



Local Plan

Minnesota's Workforce Development System under WIOA

Program Years 2016 & 2017

Updated November 14, 2016

Submitted by

LWDA:

Northwest Private Industry Council – LWDA #1

Department of Employment and Economic Development

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SECTION B: LOCAL PLAN

5. Describe the strategic approaches to ensure all elements of Career Services are available at service locations or online, including services for youth and individuals with barriers to employment or service access.

WIOA identifies specific areas of Career Services. The local board, either by staff or through contracts and MOUs with local partners, provides the following services to individuals who are adults, dislocated workers, and youth through the one-stop delivery system:

- Outreach,
- intake and orientation
- Initial assessment
- Labor exchange services
- Eligibility for services
- Referrals to programs
- Performance and cost information
- Information on unemployment insurance
- Financial aid information and
- Follow-up services

Recent regional planning efforts have emphasized the importance and desire for customers of the WorkForce Center and its partner agencies to create a service delivery system where there “no wrong front door.” The vision behind this goal is to eliminate barriers to accessing services.

Updated November 14, 2016: Please include youth in your response. In addition, also include information regarding your strategic approach.

Youth services are provided in conjunction with the adult and dislocated worker services throughout the seven county service area. All of ICCC employment and training staff are cross trained on all WIOA programs, as well as MYP and SESCO programs, which allow for broad service delivery in all offices.

With respect to the strategic approach, the local area is aligned with the broader regional vision for a skilled workforce that will be developed through our regional planning efforts in throughout the upcoming two years. Again, part of our plan is to conduct a SWOT analysis or Risk Assessment to identify ways we can build on our collective strengths and successes and strengthen our collective weaknesses to better provide services to our customers and clients across the region. We will develop these strategies through our stakeholder engagements to provide for a broad perspective.

The Northwest WDB has not engaged in a full strategic planning process for several years. The timing of WIOA, recent changes in leadership staff, and a shift in the service delivery at the local level make this issue ripe for the work of the local board over the next two years. It is anticipated that the local board will use the Governor’s Workforce Development Board’s strategic plan as a resource and as a “jumping off point” to establish local goals that align with the state’s vision. As that process is developed and flushed out at a local level, findings and comments will be filtered up to the state board for consideration.

The preliminary goal is to develop a process whereby our key stakeholders are engaged in

a collective process designed to find solutions based on our strengths that help solve our unique challenges. Reaching this goal will require active engagement from our employers, educational institutions, and communities in a way that ensures we identify skills deficiencies, encourage collaboration and avoid duplication of efforts on activities related to workforce and economic development. Part of this work will also include efforts that coincide with the larger statewide effort to build brand awareness and support of the larger workforce development system.

The local board is working during this period of WIOA transition to more fully engage key stakeholders into the discussion of a building a revised local vision and mission statement for the seven county area. In doing so, the goal will be to develop strategies alongside key community partners that will better connect community, government, business and education to implement the state's vision statement: a healthy economy, where all Minnesotans have or on the path to meaningful employment and a family sustaining wage, and all employers are able to fill jobs in demand.

7. Describe how supportive services, such as transportation and other needs, will be coordinated to better serve individuals with specific barriers to training, education and employment.

One of the benefits of having Inter-County Community Council as the provider of program services for our WIOA programs is the ability of staff to more easily blend other supportive services available in the area. Inter County Community Council is a private, non-profit Community Action Organization that was established in 1965. Its mission is to provide services, assistance and other activities of sufficient scope and magnitude to give promise of progress toward the alleviation of poverty, its symptoms and its causes. ICCC is the contracted program provider for WIOA Adult, DW, State DW and WIOA Youth activities. In addition, ICCC assists families and individuals throughout our service area by offering a number of programs designed to help people meet their basic needs while supporting their movement toward greater economic self-sufficiency. These supportive services consist of:

- The Family Service Department
- The Food Shelf
- Energy Assistance
- Crisis Fuel
- Weatherization
- Housing
- Minnesota Youth Employment and Training program (direct grant recipient)
- Senior Employment
- Early Head Start and Head Start

ICCC's core service area includes Pennington, Red Lake, East Polk and Clearwater counties. ICCC works closely with the two other Community Action Organizations in our area (Northwest Community Action in Badger and Tri-Valley Community Action in Crookston) to help clients living in those service areas access these same supportive services.

Updated November 14, 2016: Please describe the coordination strategy outside of ICCC and the other community action organizations, i.e. counties, tribal institutions, etc.

With respect to additional coordination of supportive services outside of the community

action agencies, employment and training staff are aware that the resources available at the county or tribal level for emergency responses is very limited. For example, in Kittson county the consolidated funding plan does not include any dollars set aside for emergency support for clients. In cases where clients may have access to additional, non-CAP related supportive services, those resources are explored. Because of our remote service area, the availability of additional supportive service options is not as robust as providers in metro areas. Staff is well trained to advise clients and work with all available resources, based on individual client eligibility.

With respect to coordination with tribal resources, this is also done on a case-by-case basis, and is limited given the racial makeup of our seven county area which includes approximately 1% of Native American in our total population.

Integrated case management is an effective strategy for helping individuals navigate across systems to access a range of services. At the Workforce Center, individuals work closely with a single job counselor who helps them identify the services they need rather than multiple people each working to connect them with different resources.

Workforce Center partners coordinate with each other to avoid duplication and maximize services for program participants, but they also connect with the broader network of supportive service providers in the community. By doing this, providers can maximize resources and potentially serve populations who they may not otherwise reach.

To connect participants with needed support services, case managers must have a broad understanding of the services available in their community, including those provided by workforce system partners, community-based organizations, state or local agencies, and other organizations.

16. B. Describe how the local area board will ensure that eligible providers meet the employment needs of local employers, workers and job seekers.

Employers

Our local employers are in dire need of skilled and entry level workers with strong soft skills. Local businesses have for a significant amount of time recruited outside the local area for jobs that require certain levels of education or training. For example, engineering positions are much more difficult to fill than entry level positions. However, during the past several years our larger local employers, specifically in manufacturing, are increasingly recruiting outside of our region to fill even entry level positions. While commitment to the region remains strong, several of our larger manufacturers have been compelled to expand their operations to other communities outside of our region due to the lack of available workers locally.

The workforce shortage is not a problem limited to our large employers. Our larger local businesses offer competitive benefits and wages and are hiring on a consistent basis. This in turn creates hiring difficulties for smaller local businesses who perhaps cannot afford to offer similar hiring incentives. In recent years, an increasing number of local retail and food establishments have increased their starting wage above minimum wage as an effort to attract and retain workers in these entry level jobs.

Our local businesses have developed strong recruitment strategies and offer competitive wages and benefits however; they continue to have difficulty in getting new workers to

move to the area because of the lack of available housing. This issue is especially prevalent in the communities of Thief River Falls, Roseau and Warroad, but effects many of the communities in our region to some degree. Businesses need quality, affordable housing options that will assist them in their efforts to recruit and retain their workers.

There is increasing concern and vocalization regarding workplace values (soft skills). Because of the current workforce shortage, most local businesses are willing to invest time and resources to train workers for entry level positions. However, for many employers retention of workers has become an issue because a significant number of job seekers lack the “soft skills” needed to be successful in the workplace.

Retirement of workers age 55 and older continues to contribute to the local area workforce shortage. These retirements create challenges for employers because of the knowledge and experience that is lost when these individuals leave the workforce. Businesses need to develop succession planning strategies that will allow at least a portion of this knowledge to transfer to incoming workers. This problem is compounded further by the outward migration of youth from the local area leaving to pursue post-secondary educational opportunities. Many youth do not return to the area after they have completed their educational programs.

Workers

There is great need for incumbent worker training to grow the work skills of the worker on the job. As businesses and their equipment become more technically and mechanically advanced, workers will need continued training and updating of skills. The need for continued training also relates to defined career laddering within businesses that provide a worker with the opportunity to advance to other positions within a firm as the worker’s skill level and experience grow. This is especially true for the small businesses that may lack the resources to provide a great deal of incumbent worker training. Many of the larger employers have been able to devote time and resources to develop internal training or to seek professional level training through outside resources.

Job seekers

Job seekers in the local area need and want good career planning information. They want to be provided with industry specific information about the qualifications needed to obtain high-demand, high-growth, and high-wage jobs with employers in the local area. Job seekers have also indicated the need for low cost, short term training that would allow them to enter the work place sooner or that would allow them to obtain better employment without spending two or more years in a formal training program. Many job seekers feel that they are in dead end jobs but find it difficult to move into something better because of their lack of experience or because of their lack of specific work skills.

Current job seekers need good “soft skills.” Many employers have expressed that they are willing to invest the resources needed to train individuals with good “soft skills.” There are quality jobs available but employers want to hire individuals who have good communication skills and a strong work ethic. Job seekers who do not have a good understanding of standard workplace expectations like timeliness, regular attendance, and workplace behavior are at a distinct disadvantage compared to job seekers who do understand these expectations. Addressing the lack of “soft skills” in job seekers is not any easy task as behavioral norms are often established early in life.

Basic computer skills are becoming increasingly important for job seekers as businesses become more dependent on technology. Most jobs today require some level of interaction with computers or other types of technology, and many organizations are moving to online job applications. To address this issue, job seekers will need affordable training

opportunities that will allow them to develop their computer knowledge and skills.

Updated November 14, 2016: The response talks about needs. How will the needs be addressed?

The needs of employers are multi-faceted and given the limited resources, the NWPIC and ICCC will increase the promotion and utilization of client-centered solutions through the use of On-the-Job training contracts and work experience opportunities for senior, adult and youth participants. We will also engage and support career readiness courses in the secondary education through additional Outreach to Schools activities and by continuing to support the Northern Valley Career Expo and other events targeted to tenth grade students to showcase the availability of regional employment opportunities.

The needs of existing workers will be addressed through a recently announced Incumbent Worker Grant Program. Approved by the WDB in August 2016, this program will allow for more than \$40,000 in reimbursement grants to eligible employers in the area to provide additional skill training.

In terms of job seekers, the newly established one-stop operator committee will work to better align resource delivery at the Thief River Falls Workforce Center, as well as work with our state Unemployment Insurance Department to persuade the Department that UI services such as reemployment sessions can again be provided at a minimum of one location within the service area.

17. Describe and assess the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local workforce development area.

Local Labor market information on high-growth, high-wage occupations is available to all job seekers through the local WorkForce Center, NWPIC and DEED offices. Also, all program staff are trained and kept up to date on regional occupations in demand. Case Managers who work directly with job seekers are responsible for incorporating information on high-growth, high wage occupations into their career counseling sessions with program participants. This information is used to better inform job seekers of the opportunities available within the local region and allows job seekers to make informed decisions about their future career choices.

Those individuals who are pursuing training and placement in high-growth, high demand and high-wage industries and occupations that are supported by the local labor market are the first persons selected for occupational skill training funding, once all priority of service conditions for veterans have been satisfied. Once veterans and persons pursuing training in high-growth and high-demand industries in the local area are selected, training for other occupations will be considered as funding permits. The same selection process is used when contracting with local businesses for on-the-job training opportunities.

Updated November 14, 2016: Include more information in regard to connecting the populations and types of services that the individuals need, using the labor market information.

On a local area level, an assessment of employment and training resources is being conducted as part of the environmental scan and asset mapping process being done as part of the regional planning process and Rural Career Counseling Coordination (RC3) program. This initiative will identify the depth and breadth of services related to supporting job seekers and may uncover sources of services and other supports that are not currently being accessed by Workforce Center clients. These sources can be introduced to the Workforce Center system through formal MOUs or informal referral processes in order to increase access to available services.

At the client level, each participant must do labor market information research prior to being accepted for classroom training. The client must complete an Occupational Research Packet (ORP) and have it approved by the Director before classroom training is approved. This research compiles data from the area the participant wants to find work in.

19. Describe how the local area board will coordinate education and workforce investment activities carried out under this title with relevant secondary and post-secondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.

In addition to the Outreach to schools that is done by Inter-County staff as part of their Minnesota Youth grant work, the NWPIC works with the following additional events:

Northern Valley Career Expo - The objectives of the Northern Valley Career Expo are:

- To expose secondary students to regional in-demand occupations and training programs that will help them prepare for employment in the region in high-wage rewarding careers.
- To educate the youth of the Northern Valley about Workplace Values and the importance they play not only in business but in life in general.
- To enhance collaboration between business, education, and the public sector.
- To highlight shared assets that make our communities and region a dynamic place to live and work.
- To provide an avenue for business and industry to showcase their products and services to help educate youth about the career opportunities within the region.

The planning committee for the Career Expo is a small sub-set of the original North Dakota/Minnesota Collaborative. Minnesota group members include representatives from the East Grand Forks Economic Development and Housing agency, Northland Community and Technical College, East Grand Forks Public Schools, and the Northwest Private Industry Council. North Dakota partners include representatives from the Grand Forks Region Economic Development Corporation, Job Service North Dakota, Grand Forks Public Schools, UND Office of Workforce Development, and the UND Office of Lifelong Learning and Professional Development.

The University of North Dakota representatives have taken the lead on planning logistical details and have assigned a staff to act as coordinator for the event.

Representatives from the North Dakota Economic Development Corporation and UND have taken the lead in recruiting sponsors and exhibitors for the event, but all partners continue to work on garnering support through their individual agency contacts. All partners are responsible for marketing the event to local businesses as an opportunity to connect and educate local youth on the opportunities that are available within the region.

The NWPIC Executive Director and the Job Service North Dakota representative work closely with the Grand Forks and East Grand Forks Public Schools to assist with the development/selection of the pre-expo career exploration activities and also to ensure that the Expo's events are focused on high-wage, high-demand career opportunities within the region.

The Northwest WDB and Youth Committee fully support this initiative.

The 5th Annual Northern Valley Career Expo was held in November 2016 at the Alerus Center in Grand Forks, North Dakota. The event was attended by over 1,200 tenth graders from 23 area high schools. The Expo continues to gain momentum thus attracting the attention of several additional schools and many new sponsors/exhibitors in its second year. The planning group continues to focus on continuous improvement as it moves into its third year of the planning process.

The WDB has been involved in this initiative since its beginning. The Northwest Private Industry Council Executive Director regularly attends full group planning sessions.

This event serves students and schools that are west of Highway 32. Though coordination with the Impact 20/20 project with the Northwest Minnesota foundation, a similar event is planned and hosted for schools east of Highway 32 in Bemidji.

Updated November 14, 2016 Please provide information on adult services.

Education and workforce investment activities under WIOA are coordinated with relevant secondary and post-secondary education programs in a variety of ways. The WIOA adult program is designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training and support services to succeed in the labor market and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. Adult services include; Career Services, Assessments, Training Services, Follow-up services, employer services and coordination of activities. The ultimate goal is for the adult to receive services and obtain unsubsidized employment with family sustaining wages.

Additional activities related to further developing strong linkages between programs will include a scan of the activities of other local areas and discussion of opportunities for implementing best practices into future plans.

21. Describe how the local area board will coordinate education and workforce investment activities carried out under this title with public transportation and other appropriate supportive services.

Transportation issues remain a major barrier to many job seekers in our region. The distance and cost for job seekers to transport themselves long distances are additional challenges to worker recruitment and retention. This is exacerbated by the limited

availability of public transportation in Northwest Minnesota. However, there have been some inroads made to provide public transportation in the Crookston and Thief River Falls areas for those persons commuting each day for employment.

Finding adequate child care and the cost of this service are other issues that are barriers for job seekers especially for those individuals living in rural areas or small communities. Finding child care for children less than a year old is extremely difficult in all parts of the region.

The availability of housing is an increasing issue for job seekers within the region. Housing shortages prevent the mobility of our local workforce and those wishing to move to the region. The lack of quality affordable housing is especially prevalent in the communities of Roseau, Warroad, and Thief River Falls, but also affects the surrounding communities as workers expand their housing search when they have exhausted their efforts to find housing in the community in which they want work. The lack of housing is directly related to transportation issues as many workers are required to travel long distances to reach their place of employment.

Job seekers are also looking for jobs that provide them with benefits, especially health care benefits. Many small employers or employers providing low wage employment do not offer health care benefits. This has become even more important due to rising health care costs throughout the nation.

Updated November 14, 2016: How will support services be coordinated?

All core partners of the WFC operate with the understanding that an integral part of case management is providing access to supportive services. Efforts to identify additional sources of support is part of the planned environmental scan and asset mapping process as part of the regional planning process. This initiative will identify the depth and breadth of services related to supporting job seekers and may uncover sources of support services that aren't presently accessed by Workforce Center staff. These sources can be introduced to the Workforce Center system through formal MOUs or informal referral processes in order to increase access to supportive services.

Support services are explained to participants when they enroll and throughout their duration in the program. The client will need to request support services to the Job Counselor and it must reflect the client's goals on their ISS. The request must be directly related to their employment activities. Once the request has been received by the Job Counselor, it will be brought to the team for approval. Team approval is in place to ensure all participants receive fair treatment. If the approval is yes, then the client will be notified and the Job Counselor will document in the case notes. If the approval is denied by the team, the reason for the denial will be on the support service request and documented in the case notes. The director has the final say for approvals on support services and the director must sign off on all support service requests.

22. Describe the plans and strategies for, and assurances concerning, maximizing coordination of service provided by the state employment service under Wagner-Peyser Act, and services provided in the local workforce development area through the one-stop delivery system, to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services.

Minnesota's WIOA State Plan describes the state's strategy for providing reemployment

assistance to Wagner Peyser's targeted population of UI claimants. The strategy (details currently under development with an implementation date of July 2016) will be as follows:

- A Wagner Peyser staff person will attend every Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (REA) session that the UI program offers across the state. The UI program typically offers REA sessions to approximately 40,000 applicants per year to those who are at risk of exhausting their benefits.
- The REA and Wagner Peyser staff will conduct a quick assessment of every participant to determine who will most likely need additional services from the WorkForce Center.
- The Wagner Peyser staff person will conduct an overview of WFC services either 1:1 or in a group setting (depending on the size of the group) that includes information on how to register for the state's labor exchange system MinnesotaWorks, and information about programs such as the Dislocated Worker program that they may be eligible for.
- The Wagner Peyser staff person will assist the REA customer with creating an initial registration and enrolling in the Creative Job Search workshop. Creative Job Search is typically the first job finding/job placement service that is offered to UI applicants. The workshop consists of training on how to find a job that includes career planning, preparing for the job hunt, skills identification, resumes and cover letters, applications and references, social media, interviewing skills, and more.
- Wagner Peyser will follow up with REA participants who are not enrolled in a program to ensure that they have a complete registration and resume in MinnesotaWorks, and that they are taking advantage of job placement services.

The Wagner Peyser program also provides services to businesses with a half-time Business Services Representative (BSR) assigned to the Northwest LWDA. The goal of the BSR(s) is to contact businesses in the key industry sectors identified in state and local plans, help the business solve their workforce issues, and promote job openings to job seeking customers in the WorkForce Centers.

Updated November 14, 2016: How will the coordination take place?

Participants who meet possible eligible requirements will be referred to the local WFC and program providers to ensure the potential client receives the most services. Each individual who enters the WFC to register on MinnesotaWorks will be provided with a sheet that outlines all the programs offered. It is important that each participant is provided information about what programs are available for them.

23. Describe how the local area board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out under this title in the local workforce development area with the provision of adult education and literacy activities under title II, including a description of how the local area board will carry out, consistent with subparagraphs (A) and (B)(i) of section 107(d)(11) and section 232, the review of local applications submitted under title II.

Our local educational institutions need continued support and involvement of our local businesses/employers in the form of consultation for program development, advisory committees for program maintenance, internship opportunities, and student mentoring. Our local educational institutions also need strong connections with local business and industry to work in partnership on placement of graduates in local employment opportunities that are in-demand within the region.

The Northwest WSA is a rural region with large distances between communities. Our local educational institutions need resources to continuously improve access to adult learners through localized training and distance education opportunities.

Our local educational institutions need to continue to grow and develop relationships with local partners and community based organizations so services provided to adult learners are provided through a comprehensive system of support. Working together to provide a seamless service delivery system will have a positive impact on the outcomes for all parties involved including students, job seekers, and local businesses.

Updated November 14, 2016: How will the coordination of activities take place?

Vocational Rehabilitation Services collaborates to enhance services to individuals with disabilities, individuals with other barriers to employment, and individuals living in poverty. Services are co-located in the WorkForce Center to provide access to a wide variety of services. Vocational Rehabilitation staff is available for consultation without the need for the person to apply for services. When co-enrollment is appropriate, staff and clients work together to align services to meet the needs of the individual.

28. Describe how training services under chapter 3 of subtitle B will be provided in accordance with section 134(c)(3)(G), including, if contracts for training services will be used, how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of individual training accounts under that chapter and how the local area board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs, regardless of how the training services are to be provided.

Information on high-growth, high-wage regional occupations is available at the local WorkForce Center and DEED offices. Job seekers and program participants interested in pursuing classroom training are made aware of this Labor Market Information and encouraged to pursue these occupations. A review of all participants in training during program year 2013 who were enrolled in WIA Adult, WIA Dislocated Worker, and State Dislocated Worker programs revealed that 97 percent of the participants, within the Northwest WSA, are being trained for occupations in high-growth and high-wage industries in Northwest Minnesota as defined by the MnCareers supplement. It is estimated that at least 80 percent of classroom training participants would be engaged in training programs for occupations in high-growth, high-wage industries for program year 2014. The WSA will continue to give priority for training in high-growth and high-wage occupations as long as the area employers continue to support this effort and as long as they hire participants who complete the desired training.

The local WSA will use funds WIOA funds for incumbent worker training if there is a local need that meets State and Federal guidelines regarding the use of WIOA Funds for Incumbent Worker Training.

The local WSA has identified that there is a need for incumbent worker training. These needs do not always correlate with a potential or eminent layoff but frequently occur as employers grow their businesses, update equipment/technology, or seek to replace workers who are leaving the workforce. The Northwest WDB would certainly utilize funds and support any initiatives that would provide additional resources for businesses looking to update the skills of their current workforce.

The local WSA utilizes On-the-Job Training in the WIOA Adult, WIOA Dislocated Worker, State Dislocated Worker, and Out-of-School youth programs. We utilize On-the-Job Training as an alternative training option for individuals who are not interested in a traditional classroom training program. On-the Job Training can assist job seekers in getting back into the workforce more quickly and can also greatly benefit our local employers.

At this point there has been minimal interest expressed in apprenticeship programs from area job seekers. However, the Northwest WDB would certainly support apprenticeship training as a viable means of training for job seekers and program participants.

The WDB recognizes that ABE has been a strong and active partner in the local and regional workforce development system throughout LWDA #1. One of the two ABE consortia in the region has long been co-located on two college campuses, and down the hall from the region's only Workforce Center. ABE administers CASAS and TABE assessments for dislocated workers throughout the region, co-enrolls and cross refers students to employment service programs, and provides basic literacy skills development, digital literacy training, and core literacy skills development through career pathways training partnerships across the region.

Updated November 14, 2016: Please provide information that addresses the coordination element of the question.

Individual Training Accounts (ITA) are used for program participants who receive training funds under WIOA and represent a payment agreement established on behalf of a participant with a training provider. ITA's linked to in-demand industry sectors and occupations in the local area or other regions to which the adult or dislocated worker is willing to relocate.

Ensuring a clear understanding of all training options available for a specific occupation is an integral part of the case management process. Adult and Dislocated Worker program participants work closely with their job counselor to select an appropriate training program that corresponds to their individual goals and that aligns with opportunities within the local economy. Part of this process involves looking at all available training programs for a specified occupation and discussing the quality and performance of each training providers. This allows for an informed choice to be made in the selection of a specific training program.

All training services provided to participants are required to sign contracts with the participant, worksite/higher education location, Job Counselor and Director. The participant is required to set the meeting up with the job site if doing a work experience or on the job training. All aspects of the contract are shared with the participant and the job site. The participant is explained the rules he/she needs to follow to continue working. Once a contract has been reviewed and signed, it is sent to the Director to sign off. At that time the Director has the option to answer any questions. If the participant is going to through classroom training, the correct forms for classroom training need to be filled out by the Job Counselor and signed by the participant, Job Counselor and Director. Once the

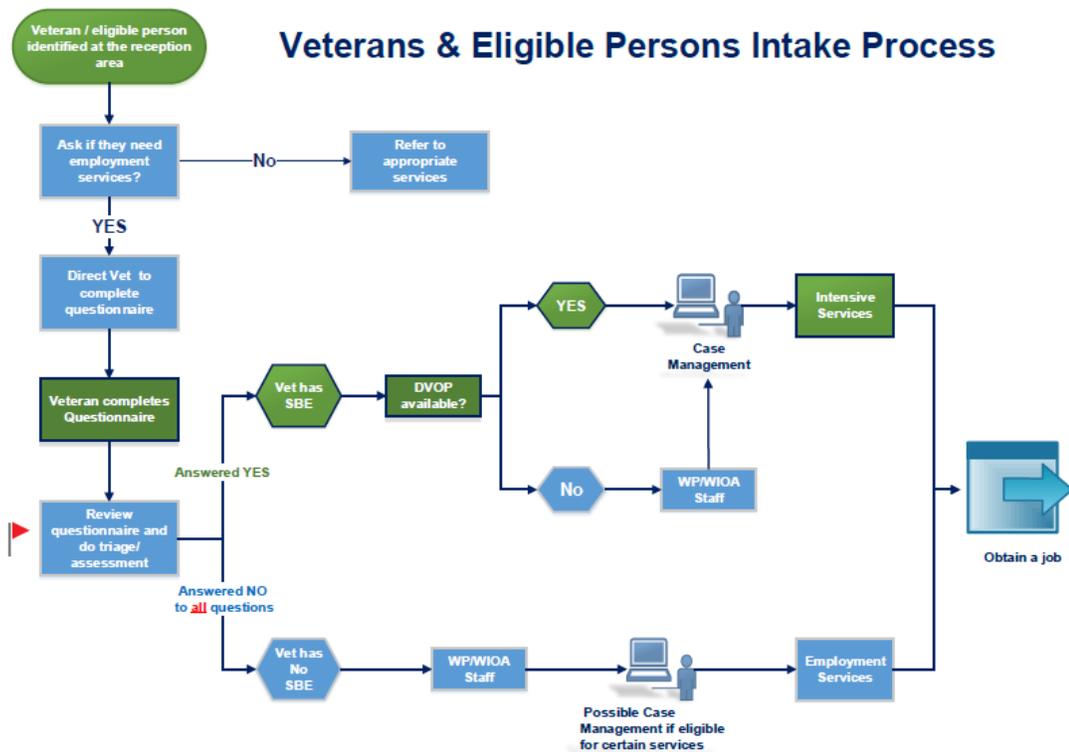
participant has selected a program in high demand he/she would like to complete, the Job Counselor completes the steps necessary for assistance with tuition. That information is sent to the Director for review. The director then sends the documentation to the college/university to approve certain agreed upon tuition amount. This process is followed to ensure all parties involved understand the rules required for each training activity.

SECTION D: SYSTEM OPERATIONS AND ATTACHMENTS

- 6. How do you identify current or former Military Service Members coming into your WorkForce Center?

The Northwest Workforce Investment Board has established local policy in reference to the Jobs for Veterans Act (Public Law 107-288). This policy has established that veterans shall have priority of service for all Department of Labor programs within the local WorkForce Center System.

All job seekers entering the WorkForce Center are initially asked if they are a veteran by the receptionist or resource area staff. Upon a positive response, the veteran is provided with a questionnaire which provides staff with basic information about the veteran. All WorkForce Center staff and management support and actively work toward providing priority of service to all veterans coming into the WorkForce Centers. All staff are trained to solicit for and to identify veterans using services at the WorkForce Center. All staff work to ensure that veterans are made aware of all services available to them, that veterans are encouraged to use these services, and to ensure that the veterans receive preference or priority access to all appropriate services offered through the WorkForce Center.



Updated November 14, 2016, with the following suggested language from DEED:

“The Minnesota Veterans Questionnaire is used to identify Veterans. We ask all customers that come to the WorkForce Center (WFC) if they ever served in the US Military. If the answer is yes, we ask them to complete the Veterans Questionnaire. Non-JVSG staff do the initial assessment/review of the questionnaire, and make appropriate referrals based on the responses on the questionnaire.

On-site signage helps the customers to self-identify themselves as U.S. Military members.”

7. How do you inform current or former Military Service Members coming into your WorkForce Center about “Veteran Priority of Service?”

All job seekers, including veterans, receive an initial assessment of need when they access WorkForce Center Services. The guided interview that takes place between Resource Room staff and the job seeker helps to identify a job seeker’s status as a veteran, assists in the determination of need for more intensive and/or training services, and also identifies potential barriers to employment. Referrals to appropriate programs are made based on the needs and interests of the job seeker.

If the need for intensive services is identified, a more comprehensive assessment is completed which includes but is not limited to an assessment of literacy and basic skills, occupational skills, career interests, and work history. If significant barriers to employment are identified during this process, the job seeker would be referred to the DEED Veterans staff for additional assistance. Any subsequent services received would be coordinated with the DEED Veterans staff.

For those veterans enrolled in WorkForce Center programs, case management services provide for additional ongoing assessment of needs. Program staff provide community based referrals, support services, and assistance in obtaining needed accommodations. If at any point during the course of the program enrollment a significant barrier to employment is identified, the program staff would refer and consult with the DEED veterans staff as appropriate given the needs of the program participant.

Updated November 14, 2016, with the following suggested language from DEED:

“Signage in the WFC advises Veterans and other eligible persons of Veterans Priority of Service (POS). Information on Priority of Service is also provided during various program orientations, from staff, and during workshops. LVER staff train and update local staff and management on the provisions of POS and PL 107-288.”

8. If your WorkForce Center has a presence on the Internet (outside of your local DEED WorkForce Center site) how do you promote Public Law 107-288, “Veterans Priority of Service” to veterans on that website?

N/A

Updated November 14, 2016, with the following suggested language from DEED:

“All websites associated with the WFCs provide information on and notice of Veterans Priority of Service.”

9. How do you identify current or former Military Service Members with “significant barriers to employment?”

Workforce Center and ICCC staff work closely with the staff of partner agencies to ensure that job seekers accessing services through the WorkForce Center System have access to all of the programs and services needed to meet their employment goals. All staff are trained regarding the basic programs and services provided by partner agencies so that they are able to make appropriate referrals to other programs based on the needs of the job seeker. Program and partner staff work closely together to provide coordination of services to those participants in one or multiple programs. This assists in the leveraging of funding to support job seekers and also ensures non-duplication of services.

Updated November 14, 2016, with the following suggested language from DEED:

“The Minnesota Veterans Questionnaire, a DOL approved standard process, is used to identify Veterans with a significant barrier to employment (SBE). The questionnaire identifies DOL designated SBE’s per VPL 03-14, including change 2.”

10. When a current or former Military Service Member with a significant barrier to employment is identified, how do you refer them to an appropriate intensive service provider when there is no Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist in your WorkForce Centers?

Veterans with significant employment barriers are referred to the DEED Veterans Employment Representative for additional services as appropriate to the needs of the individual.

This service, however, has been limited in recent years due to the staff reductions in DEED staff and their physical presence in the Thief River Falls Workforce Center. At the present time, there is not a DVOP located in our local service area.

The Veterans staff has valuable knowledge regarding veteran’s issues, as well as regional and statewide programs and services that are specific to veterans. As such, local program staff uses the DEED Veterans staff as a resource for serving veterans in their own programs.

Updated November 14, 2016, with the following suggested language from DEED:

“This local area has identified partner staff (in each WFC) to provide services (Including intensive services) to SBE Veterans in the absence of a DVOP. These staff have had training on serving Veterans via the NVTI Webinar “Helping Veterans to Meaningful Careers”, and from LVER staff one on one, and during staff and partner meetings.”

LOCAL AREA BOARD MEMBERSHIP LIST

Regional Workforce Development Area

Northwest Regional Development Area - #1

Local Workforce Development Area

Northwest Development Area - #1

REPRESENTATIVES OF BUSINESS IN LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA (must be majority)			
MEMBER	POSITION/Representing	TITLE/ORGANZIATION	TERM ENDS
Leo Olson, Chair	Red Lake County Private Sector	Former Owner, Leo's Upholstery	6/30/2018
Robert Evans, Vice Chair	Roseau County Private Sector	Vice President, Human Resources, Marvin Windows and Doors	6/30/2017
Mike Moore, Secretary	Polk County Private Sector	Publisher, The Thirteen Towns of Fosston, Inc.	6/30/2019
Sue Johnson, Treasurer	Pennington County Private Sector	Executive Director, Sanford Medical Foundation	6/30/2018
Ardell Larson	Kittson County Private Sector	President, Kick'n Up Kountry Music Festival	6/30/2017
Sally Erickson	Marshall County Private Sector	Employee Benefits Administrator, Ericco Manufacturing	6/30/2019
Edie Ramstad	Norman County Private Sector	Owner, We've Got Maille	6/30/2019
Tim Hagl	Private Sector; At-Large	Vice President, Border State Bank	6/30/2019
Randy Rakosnik	Private Sector; At-Large	Director, Human Resources, Digi-Key Corp.	6/30/2019
Kristy McFarlane	Private Sector, At-Large	Director of Human Resources, LifeCare Medical Center, Roseau, MN	6/30/2019

LABOR & COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS (20% Minimum and 2 or more nominated by state labor federations and one joint labor-management apprenticeship program labor organization or training director)			
MEMBER	POSITION/Representing	TITLE/ORGANIZATION	TERM ENDS
Dave Rock	Organized Labor	Maintenance Director, SummerField Place Apartments	6/30/2017
Amber Hawkins	Organized Labor	Nurse, Sanford Health, Thief River Falls	6/30/2019
Erik Shulind	Apprenticeship/Organized Labor	Membership Development Representative, Local Union 1426 International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, AFL-CIO	6/30/2019
Catherine Johnson	Community Based Org.	Executive Director, Inter-County Community Council	6/30/2017
EDUCATION & TRAINING (Required: ABE; Higher Education)			
Kirsten Fuglseth	Educational Agency/ABE	Director, Adult Basic Education	6/30/2017
Carey Castle	Higher Education	Vice President, Northland Community and Technical College	6/30/2019
GOVERNMENT (Required: Economic Development; Job Service; Rehabilitation)			
Christine Anderson	Economic Development	Director, Economic Development for City of Thief River Falls; Jobs, Inc.; and Pennington County	6/30/2018
Bonny Stechmann	Public Employment Agency	Manager, Job Service & Workforce Development, State of MN (DEED)	6/30/2019
Randa Lundmark	Rehabilitation Agency	Regional Manager, Vocational Rehabilitation, State of MN (DEED)	6/30/2019