to coordinate retention and expansion activities, assist with developing new employment opportunities, and assist in developing recruitment and training plans. Staff members frequently provide labor market information and assist economic development staff and businesses to utilize data available through DWD's Hoosiers by the Numbers website and other sources. When economic development officials are working with potential business prospects that may be considering locating within the region, local WorkOne offices routinely provide information on the skills of the workforce, the currently available labor pool, and other information that is key to helping a business decide the best location for its facilities. Participation in these activities also helps WorkOne staff to maintain current knowledge of the employability and job skills that are needed in order for prospective companies to locate or expand in the region.

The Board also works to coordinate the programs available through the WorkOne system with the initiatives of economic development organizations in the region. One example of this coordination is the development of the region's list of demand occupations. As this list is being developed, plans and priorities of local economic development entities as well as their knowledge of current labor force needs of employers are taken into consideration when identifying specific occupations for which current openings exist or future openings are projected. The Board and WorkOne staff have also been involved with and supportive of the development of sector partnerships in the region.

D. Strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs.

Although recent changes implemented by DWD have resulted in the discontinuation of staff assistance for Unemployment Insurance (UI) claims in local WorkOne offices, UI claimants are still able to connect to services with the WorkOne system from which they can benefit. The WorkOne customer flow process encourages UI claimants to register for Indiana Career Connect and begin their job search immediately. Available RESEA programs help to facilitate linkages between UI and WorkOne services and provide opportunities for WorkOne system staff to promote employment and training services to participants of these programs. Non-compliance with re-employment plans and scheduled WorkOne activities are reported as required which can have a negative effect on UI payments. WorkOne staff will build an even stronger connection between UI and job search services by ensuring that UI claimants are referred as appropriate to workshops, job fairs, and any other services that can help them become re-employed more quickly.

UI claimants that have trouble with connecting directly to UI representatives at DWD may utilize BAT phones located at our Bloomington and Linton WorkOne offices. These BAT phones provide a direct linkage to a UI Specialist at a Contact Center in Indianapolis and are available during regular business hours.

3.9 Describe the strategy the local board implements when using WIOA dollars to support training opportunities including but not limited to OJT, work experience, apprenticeship, and pre-apprenticeship.

- What portion of WIOA funds in the past two years were used to support training costs for participants in each of these programs? Please list a total as well as the portion used for each program.
- What percentage of WIOA funds would you project over the next two years will be used to support training costs for participants in each of these programs? Please list a total as well as the portion used for each program.
- If the local board is supporting training costs for participants using non-WIOA funding, how is this tracked?

As WIOA funds are typically used as the funding of last resort for training, the Board provided more than \$519,000 of WIOA funding from Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Training the past two Program Years. In addition, and worth mentioning as a Region 8 strategy for PY23, Region 8 received \$1,050,300 for the Workforce Ready Grant (WRG). A total of \$105,300 was budgeted for Administrative Costs with the remaining \$945,270 being completely allocated for customer tuition assistance. As of 06/24/2024, the Region had enrolled 244 students into training programs with 100% of the funds being obligated. Thus far, 185 students have completed training, 156 have earned a certification. Many of these students are also co-enrolled in WIOA funded programs. With this in mind, for PY23, Region 8 provided approximately \$123,000 for Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth training and supportive service dollars. In PY22, Region 8 provided approximately \$396,000 in Adult, Dislocated and Youth training and supportive service dollars.

The Region 8 Workforce Board is committed to operating a workforce development system that makes services to customers a priority. In support of their commitment to customer service, Board members feel strongly that resources in the region are directed toward maintaining a WorkOne location in each county of the region to allow customers access services in a convenient location near their home.

Although we strive to keep our overhead costs as minimal as possible to allow for a significant amount of funding to be spent directly on our clients, increasing wages and facility costs required us to seek other funding opportunities to maintain a high level of direct client costs. The Board also wants to spend the maximum amount of funding possible directly on occupational training, work-based learning, activities and supportive services that enable customers to engage in activities that will help them develop the skills needed by employers in the region. Based on these reasons, the opportunity for grant funding from the Next Level Jobs Grants as well as additional funding opportunities such as QUEST and the ABA Grant have become of the utmost importance to the region.

The Board has been very successful at implementing the Next Level Jobs – Workforce Ready Grant in the last several years. The Board and WorkOne staff have worked in close partnership with Employers and Adult Education providers in the region to achieve these results. This program encourages students to

work with Adult Education staff on earning a HSE if needed and improve basic skills while also attending short term training that results in a certificate or credential in a demand occupation. The WorkOne system in the region continues to promote Adult Education services and the Next Level Jobs programs. With the assistance of this partnership, over 400 individuals have been provided with training funds from the Workforce Ready Grant in the last two years.

The Board has also been successful at helping employers upskill their workforce by providing the Next Level Jobs – Employer Training Grant. Over the last two years, almost \$2 million in funding has been provided to local employers to upskill their workforce. The Board will continue to utilize DWD funds grants and take advantage of other grant funded opportunities as they arise to continue our commitment to a customer-centered approach.

It is difficult to calculate a projected regional percentage for training given that each funding source in the WorkOne system has different definitions, allowable uses and restrictions, and budget processes regarding funds for customer training. The Board has, however, established a direct client expenditure goal specifically for the WIOA and Performance Support Grant funds that are granted to the Board from DWD. The region’s planned total PY’24 budget for WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth funds is \$1,512,273. Of this amount, it is anticipated that approximately 15-20% (\$227,000 - \$302,000) of the total funds available for WIOA program activities will be used for direct client tuition and supportive service payments.

On top of these projections, WorkOne staff will work in coordination with partner agencies including Adult Education, Wagner-Peyser, TAA, Higher Education Institutions such as Ivy Tech Community College and Vincennes University, and Vocational Rehabilitation to ensure that customers can access all available training funds as appropriate to maximize the impact of the Region’s total funds available for training to participants of the WorkOne system.

For non-WIOA Grant funded programs, Region 8 uses various methods to track training costs. Region 8 utilizes the two CRM’s required by DWD for managing the Workforce Ready Grant (WRG) and the Quality Jobs, Equity, Strategy and Training (QUEST) Grant. Region 8 is also the recipient of ABA Funding through the Office of Work Based Learning and Apprenticeship (OWBLA). Funds for this Grant are tracked through Vouchers in the Indiana Career Connect (ICC) system and through a monthly regional reporting form, attached as a part of Exhibit Five.

3.10 If the local board is currently leveraging funding outside of WIOA Title I funding and state general funds to support the local workforce development system, briefly describe the funding and how it will impact the local system. Organize the description by population(s) served. If the local board does not currently have oversight of additional funding, describe any plans to pursue it.

The Board continually evaluates funding opportunities as they arise and determine the most appropriate manner in which to proceed. As appropriate, the Board will seek additional funding to increase available employment and training services in the region. The Board is a 501(c) (3) non-profit corporation and will leverage its funding from DWD to obtain additional grants and contracts that will enhance or compliment WorkOne services in Region 8.

In 2023, we established a minimum goal of obtaining at least \$100,000 per year in additional non-DWD funding. To date, Region 8 has secured additional funding dollars as follows:

1. The Workforce Board is working closely with the Indiana Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeships (OWBLA) to deliver Registered Apprenticeships throughout the Region when appropriate. In April of 2023, Region 8 received \$547,500 in funding through a DOL sponsored Apprenticeship Building America (ABA) grant acquired by the OWBLA.
2. Next Level Jobs - Workforce Ready Grant; Next Level Jobs - Employer Training Grant; the Quality Jobs, Equity, Strategy and Training (QUEST) Disaster Recovery Dislocated Worker Grant.

The Workforce Ready Grant is tracked through a CRM that allows training providers to submit invoices for eligible students. These individuals are vetted through the local WorkOne offices to ensure program eligibility. Staff then submits a request to the One-Stop-Operator who completes a detailed review prior to approval. Once approved, the training provider submits a voucher on the first day the individuals start training (70%) and upon the completion of class (30%). The Board pays those invoices directly to the training provider.

The Employer Training Grant is also tracked through a CRM that allows employers to submit invoices. The One-Stop-Operator completes a detailed review of each of those and the employer signed a training agreement and Regional Participation Requirements prior to submitting an invoice. Once the trainees are retained for 6 months after their start date of training, employers submit an invoice through the CRM along with supporting documentation of the completion and requirements of the program. The Board pays those invoices directly to the employer.

For the Apprenticeship Building America (ABA) Grant Program, eligibility and services are tracked through the state case management system. The service provider is responsible for determining eligibility and approving use of those funds.

For the Quality Jobs, Equity, Strategy and Training (QUEST) Disaster Recovery Dislocated Worker Grant, eligibility and training services are managed through two systems: the State case management system and a CRM provided by the state. The One-Stop Operator is responsible for reviewing the training for final eligibility and submitting invoices to the Board for payment directly to the training provider.

<p>3.11 Describe any collaboration with organizations or groups outside of your local area, interstate or intrastate, and what outcomes you plan to achieve as a result of the collaboration.</p>
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Region 8 is currently working with Region 11 in support of the Vincennes University Jasper Catapult Production Training for Advanced Manufacturing. Jasper is located in EGR 11 and borders the Region 8 service area. The funding partners for this program include: Radius Indiana, Conexus Indiana, Dubois Strong/Grow Dubois, and the Dubois County Community Foundation. This program will provide classroom and applied learning in Lean Manufacturing and prepare candidates for potential employment with a wide variety of manufacturing companies. Region 8 plans the result of this effort to be in terms of high-wage/high-demand job placement with advanced manufacturing companies.

Region 8 has started partnership negotiations with Midwest Urban Consultants and Region 4 for the upcoming Tech Expansions within the Semiconductor and Microelectronics industries. We are in the early stages of this negotiation, but the shared goal will be to apply for DOL and State Grants that will be coming out in the near future.

Section 4: Program Design and Evaluation

Please answer the following questions. Many of the responses below, such as those regarding career pathways and individual training accounts, should be based on strategic discussions between the local board and partners. **Questions that require collaborative answers for planning regions are designated with an asterisk (*). See the Regional Plan Subsection of Memo 2023-16 for more information.**

4.1 Describe how the local board, working with the entities carrying out core programs (*Core programs include Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth Services, Title II Adult Education and Literacy, Title III Wagner-Peyser, and Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation*), will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment and out of school youth. Include information regarding the referral processes with one stop partners such as the technology used for making/tracking referrals. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(3) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(2)(i)]

As previously mentioned in this plan, cross-training of partner staff and co-location of services will improve access to WorkOne system programs in the region for all individuals, especially those with barriers to employment. As staff of WorkOne partners become more knowledgeable about programs and services, they will be better equipped to make appropriate referrals to enable customers to access all employment and training assistance available that can help them meet their individual career goals. As a part of the cross-training process, more formalized referral processes will be developed between one-stop partners to ensure customers do not fall through the cracks. For customers with vision or hearing impairments, accessible workstations are located in the WorkOne Centers located in Bedford, Bloomington and Linton. Staff are also trained to help individuals utilize the Ease of Access Features for vision, hearing, dexterity, mobility and focus.

Efforts will continue to be made to develop closer connections with high school guidance counselors and community organizations who serve youth to increase awareness about services that are available through the WorkOne system to help out-of-school youth successfully transition into a career. Region 8 will increase their presence in the High Schools this year with the assistance of the Commission for Higher Education (CHE) Intermediary Capacity Building Grant which allows Region 8 to have WorkOne Career Counselors in the High Schools to conduct Career Discovery Meetings which cover a variety of topics with youth. This will allow us to build rapport with those transitioning students to ensure their successful transition to the workforce or next phase of their academic careers.

Region 8 has 14 Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) programs located throughout the Region. JAG Programs are located at the following High Schools:

- 1) Bedford North Lawrence
- 2) Bloomfield
- 3) Brown County
- 4) Eastern Greene
- 5) Edgewood
- 6) Linton-Stockton
- 7) Mitchell
- 8) Owen Valley (9/10 and 11/12)
- 9) Paoli
- 10) Shakamak
- 11) Washington.

JAG Programs are also located at the following Middle Schools:

- 1) Bloomfield
- 2) Eastern Greene
- 3) White River Valley.

JAG Specialists will also work closely with schools, community organizations and WorkOne staff to provide supportive services and referrals to students and former students as appropriate.

Region 8 has a South Central Indiana website at www.southcentral8.org for Board members and the general public. Board meeting dates and minutes are available for review on this site, as well as any important regional announcements that need to be posted. Additionally, and working closely with DWD, a regional State WorkOne website is also available at www.workonesouthcentral.org. Customers can obtain information about programs and services, upcoming events, and other useful information designed for employers and job seekers in the region. Region 8 first established a JAG Facebook account to allow followers to receive helpful tips and alert them about upcoming JAG events, happenings, or other items that may be of interest.

Region 8 also has a DWD Regional WorkOne website. Customers can now obtain information about programs and services, upcoming workshops and job fairs, and other useful information designed for employers and job seekers in the region. In addition, Region 8 has a General Facebook account to allow followers to receive helpful tips and alert them about upcoming workshops, job fairs or other events they might be interested in attending.

Region 8 plans to establish a Linked-In page by January 1, 2025. Social Media usage will undoubtedly increase the effectiveness of communication between WorkOne and In and Out-of School Youth.

4.2 Describe how the local board will facilitate and develop career pathways and utilize co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs as well as improve access to activities leading to a recognized post-secondary credential, including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(3), 20 CFR 679.560(b)(2)(iii), and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(2)(ii)]

The region has a long history of co-enrollment between WIOA programs and Wagner-Peyser programs. With the continued partnerships with Adult Education Providers throughout the service area, the region has significantly increased co-enrollment between WIOA and Adult Education programs. As mentioned in Section 3 of this plan, the region will ensure staff are well trained and knowledgeable about other partner programs so they can effectively screen customers and make appropriate referrals that lead to co-enrollment among partner programs.

One area that remains a priority for the Board involves the exchange of information between Vocational Rehabilitation staff and other partner agencies. Due to confidentiality and privacy regulation concerns, this makes it more difficult for staff to work in collaboration on behalf of VR customers who are co-enrolled in other programs unless the customer takes the lead on sharing information with staff of each program. Per the Unified State Plan, the region ensures that all staff comply with the rules and requirements while also allowing for information to be shared to the extent possible between Vocational Rehabilitation staff and other partners. Increased access to information between all partners is necessary to facilitate the development of a coordinated plan of service for the customer and more efficient use of resources by partner organizations.

As appropriate, customers in the workforce system will continue to be assessed for training eligibility and co-enrolled in programs they are determined eligible for based on an in-depth career assessment. If deemed eligible and identified as a candidate for a funded training activity or program, customer will have the opportunity to pursue industry-recognized credential certification and/or degree programs. As mentioned in this plan, Region 8, continues working with the Office of Work Based Learning and Apprenticeships, and has expanded Registered Apprenticeship programs in South Central Indiana within the Life Sciences, IT, Health Care, Fiber Technology and Advanced Manufacturing sectors. An example of this involves WorkOne partnering with Electricom in Orange County on the Fiber Technician Apprenticeship Program described in section 3.8 of this plan. Successful completion of the training course will earn customers an industry recognized certification. At the end of the training, clients will have the opportunity to continue on as an Electricom employee.

4.3 A-G Describe the one-stop delivery system in the local area as required by WIOA Sec. 121(e). Please note that question F is only for local areas participating in a Planning Region. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(A-D) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(5)].

A. Describe the local board's efforts to ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and jobseekers. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(A) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(5)(i)]

The region will encourage continuous improvement of service provision in a variety of ways. The Board will regularly review progress toward meeting federal performance standards. If deficiencies are noted, the Board's One Stop Operator will work with providers to implement corrective actions designed to improve performance.

At each quarterly meeting, Board members will also receive a WorkOne report which provides information on services provided to employers and job seekers. Board members will have an opportunity during these meetings to discuss the information presented and ask questions regarding the effectiveness of business services efforts in meeting the needs of employers, and WorkOne service delivery processes in helping to assist customers in meeting their employment goals. Service providers will be asked to address any concerns raised by Board members as a part of this process.

The One-Stop Operator will also review available data on co-enrollment rates between partners to ensure that referral processes are continuously improved to increase customer access to all programs. The region will use feedback received from customers and employers to improve service delivery practices to make them more effective and easier to access.

B. Describe how the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and through other means. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(B) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(5)(ii)]

As mentioned previously, WorkOne Centers are located in each county of the region. Because some areas of the region lack reliable internet access and many customers do not have computers, printers and/or internet access in their homes, these Centers provide a convenient location where customers can use technology to apply for jobs, file Unemployment Insurance claims, take online testing, participate in internet based training activities, complete applications for postsecondary training, and

other activities that are necessary for participation in employment and training programs. It is particularly beneficial for customers who lack computer skills to visit these WorkOne Centers where staff are available to answer questions and assist them while they conduct these online transactions.

Using technology, the Board and WorkOne Centers will make WorkKeys assessments throughout the region accessible via online testing arrangements as appropriate. Since a certain number of businesses within the region still utilize WorkKeys assessments, the assessment will continue to be offered to provide an opportunity for more individuals to prepare for jobs with those employers still utilizing the assessment as part of their hiring process. Additionally, using WIN Career Readiness Courseware, which is available to all users with internet access, individuals will be better prepared for the WorkKeys assessments and will improve their ability to succeed in Adult Education programs. Currently, the region utilizes online versions of some of the workshops offered by WorkOne which enable customers to access the information from these workshops at their convenience. Workshops such as service orientations, resume development, interview techniques and job search strategies can be all be completed virtually. Region 8's office computer systems allow for virtual Case Manager meetings with current and potential customers to include enrollments. This has become part of our normal delivery system within the region for quite some time now.

C. Describe how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA section 188 and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 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. [See WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(C), 29 CFR 38, 20 CFR 679.560(b)(5)(iii), and DWD Policy 2016-09]

Partnering with Vocational Rehabilitation staff, Region 8 will ensure WorkOne facilities comply with the physical and programmatic accessibility of our programs and services with the Americans with Disabilities Act and WIOA Section 188. We will work cooperatively with Vocational Rehabilitation to ensure WorkOne staff has been trained in addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.

Opportunities for staff training will be shared with one-stop partners as these opportunities become available. As a part of our annual program and compliance on-site monitoring, the Board through its contracted Staff to the Board performs a review of programmatic accessibility and a review of the WorkOne facilities accessibility. As a part of our annual program and compliance on-site monitoring, the Board through its contracted Staff to the Board performs a review of programmatic accessibility and a review of the WorkOne facilities accessibility. The following table on the next page indicates the results of the most recent review:

	Bedford	Bloomington	Linton	Brown	Daviess	Martin	Orange	Owen	Notes
Accessibility Element Reviewed									
Entrance	A	A	I	A	A	A	A	A	See Accessibility Table
Parking	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	
Doors / Force	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	
Services	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	
Interior Access Width 36"	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	
Wheelchair Access	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	
Rooms & Spaces 36" Wheelchair	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	
Signage Compliant	I	A	I	A	A	A	A	A	Parking Signage
Controls, height, closed fist	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	
Seats, Tables and Chairs	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	
Ramps, Lifts, Elevators	A	N/A	N/A	A	N/A	N/A	A	N/A	
Stairs	A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Rest Room Usability	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	
Lavatories	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	
Drinking Fountains	A	A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Telephones	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	
Special Accessible Workstations/ Computers	N/A	A	A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
A = Accessible I = Needs Improvement N/A = Not Applicable									Review Date 5/17/2024

Working closely with the regional Service Provider, the Staff to the Board will conduct annual training sessions for all WorkOne staff and provide appropriate materials to be reviewed each program year. This annual training will be recorded appropriately once completed.

WorkOne has a variety of resources available to provide reasonable accommodation to individuals requesting auxiliary aids and services. Appropriate accommodations are determined on an individualized basis. Strategies staff may use to assist an individual with disabilities will include but are not limited to:

1. Partnering with Vocational Rehabilitation or other community-based organizations able to meet the specific need of the customer.
2. Contacting Vincennes University's Office of Disability Services. This office provides information about services available to individuals with disabilities on appropriate accommodation procedures; evaluates disability documentation for reasonable and appropriate accommodations; assists in recruiting American Sign Language interpreters and provides information to make appropriate referrals.
3. Requesting consultation or information on accommodations from the Job Accommodation Network (JAN). 1-800-526-7234 (V) and 1-877-781-9403 (TTY)
4. Referring individuals to a full-service WorkOne office as these offices are equipped with disability work-stations that will accommodate accessibility to services (Bloomington and Linton locations). Individuals who are deaf, hard-of-hearing, or speech impaired are afforded the same equal opportunity to receive services, as are non-impaired persons. Persons with hearing impairments will receive reasonable accommodations in accessing services through the use of auxiliary aids and/or qualified interpreters at no cost to them. WorkOne staff will be made aware of these interpreter services available through the State of Indiana and will offer to help customers access these services as appropriate.

Listed below are some of the additional resources available within Region 8 to assist individuals with limited English proficiency:

- Transition Resources - Available in all counties
- City of Bloomington Office of Latino Affairs - Monroe County
- Indiana University Language Departments - Monroe County
- Vincennes University Foreign Language Department - All Counties
- On-Line Translation Services – www.translate.google.com. If no other resources are immediately available staff may use the free on-line translation service available from Google. This website provides free translation services in many languages.

The Bloomington and Linton WorkOne Centers have workstations designed for use by individuals with disabilities. The workstation computers have been updated and the workstations are currently operational. Each entity located in the Region 8 WorkOne Centers is required to comply with WIOA section 188 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Agreements developed by the Board will contain nondiscrimination assurances as follows:

Pursuant to the Indiana Civil Rights Law, specifically including IC 22-9-1-10, and in keeping with the purposes of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act, the One-Stop Partner covenants that it shall not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment relating to the WorkOne with respect to the hire, tenure, terms, conditions or privileges of employment or any matter directly or indirectly related to employment because of the employee or applicant's : race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability, ancestry, status as a veteran, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law ("Protected Characteristics"). Furthermore, the One-Stop partner certifies compliance with applicable federal laws, regulations, and executive orders prohibiting discrimination based on the Protected Characteristics in the provision of services.

Each One-Stop partner understands that the South Central Workforce Development Board is a recipient of federal funds, and therefore, where applicable, the One-Stop Partner and any One-Stop Partner contractors agree to comply with requisite affirmative action requirements, including reporting, pursuant to 29 CFR Part 38.

- A. Equal Opportunity Assurances: The parties to this Agreement assure that each will fully comply with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of Section 188 of WIOA and its implementing regulations. These regulations prohibit discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or political affiliation or belief, or against beneficiaries on the basis of either citizenship status or participation in any WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity.*
- B. Discrimination Complaint Procedures: The parties to this Agreement will assure those complaints alleging discrimination on any of the above bases will be processed in accordance with applicable federal WIOA regulations and DWD policy 2016-09, as well as any subsequent DWD policy which rescinds and replaces these, developed pursuant to this section and approved by the U.S. Department of Labor's Civil Rights Center.*
- C. Accessibility and Reasonable Accommodation: Pursuant to federal WIOA regulations, the parties to this Agreement assure that the following is provided in the One-Stop delivery systems:
 - (1.) Facilities and programs which are architecturally and programmatically accessible;*
 - (2.) Reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities;*
 - (3.) Cost allocation method for making reasonable accommodations (i.e., shared or paid by one entity).**
- D. Obligation to Provide Notice: The parties to this Agreement will provide ongoing and continuing notification that it does not discriminate on any of the prohibited basis in accordance with applicable regulations for Section 188 of WIOA.*

D. Provide the name, organization, and contact information of the designated local WIOA Equal Opportunity Officer.

The Region 8 designated local WIOA Equal Opportunity Officer is:

Robert E. King
Executive Director
South Central Region 8 Workforce Board
E-mail – reking@vinu.edu
Phone – (812) 322-6835.

E. Describe the roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners agreed to per DWD Policy 2018-04 Memoranda of Understanding and Infrastructure/Additional Costs Funding Guidance and any future iteration of this guidance. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(D) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(5)(iv)]

The Region 8 IFA budget includes financial contributions from WIOA, RESEA, WP, JVSG, UI, Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation and Child and Adult Resource Services (CARS). Funding agreements are negotiated individually with each partner and the agreed upon contributions toward infrastructure costs are included in the IFA. The shared infrastructure costs in Region 8 include Rent, Utilities, Security, Phone/Internet and Facility Maintenance costs that are shared between partners who have staff physically located in a Region 8 WorkOne office location.

For costs included in the Region 8 IFA, the financial contribution for each partner is calculated based on actual square footage assigned to partner staff, along with their proportionate share of common area costs within the WorkOne facility where staff are located. Per DOL definition, all financial contributions provided to the Board for IFA costs associated with space utilized by partner staff in a Region 8 WorkOne location are considered as Non-Cash contributions.

A number of Region 8 partner agencies also contribute to the WorkOne one-stop delivery system by providing Career Services that benefit WorkOne customers. These Career Services include:

- eligibility determination
- outreach, intake and orientation
- skills and supportive service needs assessments
- labor exchange services
- provision of training provider cost and performance information
- provision of local performance information
- information about the availability of supportive services and referrals
- assistance with UI claims
- employment and retention services
- follow up services for WIOA Title 1-B participants

Additional costs included in the Region 8 IFA for these Career Services are based on partner estimates of the amount of staff time and resources they contribute to providing the services listed above to benefit customers of the WorkOne system in the region.

In accordance with the MOU guidance issued by DWD, Policy 2018-04, the Board will submit all required MOUs as appropriate or requested by DWD. The DWD will facilitate the development of umbrella MOUs for Wagner-Peyser, TAA, Veterans programs, Unemployment Insurance and TANF Employment and Training programs. The Board anticipates MOUs which describe the roles and resource contributions of each partner will be developed locally with many of the following entities:

Vincennes University – Vincennes University is the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, RESEA, Youth, Business Services and JAG Service Provider. DWD leases the full service WorkOne office in Bloomington. Vincennes University has staff located in this office. The South Central Region 8 Workforce Development Board shares the proportional costs of overhead in the Bloomington office through the Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA). Vincennes University employs staff and leases space for

WorkOne Affiliate offices in Brown, Daviess, Greene, Lawrence, Martin, Orange and Owen counties. Partners whose staff are physically located in these facilities provide financial contributions to the Board to pay for their share of office space as indicated in the Region 8 IFA.

National Able Network and AARP Foundation SCSEP – These organizations provide Senior Community Service Employment Programs funded by Title V of the Older Americans Act in designated counties.

Adult Education Consortium Partners – Wagler Education & Training Center (Greene County), Owen County Public Library, Brown County Career Resource Center, Vincennes University Adult Education (Lawrence, Daviess, Martin and Orange counties) and Monroe County Community School Corporation provide Adult Education services for Region 8.

Bloomington Housing Authority, South Central Community Action Program, Hoosier Uplands and PACE provide housing assistance, employment assistance, supportive services, career counseling and training under the Community Service Block Grant, Housing and Urban Development, and other funding sources.

Ivy Tech Community College Bloomington and **Vincennes University** receive funds through the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act. Both entities provide an extensive array of short-term certification programs and Associate Degree programs in demand occupations.

In addition to the MOUs required by WIOA, the South Central Region 8 Workforce Development Board has the following MOUs/Letters of Support in effect as of July 1, 2024:

1. **Thrive Orange County** – This MOU is a referral agreement to serve mutual customers and coordinate resources.
2. **Amethyst House, Inc.** - This MOU is a referral agreement to serve mutual customers and coordinate resources.
3. **Conexus Indiana** – This MOU defines the ways in which the Workforce Board may participate as partners in the launching of Catapult Indiana as appropriate.
4. **Centerstone** – This Letter of Commitment for Monroe County is a referral agreement to serve mutual customers and coordinate resources.
5. **Evansville Goodwill Industries, Inc.** - This Letter of Support is a referral agreement to serve mutual customers and coordinate resources.
6. **Easterseals** - This Letter of Support is a referral agreement to serve mutual customers and coordinate resources.
7. **Jobs for America’s Graduates** – Total of Thirteen (13) Programs within Region 8. The South Central Workforce Development Board has entered agreements to operate JAG in Ten (10) High Schools and Two (2) Middle Schools:
 - a. Bloomfield School District
 - b. Brown County School Corporation
 - c. Eastern Greene Schools – High School and Middle School
 - d. Mitchell Community School Corporation
 - e. North Lawrence Community Schools
 - f. Owen Community School Corporation – 9th and 10th Grade Program as well
 - g. Paoli Community School Corporation
 - h. Richard Bean Blossom Community Schools
 - i. MSD of Shakamak Schools

- j. Washington Community School Corporation
- k. White River Valley School District – Middle School

F.* If you participate in a Planning Region, please describe the coordination of administrative cost arrangements, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate. [20 CFR 679.510(a)(1)(v)]

Not Applicable to Region 8

G. Describe how one-stop centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated technology enabled intake and case management information system for core programs and programs carried out under WIOA and by one-stop partners. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(21) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(20)]

As mentioned previously, some areas of the region lack reliable internet access and many customers do not have computers and/or internet access in their homes which limits the extent to which these customers can access one-stop services online. WorkOne Centers located in each county of the region provide a convenient location where individuals can use computers to access a variety of online tools including Indiana Career Connect, Indiana Career Explorer, WIN Career Readiness Courseware, the Uplink Unemployment Insurance Claim system, as well as online testing such as MOS Certifications and EmployTest to prepare for job opportunities where skills certifications are needed.

Outside of the Bloomington area, many individuals also lack the necessary computer skills to effectively use the internet to conduct employment and training activities online. To enhance the skills of WorkOne customers in the region, the WIOA Service Provider employs an instructor to provide digital literacy workshops and individual tutoring using the computer labs located at WorkOne Centers throughout the region. These digital literacy workshops cover a variety of topics including basic computer skills and email, Windows, Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint, Internet Explorer and other software programs. In addition, workshops are offered throughout the region that include instruction on how to use Indiana Career Connect and how to conduct an online job search.

Through use of ICE and ICC training programs such as ALISON, job seekers will be able to use technology to identify career paths and use additional online training programs to develop their skills. Currently, the region is offering many virtual activities online to include service orientations, workshops, intake assessments, counseling, and job referral services. More virtual delivery methods of additional services will continue to be reviewed and added as we move forward. Region 8 will also collaborate with the Indiana Department of Workforce Development and all one-stop partners in terms of integrated technology processes that are currently being considered or may be considered in the future.

4.4 Provide an assessment and description of adult and dislocated worker workforce development activities, including type and availability of education, training, and employment activities. Include analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of such services as well as the capacity to provide such services in order to address the needs identified in 1.2. Specifically assess the local area’s WIOA performance levels from the prior two years. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(D) & 108(b)(7), 20 CFR 679.560(b)(6), and 20 CFR 679.560(a)(4)]

Participants of the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs will have access to a wide array of valuable employment and training assistance to help them meet their employment goals. The services available are organized into four categories:

- **Basic Career Services** are available to every customer who seeks help from the WorkOne system. These services include: eligibility determination for applicable programs; orientation to the full array of services available through the WorkOne system; initial assessment of basic skills, abilities and supportive service needs; job placement assistance; labor market information including data on in-demand occupations, required skills and average wages; information about training programs offered by eligible providers; an overview of other assistance that may be available to help with basic needs including TANF and SNAP as well as housing, medical and child care assistance; and assistance with finding financial aid for training.
- **Individualized Career Services** are provided when WorkOne Career Advisors determine they are appropriate to help an individual obtain or retain employment. These services will be available in all WorkOne Centers and will include: assessment of skill levels and service needs; development of an individual employment plan that identifies goals and the activities needed to be successful; counseling and career planning; short term pre-vocational training including employability skills, internships or work experience with linkages to careers; workforce preparation including digital literacy, basic skills, and other skills necessary to transition into postsecondary training or employment.
- **Training Services** linked to in-demand occupations will be available to individuals who are unlikely to obtain or retain employment leading to economic self-sufficiency with their current skills and are therefore in need of training. These individuals will receive financial assistance with postsecondary training through the use of an Individual Training Account and/or an On-the-Job Training contract.
- **Follow-Up Services** will be provided as appropriate for individuals who are placed into employment for up to 12 months after their first day on the job. These services may include counseling, job retention skills, time and stress management skills or other assistance necessary to help these individuals retain employment.

For Program Years PY21 and PY22, Region 8's performance levels for Adult and Dislocated Workers were as follows:

PY 22	Credential		Employment Q2		Employment Q4		Measurable Skills Gain		Median Earnings	
	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual
Adult	62.45%	76.7%	78.9%	85.4%	78.6%	78.8%	61.0%	69.7%	\$6,566	\$9,136
Dislocated Worker	67.6%	61.9%	71.95%	79.70%	74.15%	68.1%	61.0%	77.1%	\$7,268	\$9,583

PY22: As you can see, Region 8 met or exceeded all of the Adult Performance Metrics. For Dislocated Worker Performance (DW), Region 8 met or exceeded three of the five DW Performance Metrics, falling short in Credential Attainment and Quarter Four Employment. Region 8 struggled to meet overall performance goals due to a multitude of factors with the biggest issue being staff turnover. The COVID-

19 Pandemic played a major role in causing most of the hardships, but as of the beginning of PY23 Region 8 is seeing a great improvement in staffing numbers to include stability, thus resulting in increased performance since this time.

PY 21	Credential		Employment Q2		Employment Q4		Measurable Skills Gain		Median Earnings	
	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual
Adult	62.45%	72.4%	78.9%	85.9%	78.6%	86.8%	61.0%	74.8%	\$6,566	\$7,800
Dislocated Worker	67.6%	69.6%	71.95%	71.4%	74.15%	83.10%	61.0%	68.0%	\$7,268	\$7,721

PY21: Region 8 met or exceeded all of the Adult Performance Metrics. For Dislocated Worker Performance (DW), Region 8 met or exceeded four of the five DW Performance Metrics, falling short in Measurable Skills Gain only. Although Region 8 did well in meeting the performance numbers, Covid-19 did have some affects on the overall outcomes. PY21 is when Region 8, as well as all Regions in Indiana, began to see the increased difficulty in serving customers due to the resulting pandemic office closures, staff related illnesses, amount of customer services provided to include the way they were being provided, and the initial decrease in enrollment numbers. Overall, Region 8 did a tremendous job during this critical time and in the end became much better operationally in terms of customer services delivery and community outreach.

There are a number of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges associated with the implementation of the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs.

Strengths include: services are already co-located in a number of WorkOne locations: a variety of short term and traditional training options are available in the region and strong partnerships already exist with Ivy Tech, Vincennes University, Adult Education providers; Career & Technical Education (CTE) Centers; a WorkOne Center is located in every county of the region which facilitates access to services for customers, and partners in the region have a sincere willingness to work together for the benefit of customers; Vincennes University, a long time service provider of WIA and now WIOA, has a successful track record of effectively delivering these services.

Weaknesses include: rural areas throughout the region where transportation options are limited, lack of resources and employment opportunities in some communities make it more challenging for customers to meet employment goals; and recent staff reductions the past few Program Years in WorkOne Centers have changed the service delivery capacity of some programs and activities. However, recent staff additions in 2024 has greatly reduced this area as a weakness.

Opportunities include: Registered Apprenticeships will continue to provide additional options in more career fields, therefore creating more opportunities for customers. The I-69 Corridor continues to allow for business expansion and has improved connectivity among communities and partners within the region, thus leading to more jobs that pay a good wage. This trend continues to affect job availability and creation; strong partnerships with Adult Education provides an opportunity for the many people in the region who lack a high school diploma to simultaneously work on their HSE and attend short term vocational training. Additionally, Federal funding to provide internet services to all areas of the State

should provide much more effective outreach to customers where they live and enhance training and employment opportunities.

Threats include: with over 19,000 individuals of the workforce having a high school diploma or less, the region lacks workers with the basic skills and job skills needed to meet the needs of employers; and typical allocations of workforce development funding for Region 8 is among the lowest in the state.

4.5 Identify successful models of the activities above, especially any best practices for dislocated worker activities relevant to the local area.

In the past few years, Region 8 has not seen many dislocations throughout South Central Indiana. In PY22 and PY23, there were two major rapid response activities that occurred. The first one happened in the Healthcare industry with a Hospital in Lawrence County shutting down. Working with a regional Healthcare Alliance started by two of our Board members, which is now a State Alliance, we were able to work directly with the Hospital and move most of the workers to other facilities without any down time in between jobs. Of course, this was due to having As mentioned previously, WorkOne Centers are located in each county of the region. Because some areas of the region lack reliable internet access and many customers do not have computers, printers and/or internet access in their homes, these Centers provide a convenient location where customers can use technology to apply for jobs, file Unemployment Insurance claims, take online testing, participate in internet based training activities, complete applications for postsecondary training, and other activities that are necessary for participation in employment and training programs. It is particularly beneficial for customers who lack computer skills to visit these WorkOne Centers where staff are available to answer questions and assist them while they conduct these online transactions.

Using technology, the Board and WorkOne Centers will make WorkKeys assessments throughout the region accessible via online testing arrangements as appropriate. Since a certain number of businesses within the region still utilize WorkKeys assessments, the assessment will continue to be offered to provide an opportunity for more individuals to prepare for jobs with those employers still utilizing the assessment as part of their hiring process. Additionally, using WIN Career Readiness Courseware, which is available to all users with internet access, individuals will be better prepared for the WorkKeys assessments and will improve their ability to succeed in Adult Education programs. Currently, the region utilizes online versions of some of the workshops offered by WorkOne which enable customers to access the information from these workshops at their convenience. Workshops such as service orientations, resume development, interview techniques and job search strategies can be all be completed virtually.

Region 8's office computer systems allow for virtual Case Manager meetings with current and potential customers to include enrollments. This has become part of our normal delivery system within the region for quite some time now. a plan in place with other Healthcare Employers and the need for healthcare workers still at a high rate. The second dislocation involved more than 100 workers from a Life Sciences facility in Bloomington. This dislocation was mainly related to the COVID-19 Pandemic and the fact that production of the vaccine was no longer needed at a high rate. Many of these employees will be able to find jobs in the Life Sciences or Advanced Manufacturing industry either on their own or through the assistance of our Rapid Response activities. One partnership that flourished as a result of this layoff was a better coordination effort among the Bloomington Economic Development Corporation (BEDC) and its Monroe County partners. BEDC and Workforce Development partners worked closely together to get out in front of the layoff in Bloomington. A coordinated partner Rapid Response Guide was created for

businesses as a result of this collaboration. In addition, the Region 8 Business Services staff also created an Employer Services Guide as well for local businesses to understand the activities and resources provided by WorkOne offices throughout South Central Indiana, a most valuable and much needed resource developed in PY23.

4.6 Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities, as described in section 134(a)(2)(A). [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(8) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(7)].

The Business Services Manager will coordinate Rapid Response services for Region 8. The Business Services Manager will maintain regular contact with the State Rapid Response Team/Dislocated Worker Unit (DWU) and TAA Unit for mass layoffs, WARN information, and TAA activity. Information from DWD, the TAA Unit, and the Dislocated Worker Unit will be shared with the Regional Leadership Team, and information obtained locally will be shared with the State Rapid Response Team, TAA Unit and DWU.

The Business Services Manager will share information with the Regional Leadership Team through use of regular meetings, e-mail, and phone contact for immediate issues. The Business Services Manager and the WIOA Service Provider for the region will schedule meetings with the Regional Operations Director to coordinate staff, facilities and resources to plan rapid response activity in the region. The Business Services Manager will ensure that all staff and partners needed to participate in orientations are advised and scheduled for appropriate presentations. The Business Services Manager will keep the One-Stop Operator advised of activities and provide reports to the State Rapid Response Team/Dislocated Worker Unit (DWU), One-Stop Operator and to the Regional Workforce Board.

In the event that layoff activity involves a TAA certified company, the Business Services Manager will ensure that all local activities are well coordinated between WIOA Dislocated Worker programs and the DWD TAA Unit. All Trade related activities will be shared with the Leadership Team and the Business Services Manager will be copied on all communications related to Trade program issues. The Business Services Manager will ensure contact with the State DWU occurs whenever a Trade activity occurs or has a potential to occur. Regular contacts with the DWD Trade Specialists in Indianapolis will ensure a cohesive ongoing relationship. DWD Trade Specialists will work with the Business Services Manager to ensure all staff are aware of Trade activities and understand how to properly implement the applicable policies and procedures.

4.7 Provide an analysis and description of the type and availability of youth workforce activities for in school youth, including youth with disabilities. If the same services are offered to out-of-school youth, describe how the programs are modified to fit the unique needs of in-school youth. For each program, include the following: length of program and availability/schedule (i.e. two weeks in July); percent of youth budget allocation; WIOA program elements addressed by the program; desired outputs and outcomes; and details on how the program is evaluated. Include analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of such services and the capacity to provide such services in order to address the needs identified in 1.2. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(9) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(8)]

Per WIOA definition, in-school youth are low-income individuals, ages 14-21, who are attending secondary or postsecondary school. In order to be eligible for WIOA services, these individuals must also have one of the following barriers: basic skills deficient; English language learner; offender;

homeless or runaway; pregnant or parenting; disability or requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or secure or hold employment.

The sole provider of WIOA Youth services in Region 8 is Vincennes University. As such, approximately 90% of the available youth funding is contracted by the Board to VU for direct service provision. WIOA limits the amount of funds that can be spent on in-school youth to 25% of total youth expenditures.

Most WIOA in-school youth funds are spent on eligible WIOA youth clients with only a small amount, if any, spent in support of JAG programs. If a JAG student accesses any WIOA funding, it is due to the fact the client is eligible and enrolled as a WIOA youth participant. JAG programs in the region typically serve a combined total of approximately 35-40 students per year and these programs have an exceptional track record at meeting service levels and performance measures. The partnerships that have developed with the participating high schools have led to increased attendance, better academic performance and improved graduation rates as well as more students going on to postsecondary training or finding suitable employment after high school.

The remaining WIOA in-school youth funds will be spent on providing employment and training services such as Work Experience activities, to eligible participants through the WorkOne Centers. As such, all customers under the age of 25 are screened for WIOA Youth eligibility when they visit a WorkOne Center in the region. Those who appear to be potentially eligible are immediately referred to a Career Advisor knowledgeable about the WIOA Youth program.

All in-school youth services will be available on-site during normal operating hours at each of the eight (8) WorkOne Centers in the region. Since Vincennes University is also the service provider for WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker services, staff who provide case management services to youth also serve adults and dislocated workers. This allows all youth 18 years and older to receive seamless access to the full array of WorkOne services and WIOA resources for which they qualify from a single Career Advisor. This eliminates the need for youth to visit multiple locations or provide the same information to numerous case management staff in order to access all the services that can be offered by WorkOne staff. This design results in a well-coordinated service delivery system that maximizes available resources to assist youth participants.

All WIOA youth participants receive an objective assessment which reviews their educational functioning levels, barriers, goals, strengths, interests, aptitudes, employability and job skills, and supportive service needs. This assessment is an on-going process throughout their program participation and includes interviews, utilization of Indiana Career Explorer and other assessment tools and methods.

All youth customers will participate jointly with a Career Advisor in the development of an Individual Service Strategy (ISS). The ISS will identify the educational and employment goals for each youth and provide a road map for the steps that must be taken to meet these goals. The ISS will be updated to reflect any changes in goals or life changes that may affect goal attainment.

As a part of their participation, all youth will be offered the following 14 service elements:

1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies.

2. Alternative secondary school services or dropout recovery services as appropriate.
3. Paid and unpaid work experiences that have academic and occupational education as a component of the work experience, including summer employment and other opportunities throughout the year, pre-apprenticeship programs, internships and job shadowing, and on-the-job training opportunities.
4. Occupational skills training.
5. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities.
6. Leadership development opportunities.
7. Supportive services.
8. Adult mentoring for a duration of at least 12 months.
9. Comprehensive guidance and counseling.
10. Financial literacy education.
11. Entrepreneurial skills training.
12. Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area.
13. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training.
14. Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation.

These elements will be provided either by staff of the WorkOne system or through collaborative agreements with other community agencies. More details about their implementation are included below:

- Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities. Implementation strategies for this element include integrating education with workforce preparation activities. The JAG model is an excellent model that combines both education and career preparation in an integrated setting. Other strategies include establishing training options, when able and appropriate, that allow youth to participate in Work Experience, OJT, or Internships while completing a program of classroom education and skills training. This training may involve WorkOne, High School and/or community partners involvement to offer and deliver. The goal of this multifaceted approach will be to provide the Youth with not only a recognized credential, but valuable work experience within the occupation or industry.
- Financial literacy education. Sound financial management training will be provided to youth clients which will allow them to understand the fundamentals of personal finance. This element is offered via one-on-one instruction, in groups, or using computer based instruction to help

youth learn more about banking, loans, credit cards, credit scores, budgeting, making good financial decisions, avoiding identity theft, and other topics related to helping youth gain knowledge and confidence to make informed financial choices. This training will also include financial aid processes for postsecondary education opportunities.

- Entrepreneurial skills training. This element will be offered on an individual basis or in a group setting and will include basic information on the tools needed to start a small business, how to identify business opportunities, understanding options for funding the development of a small business and effective marketing strategies. The Gayle & Bill Cook Center for Entrepreneurship at Bloomington Ivy Tech will serve as a resource for ideas and advice on how to best provide this information. Youth may also receive counseling on the option of self-employment as a career option.
- Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area. Youth clients will be counseled on career pathways with an emphasis on Demand Occupations. Staff will discuss growth potential within the career pathway and career cluster. Staff will continually work with youth to determine the most suitable career choices and provide a foundation for long term self-sufficiency. Activities will include: career awareness, career guidance and counseling, career exploration; labor market information including in-demand industry sectors; assessment of career interests and how they align with occupational projections for the region; and aptitudes and values (ICE).
- Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training. These services will be provided primarily on an individual basis although some of these activities may be conducted in a group. Components included in this element will include: coordination of remedial courses with Adult Education providers to increase success prior to entering postsecondary education programs; exposure to and assistance with the college admissions and financial aid processes; mentoring referrals; awareness of soft skills, study skills, time management, stress management, and other skills needed to successfully navigate the postsecondary education experience; assistance with transitional activities associated with starting a new educational venture to include labor market information, career research and training program comparisons.

Similar services will be offered to out-of-school youth, but delivery of these services to in-school youth will be tailored to fit the needs of the in-school youth population. For in-school youth who have not yet graduated from high school, the focus will be on staying in school, maintaining good attendance and punctuality, making good grades and graduating with a diploma. These youth will also be encouraged to develop a plan for transitioning from high school to military service, postsecondary education, or employment. Services will be delivered with this transition in mind and every effort will be made to adequately prepare the youth so the transition to whichever option they choose will be a smooth and successful one. WorkOne staff will contact local high schools to offer on-site workshops at the schools to help graduating seniors learn how to access Indiana Career Connect and other WorkOne services. There are a number of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges associated with the implementation of the WIOA In-school Youth program.

Strengths include: the opportunity to focus on helping youth to stay in school and prepare for a successful transition to life after high school will likely significantly increase the chances for future

success; those 18 and older can be co-enrolled with other WIOA programs which maximizes available resources; and the focus on work-based learning will provide an opportunity to better prepare in school youth for transition into employment.

Weaknesses include: the low-income and barrier eligibility requirements can screen out youth who need services; and limited capacity due to in school expenditure limitations may result in a situation where some in-school youth are unable to be enrolled.

Opportunities include: increased focus on partnerships with schools will facilitate more coordinated delivery of services for youth; and the requirement for 20% of youth funds to be spent on work experience facilitates a focus on work-based learning opportunities for youth.

Threats include: the requirement that only 25% of total youth expenditures may be spent on in school youth limits both the numbers of youth that may be served and the resources that may be made available to them.

4.8 Identify successful models of the activities above and any other best practices for youth workforce activities relevant to the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(9) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(8)]

Youth programs in the region have historically been successful in achieving excellent outcomes for the youth who are enrolled. Post pandemic numbers were affected in PY22. The table below summarizes youth performance in Region 8 for the past two program years:

WIOA Youth Performance	PY'22	PY'21
Placed In Employment or Education		
Goal	78.4%	78.4%
Actual	66.07%	78%
Attainment of Degree or Credential		
Goal	62.0%	62.0%
Actual	61.7%	74.35%

In PY'21 we met or exceeded Youth Performance Goals. In PY'22, Region 8 placed 66.07% in Employment or Education, which was a bit off of the Goal. We were right at the Credentialing Goal. It is believed this was due to COVID-19 and the numbers reflected issues in PY22 numbers. In PY'23, we are back on pace to meet or exceed these Goals once again.

One practice that has been particularly effective in the region is the use of WIOA Youth funds to provide paid work experience opportunities with employers throughout the region. These work-based learning opportunities have not only given youth participants an opportunity to learn valuable skills and gain experience that can be included on a resume, the work experience assignments have often led to job offers. The COVID-19 pandemic did affect work experiences for more than two-years, but the region will

continue to expand work experience, OJT and other work-based learning opportunities in PY24 and beyond to help connect youth with employment opportunities.

In addition to success with WIOA programs, the region also operates excellent JAG programs at Bedford North Lawrence, Bloomfield, Brown County, Eastern Greene, Edgewood, Mitchell, Owen Valley, Paoli, Shakamak and Washington High Schools. These programs have a history of meeting the desired 5 of 5 Standards, now 6 of 6 Standards for measuring student success. These standards include: graduation rate; employment rate; full-time employment (30-hours); total full-time positive outcomes; further education rate; and connectivity rate.

4.9 Describe the process utilized by the local board to ensure that training provided is linked to in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area or in another area to which a participant is willing to relocate. Describe how training services outlined in WIOA sec. 134 will be provided through the use of individual training accounts, including, if contracts for training services as described in 20 CFR 680.320 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. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(19) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(18)]

In order to ensure training is provided for occupations in demand, WIOA resources will only be used to support Individual Training Accounts for the occupations listed on the regional demand occupation list included as an Exhibit of this plan. This list is updated annually and approved by the Board in an effort to make sure it reflects jobs with sufficient numbers of current or projected openings and provides a reasonable expectation that the customer will be able to find work in their desired occupation earning a good wage. In order to ensure that training services are accessible to as many customers as possible, including youth and individuals with disabilities, the Board makes a specific effort to ensure that occupations on the list require varying levels of training ranging from short term training of a few weeks, to On-The-Job training, to more traditional long-term training and degree programs. Vocational Rehabilitation programs will use the demand occupation list only for informational purposes and will not limit customer training opportunities to occupations on this list.

Prior to the issuance of an Individual Training Account, Career Advisors will review the educational profile and work history of each customer to determine if training is needed or if the customer already possesses the credentials and marketable job skills necessary to find employment in an in-demand occupation from this list. Once the determination is made that training is needed to prepare the customer to compete for these high demand jobs, customers seeking assistance with training will be provided with career assessment services to assist them in identifying a career plan that is a good fit for their interests, abilities and aptitudes. Financial literacy workshops will also be provided to help the customers select a career path that will enable them to earn wages that will help them become self-sufficient.

After a customer's individual career plan has been developed identifying an employment goal, a Career Advisor will review DWD's INTraining list with customers to ensure they are aware of the available training options for their chosen career. In consultation with their Career Advisor, the customers will

select an appropriate training provider taking into consideration location, class schedule and start date of next training, additional costs such as transportation or child care necessary for participation, total cost of attending training, and other factors that may affect their training choice.

4.10 Describe how Reemployment Service and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) activities are implemented in the local area and how they will be incorporated into WIOA programming.

Customers participating in the RESEA programs are routinely screened for eligibility for other programs, especially dislocated worker programs. All individuals on the list of potential participants are selected and requested to visit the WorkOne for services. These individuals are assigned to a staff member who works to identify what skills are needed for these job seekers to become more marketable to area employers. WorkOne staff help these customers access services such as workshops, Adult Education, postsecondary training, or on-the job training, that will help them meet their employment goals. As a part of the regional coordination for these programs, staff from the Bedford, Bloomington and Linton WorkOne Centers who have special knowledge or expertise that can benefit RESEA participants are cross utilized to assist local and state staff who provide these services throughout the region. These individuals will be co-enrolled with WIOA as appropriate to include braiding of funding to support training and/or supportive services as needed.

4.11 Describe the local area's grant application and project design strategy, including staffing, when applying for additional funding (e.g., non-formula grants). How does the local area braid funding and/or prioritize use of certain funding streams?

Due to decreased WIOA funding in the last several years, Region 8 seeks additional funding opportunities when they are available to assisting in maintaining an office in each of the counties served. Region 8 specifically identifies opportunities to support training as well as grants that provide for the capacity to increase our service reach throughout our counties. Region 8 has applied for and received non-WIOA funding grants such as DWD - Performance Support Grants, DWD- National Dislocated Worker Grants, DOL -HVRP grant and the CHE - Intermediary Capacity Building Grant.

Regulations that apply to our current WIOA funds are often more restrictive and limit the number of individuals who are eligible for funding, especially those in need of training. The flexibility of these additional programs allows for the ability to train and upskill workers to meet our local workforce needs. Region 8 assesses individuals to determine program eligibility for each program that is currently available through their local WorkOne. This assists in providing a streamlined process that allows the individual to receive referrals to the appropriate program as quickly as possible. Based on their eligibility, the region provides funding for training and/or supportive services to ensure that as many individuals as possible will have access to those funds. This can be achieved by utilizing one funding source or braiding program funding from each grant that the individual qualifies for. This approach ensures that grants will be expended on a timely basis and also improves program outcomes as the Customer is supported throughout their participation to ensure their success.

As mentioned earlier, Region 8 has started partnership negotiations with Midwest Urban Consultants and Region 4 for the upcoming Tech Expansions within the Semiconductor and Microelectronics industries. We are in the early stages of this negotiation, but the shared goal will be to apply for DOL and State Grants that will be coming out in the near future.

4.12 Describe how the local area plans to implement program evaluation. What aspects of program delivery and performance will be evaluated, and how will these evaluations take place?

Region 8 utilizes a proactive approach for program evaluations provided throughout the region. To ensure successful implementation, the One Stop Operator will ensure staff are provided with comprehensive training and materials based on program eligibility, requirements and program metrics.

The Service provider will be expected to review the enrolled clientele on a regular basis for program eligibility and provide their approval prior to funds being expended. Based on the program requirements, the One Stop Operator will review and potentially provide direct oversight to ensure program implementation as well. Region 8 assesses individuals to determine eligibility for each program that is currently offered through their local WorkOne. Based on those assessments, funding is provided for training and/or supportive services to ensure that the region can serve as many people as possible with the resources that are available. This can be achieved by utilizing one funding source or braiding program funding from each grant that the individual qualifies for to provide training or supportive service funding. This approach ensures that grants will be expended on a timely basis and also improves program outcomes as the Customer is supported throughout their participation to ensure their success. Services can be offered in a variety of ways depending on the program requirements. When multiple meetings are required, individuals can meet virtually at the WorkOne location closest to their home or employer or at alternative sites such as adult education classrooms or High Schools.

Region 8 conducts regular monitoring of all programs to determine if performance benchmarks are being met. If issues are noted, the One Stop Operator will work with the service provider to determine what process needs to be changed or implemented to ensure program success. The regular review of all programs allows for the region to determine what programs work well, provides insight as to what other services or programs may be beneficial and shows performance success that will can be advantageous in securing other grants or funding opportunities.

4.13 Describe the local area's professional development plan for all staff, including the frequency, type (in-person, self-guided, web-based, etc.), and topics addressed.

Region 8 is committed to providing new and current staff with training to make certain that staff members feel competent and confident in their ability to provide the best services possible to WorkOne Customers. New Staff Members are provided with comprehensive training that consists of approximately one week of in-person and virtual meetings with the Service Provider Management and Mentors. This training covers the following: HR Functions; WorkOne Programs; Program Eligibility based on the current programs within the region; ICC Entry and Data Collection; Assessments; Case Noting; Data Entry; Performance Requirements; and more.

To assist current staff, the Region 8 Deputy Director emails a weekly "WIOA Tips and Guidance Update" with any regional changes or areas of concern. This can also include a Q&A section based on staff interaction throughout the week to ensure that staff have the same information. Region 8 conducts virtual bi-weekly staff meetings which cover training topics or areas of concern discovered during monitoring or based on questions posed by staff members. This is also used to address additional

changes to policy, new or existing grant requirements and allows for staff to bring up items that are identified as training needs or concerns.

Regional staff refresher training is also held in person in the Spring and Fall to discuss any additional issues or concerns that arise. Staff also receive training virtually by DWD administrative staff and GEO Solutions.

Region 8 has specifically provided training for these topics over the last program year:

- Youth Eligibility
- Adult and DW Eligibility Determination
- Adult Priority of Service
- Data Validation
- Case Noting
- Income Calculations
- ICC corrections
- VOS Greeter
- Equal Opportunity Refresher Training
- TABE Refresher Training

Staff are also given the opportunity to attend Professional Development training based on availability.

Section 5: Compliance

Please answer the following questions. Most of the responses should be staff-driven, as the questions focus on the organization's compliance with federal or state requirements. **Questions that require collaborative answers for planning regions are designated with an asterisk (*). See the Regional Plan Subsection of Memo 2023-16 for more information.**

5.1 Describe the competitive process that will be used to award the sub-grants and contracts in the local area for WIOA Title I activities. Identify agreement type (sub-award or contract), name of sub-recipient or contractor, and length of agreement. Attach copies of current agreements as Exhibit 1 for, as applicable: One Stop Operator, Service Provider(s), Fiscal Agent, and Staff to the Board. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(16) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(15)]

WIOA Staff to the Board, One-Stop Operator and Service Provider – The South Central Region 8 Workforce Board, Inc. through its Fiscal Agent, Crowe LLP conducted a competitive solicitation and last released an RFP in September of 2020 for Regional Staff to the Board, One-Stop Operator and WIOA Service provider functions as a combined proposal for all three functions to be executed by one entity.

Throughout the solicitation process, Vincennes University staff were excluded from participation in meetings or discussions about the RFP specifications as well as ratings of proposals received. The RFP specifications were developed by Crowe LLP as a product of meeting with the Executive Committee of the South Central Region 8 Workforce Board, Inc. The Executive Committee was comprised of the Board Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and the Chief Elected Official. Crowe LLP advertised the availability of the RFP by:

- Posting to DWD website
- E-mail distribution to Regional Operators and Service Providers statewide
- E-mail distribution to Community Actions Agencies statewide
- Posting to the South Central Region 8 Workforce Board, Inc. website
- Legal ads in Regional newspapers as well as the Indianapolis Star

Two organizations submitted letters of intent to bid, with one proposal fully submitted to Crowe LLP. Crowe LLP distributed the proposal to the Workforce Board Executive Committee members for independent scoring. The Executive Committee met, discussed the proposal received, compiled scores and voted to recommend to the Board to award the contract to Vincennes University for a three-year period ending June 30, 2024 with a one-year extension through June 30, 2025 that may be exercised by the Workforce Board based on performance. The full Board subsequently met on October 28, 2020 and accepted the recommendation of the Executive Committee.

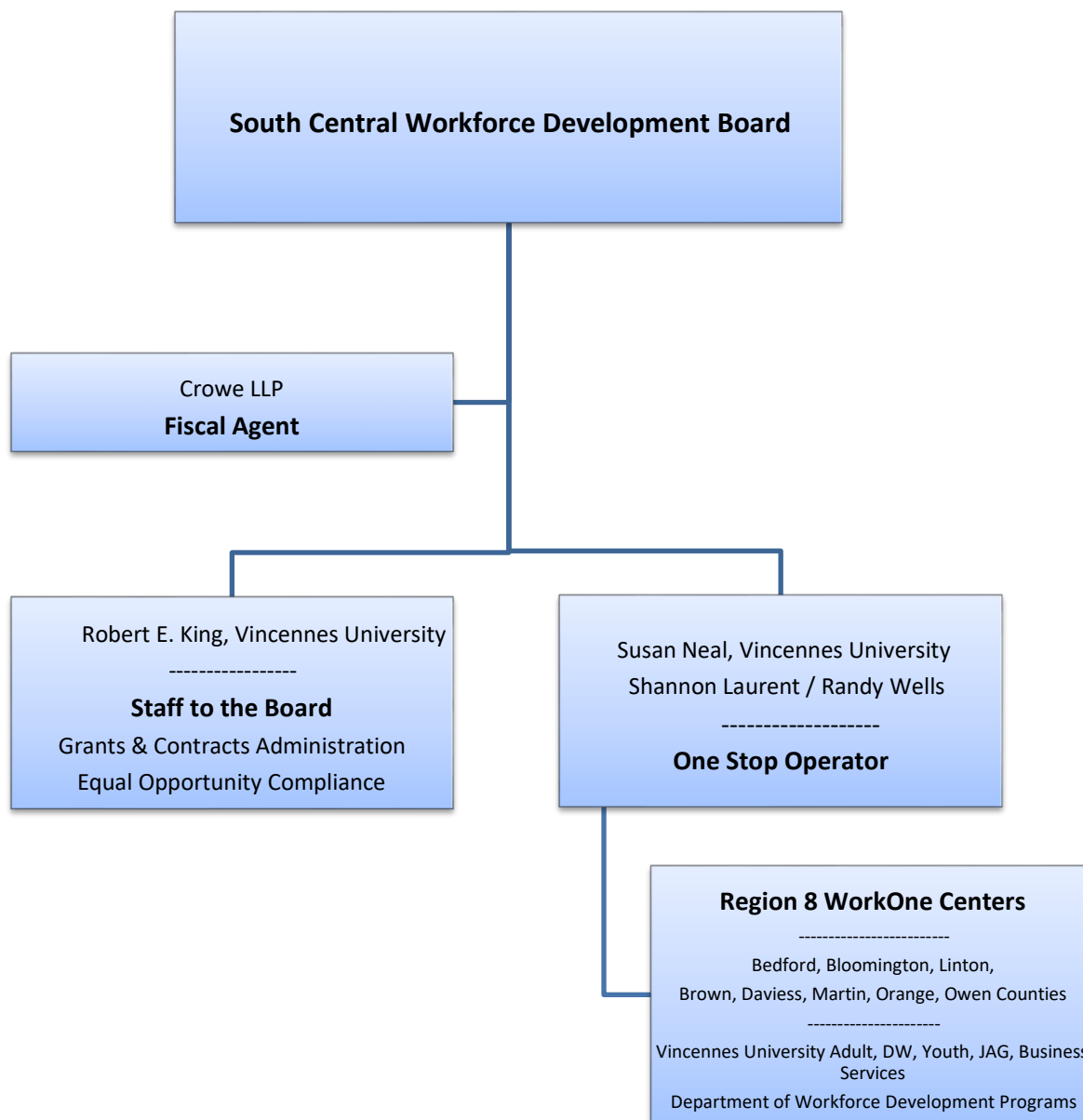
Effective July 1, 2021, Vincennes University (VU) continued its role as Staff to the Region 8 Workforce Board and One-Stop Operator in addition to maintaining their role as the Service Provider for Region 8. All regional activities and services were and continue to be delivered under the management structure attached as an exhibit of this plan. The South Central Region 8 Workforce Board voted to award the one-year extension option at its meeting on June 26, 2024. Vincennes University is currently under contract through June 30, 2025. Fiscal Agent – On June 26, 2024, the Chief Elected Official issued an opinion to the Workforce Board that Crowe LLP had done a great job as Fiscal Agent in Region 8 and recommended that they continue on for an additional two-year contract with a third-year option based on performance. The full Board discussed and voted to approve Crowe LLP to continue as Fiscal Agent through June 30, 2026.

The agreement for Vincennes University to serve as Region 8’s Staff to the Board, One-Stop Operator and Service Provider are included within the Adult/Dislocated and Youth Contracts attached in Exhibit One. The Fiscal Agent (Crowe) Contract, is also included in the attachments.

Upcoming RFP for Staff to the Board, One-Stop Operator and Service Provider – Fiscal Agent, Crowe LLP will release a new WIOA Services RFP based on the following timeline: 1) – Release of RFP on October 21, 2024, 2) – Letters of intent due by November 7, 2024, 3) – Proposals for each entity due by December 13, 2024, 4) – Executive Committee review by January 15, 2025, and 5) – Selection announced at Region 8 Workforce Board meeting on January 22, 2025. Providers will have a clear option to bid on each entity separately.

5.2 Provide an organization chart as Exhibit 2 that depicts a clear separation of duties between Title I roles (e.g., between the board and service provision). [20 CFR 679.400 – 430]

The organizational chart below depicts the separation between the board and service provision:



5.3 Describe any standing committees or taskforces of the Local Board, including the role and scope of work of the youth committee (or youth representatives on the WDB if there is not a youth committee).

The only standing committee of the South Central Region 8 Workforce Board is the Executive Committee. In the absence of a Youth Committee, the Board members listed below have the knowledge and experience to represent the youth perspective:

1. **Adam Gross, Vice Chancellor, Ivy+ Career Link, Ivy Tech Bloomington** - Ivy Tech has a large number of students aged 24 and younger and Adam has experience working with regional

partners to create systems which allow youth to have a smooth transition into postsecondary education.

2. **Brenda Reetz, CEO of Greene County General Hospital and current Workforce Development Board Chair** - In her role as CEO of the hospital, Brenda has been very supportive of efforts to serve youth. She regularly volunteers to speak to JAG classes and other school classrooms in our region, and serves as a judge for our annual JAG CDC. Brenda and Greene County General Hospital are previous award recipients of the WorkOne Achievement Award from DWD for their support of our youth work experience programs. Brenda has also been instrumental in assisting Region 8 WDS with establishing new JAG programs at Eastern Greene and White River Valley Middle School.
3. **Scott Baker, Operations Manager of Whitney Tool in Lawrence County (and current Workforce Development Board Vice-Chair)** – In his role as Operations Manager, Scott has also been very supportive of efforts to serve youth. He has worked directly with local WorkOne office in support of Work Experience activities and has sponsored young adults participating in these types of events. Scott has also worked with Conexus Indiana in support of their Summer Youth Intern Programs. Scott is a strong advocate for JAG programs and supports expansion of this program state wide.
4. **Michelle Ellis, Director of Training Programs and Adult Education Coordinator of Wagler Education & Training Center** – Since over 50% of Adult Ed students in Region 8 are 24 years old or younger, Michelle has expertise in working with young people who need to increase their skills and motivating them to use the resources available to meet their goals. Wagler Education & Training Center is an Adult Basic Education school offering High School Equivalency Diploma and Workforce Certifications. Michelle collaborates and offers training and adult education programs in Daviess, Greene and Lawrence counties to include work with the North Lawrence Career Center, Stonegate Education Center in Bedford, and the Davis County Economic Development Corporation.
5. **Pam Metz, CEO of Boston International** - In her role as CEO, Pam is very active with local schools and youth activities in Orange County, particularly in French Lick, Indiana. She is a supporter of Region 8 JAG Programs and advocates for a program in every High School throughout the State of Indiana.
6. **Linda Henderson, Executive Director of Stonegate Arts & Education Center** - In her role as Executive Director, Linda works closely with regional partners including Ivy Tech, Vincennes University and North Lawrence Career Center to serve area youth with workforce certifications, college course offerings and youth program activities. She also hosts various educational youth camps for JAG, Vincennes University and local partners.

5.4 Identify the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds as described in WIOA Sec. 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III), as determined by the chief elected official or the Governor under WIOA sec. 107(d)(12)(B)(i). [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(15) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(14)]

The Board’s Fiscal Agent is Crowe LLP. Contact information is:

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5.5 Indicate the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official consistent with WIOA sec. 116(c) to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the Local WDB for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under WIOA title I subtitle B, and the one-stop delivery system in the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(17) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(16)]

Region 8 Negotiated Levels of Performance for PY’24 and PY’25:

Activity	Adult	DW	Youth
Employment 2Q	82.7%	78.0%	82.5%
Employment 4Q	81.2%	76.0%	83.0%
Credential	75.0%	73.6%	68.0%
Median Earnings	\$7,785	\$8,500	\$5,000
MSG	68.0%	68.0%/70.0%	69.0%

5.6 Describe the actions the local board will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing local workforce development board, consistent with the factors developed by the State WDB. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(18) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(17)]

The Region 8 Workforce Board is committed to maintaining a WorkOne system where the customer, not the programs or funding sources, is the primary focus. As indicated previously in this plan, the Board has established a number of goals that support the over-arching goal of a client-centric approach. Basically, Region 8 operates a system where the customer is at the center of service delivery. Coordination between partner agencies is an essential part of providing customers a positive and productive experience with the WorkOne system. As appropriate, customers will have individual career plans that lay out the steps needed for success in a career pathway. These plans will be designed with the needs of the customer in mind. All WorkOne partners involved with each client will work to present a unified effort to maximize available resources.

To the extent possible, customer flow procedures will be designed to avoid duplication of effort from the various partners and unnecessary collection of redundant information from the customer. As a part

of their individualized plan, each customer will have access to assessment, career counseling, educational and training assistance, supportive services, work-based learning opportunities, and job placement assistance as appropriate. Throughout the implementation of the plan and duration of participation with the WorkOne system, staff from the WorkOne partners will communicate regularly and exchange information as allowed by confidentiality guidelines to ensure programs and funding sources are coordinated for the benefit of the customer. Specific efforts will be made to help youth, individuals with disabilities or basic skills deficiencies, and those with other barriers to employment connect with resources that can help them become successful members of the labor force. WorkOne staff will maintain current knowledge of all available services with their communities and will work to establish referral processes with these organizations to assist customers in gaining access to services from which they can benefit.

Additionally, the vision of the Region 8 Workforce Board aligns closely with the State WDB's vision for both businesses and individuals. In an effort to help employers find and develop skilled talent and maintain a competitive advantage in a global economy, the WorkOne Business Services Team will ensure all businesses have the opportunity to post jobs on the state's automated labor exchange system to identify skilled individuals for job openings. Employers will also have access to labor market information that can be used to make their business more competitive and more successful in hiring, developing, and retaining employees. The Business Services Team will also work with Employers to assist with incumbent worker and new hire training activities through the Next Level Jobs Employer Training Grants (ETG). Business services team members will also work with employers and education and training partners to develop and implement work-based learning opportunities, including apprenticeships, for job seekers as appropriate. These work-based learning activities are often an effective method for businesses to find and develop skilled employees. In an effort to help individuals have career success, all citizens of Region 8 will have the opportunity to understand and improve their skills through the local workforce system. Individuals will have access to information about educational opportunities, career pathways, and available job opportunities including labor market information about demand occupations in the region and statewide. This information will be provided by the WorkOne through collaborative partnerships with area education providers and community organizations. Coordination among area partners will allow an improved approach to meeting the needs of the regional economy and strengthen the overall state economy.

The South Central Region 8 Workforce Board has always performed at a high level and believe we set the standard in regards to many of the metrics put into place. Region 8 will continue to strive to deliver the most effective and beneficial programs to Hoosiers in South Central Indiana and beyond.

5.7 Provide as Exhibit 3 copies of executed cooperative agreements which define how all local service providers, including additional providers, will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the local one-stop delivery system. This includes cooperative agreements (as defined in WIOA sec. 107(d)(11)) between the Local WDB or other local entities described in WIOA sec. 101(a)(11)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 721(a)(11)(B)) and the local office of a designated State agency or designated State unit administering programs carried out under title I of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.) (other than sec. 112 or part C of that title (29 U.S.C. 732, 741) and subject to sec. 121(f)) in accordance with sec. 101(a)(11) of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. 721(a)(11)) with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination. See Local Plan References and Resources. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(14) and 20 CFR 679.560(b)(13)]

VR Agreement included as Exhibit Three.

5.8 Describe the process used by the Local WDB, consistent with WIOA sec. 108(d), to provide a 30-day public comment period prior to submission of the plan, including an opportunity to have input into the development of the local plan, particularly for representatives of businesses, education, and labor organizations. If any comments that represent disagreement with the plan were received, they must be included as Exhibit 4 attached to this Local Plan. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(20), 20 CFR 679.560(b)(19), and 20 CFR 679.560(e)]

The South Central Region 8 Workforce Board Executive Committee received a draft of this plan on August 23rd and approved release of the plan for public comment. In addition, all Workforce Board members were notified of the plan's release via e-mail, including those who represent business, labor, economic development, community-based organizations and education. Throughout the program year, Staff to the Board worked closely with the Board to ensure operational elements were included in the plan. Prior to the submission of this plan to DWD, a copy of the plan was posted on the DWD Region 8 website on August 23, 2024. A link to the plan and invitations to comment during the period 08/23/2024 – 09/23/2024 were sent via email to Local Elected Officials, Adult Education Directors, Career and Technical Education Directors, Division of Family Resources Directors, Local Economic Development Representatives, Community Action Program Directors, Vocational Rehabilitation Directors, Chambers of Commerce and other interested organizations. In addition, advertisements were placed in the legal ad section of area newspapers alerting the public of the opportunity to comment on the document. Comments could be made by all stakeholders, including Region 8 Workforce Board members, through 09/23/2024.

Note: There were no comments made in disagreement with the Regional Plan 2024-2027.

5.9 Describe the board’s process for oversight and monitoring of sub-recipients and contractors. Include staff titles for who conducts monitoring and how staff are trained to conduct monitoring. Provide a list of all upcoming planned or scheduled monitoring activities as well as copies of or links to all monitoring procedures and tools utilized during the review process. Submit this information as Exhibit 5.

Financial Compliance and Program Compliance monitoring of the Board contractors listed in **Attachment 5C** is conducted once each program year, usually during the 4th quarter of the program year. DWD monitoring follows the annual DWD monitoring schedule.

BOARD CONTRACTOR	REGIONAL ROLE OF CONTRACTOR	SCOPE OF MONITORING	ENTITY WHO CONDUCTS MONITORING
Crowe LLP	Board Fiscal Agent	Regional Financial Operations	Department of Workforce Development
Vincennes University	Staff to the Board and One-Stop Operator	Financial Management	Crowe LLP
Vincennes University	Staff to the Board and One-Stop Operator	WIOA Regional Program and Financial Compliance	Department of Workforce Development
Vincennes University	Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth and Business Services	Financial Management	Crowe LLP
Vincennes University	Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth and Business Services	Contract and Program Compliance	Vincennes University (Staff to the Board and One-Stop Operator)

Monitoring Staff:

Carla Crowe of Crowe LLP conducts the financial reviews of Vincennes University as Staff to the Board, One-Stop Operator and Service Provider. This work is supervised by Brad Schelle, CPA at Crowe LLP. Crowe LLP performs regular Continuing Professional Education of staff to assure that professional skill standards are maintained.

Robert E. King and Randy Wells, Staff to the Board and One-Stop Operator, perform compliance monitoring of Vincennes University. Both of these individuals each have over 15 years of experience monitoring employment and training program compliance. Mr. King and Mr. Wells have attended many training sessions on monitoring techniques over the years and will continue to attend such training when available. It is important to note that Mr. King and Mr. Wells maintain proficiency through their active participation in Indiana's WorkOne system at multiple levels regionally and statewide. Schedule:

Financial monitoring of Vincennes University will be conducted by Crowe LLP no later than April 30th of each Program Year. Staff to the Board and One-Stop Operator monitoring of Vincennes University will be conducted throughout the Program Year with a formal report released no later than June 1st of each Program Year.

5.10 Describe local operating systems, including data systems, and local policies that will support the implementation of the local board's strategy.

Region 8 believes that accurate and measurable information for both job seekers and employers is crucial to a workforce development system. Indiana Career Connect (ICC) is used for both job seekers and employers to provide services. ICC is used for registration, enrollment in the WIOA program, comprehensive case management, and detailed reporting and tracking of activities and results. This system also provides the essential labor exchange process between employers and job seekers for a seamless delivery of services. Region 8 utilizes Customer Relationship Management Systems (CRM's) that track participation in various programs. Participants receiving training through the Workforce Ready Grant and Employers receiving Employer Training grants funds are entered into a CRM provided by DWD.

The Workforce Ready Grant CRM application is used to enter and process participant enrollments, outcomes, and invoices to make payment to training providers. The INGage CRM application is used to accept employer applications, collect training requirements and documentation, and provide reimbursement to NLJ employer partners. Participants for the QUEST program are managed through DWD's Virtual Client Engagement CRM. The system is used to collect participant information and allow for reimbursement at designated payment points based on successful completion of identified participant activities and achievement of certain benchmarks. Local policies that support the coordination and implementation of the board's vision include the following:

- Target Population
- Program Eligibility
- Selective Service
- Grievance/Complaints
- Assessment Process

- Occupational Skills Training
- Supportive Services
- Work Experience
- On-The-Job Training
- Relocation Assistance
- Program Accessibility
- Youth
- Veteran
- Program Monitoring
- Conflict of Interest
- Performance Metrics
- Public Media
- State JAG
- Drug Screening
- Adult Priority of Service
- NLJ-Workforce Ready Grant
- USDOL Apprenticeships
- Quality Jobs, Equity, Strategy and Training (QUEST)

Section 6: Participant Information, Costs, and Supplemental Funding

In the “Program Participants” column, each program should reflect all participants enrolled or projected to be enrolled regardless of whether they are co-enrolled in another program. Please provide an explanation of the projections if they are at or below participant levels from the prior year. In the “Co-enrolled Participants” column, please list how many participants are co-enrolled in any core or other programs. In the text box below, include the programs in which the participants are co-enrolled.

Program		Program Participants	Co-enrolled Participants	Referrals			Average Cost Per Participant
				ABE	VR	Other	
WIOA Adult	Actual PY22	354	290				
	Actual PY23	521	411				\$1,004 per Part
	Projected PY24	554					
	Projected PY25	554					
WIOA Dislocated Worker	Actual PY22	78	78				
	Actual PY23	156	150				\$2,461 per Part
	Projected PY24	106					
	Projected PY25	130					
Youth (In School)	Actual PY22	31	26				
	Actual PY23	29	7				\$4,794 per Part
	Projected PY24	35					
	Projected PY25	37					
Youth (Out of School)	Actual PY22	63	55				
	Actual PY23	83	65				\$6,700 per Part
	Projected PY24	139					
	Projected PY25	139					

Explanation

Supplemental Funding

Please list additional funding sources that will supplement the funding that the local area receives through WIOA.

Funding		Program Participants	Total Budget	Budget per Participant	Explanation
Additional State	PY24	TBD (Multiple Grants)	\$2.3 Mil +	TBD	Additional Funding includes WRG, ETG,S JAG, Business Services
	PY25	TBD			
Additional Federal	PY24	TBD	\$625,000		Additional Funding includes JAG-TANF, Registered Apprenticeship
	PY25	TBD			
Additional Other	PY24	TBD	\$295,000 to 1 Mil +		Additional Funding includes LISC, CHE and potential Grant Estimates for Semi-Conductor and Micro-Electronics Grants
	PY25	TBD			