

CENTRAL KENTUCKY REGIONAL PLAN



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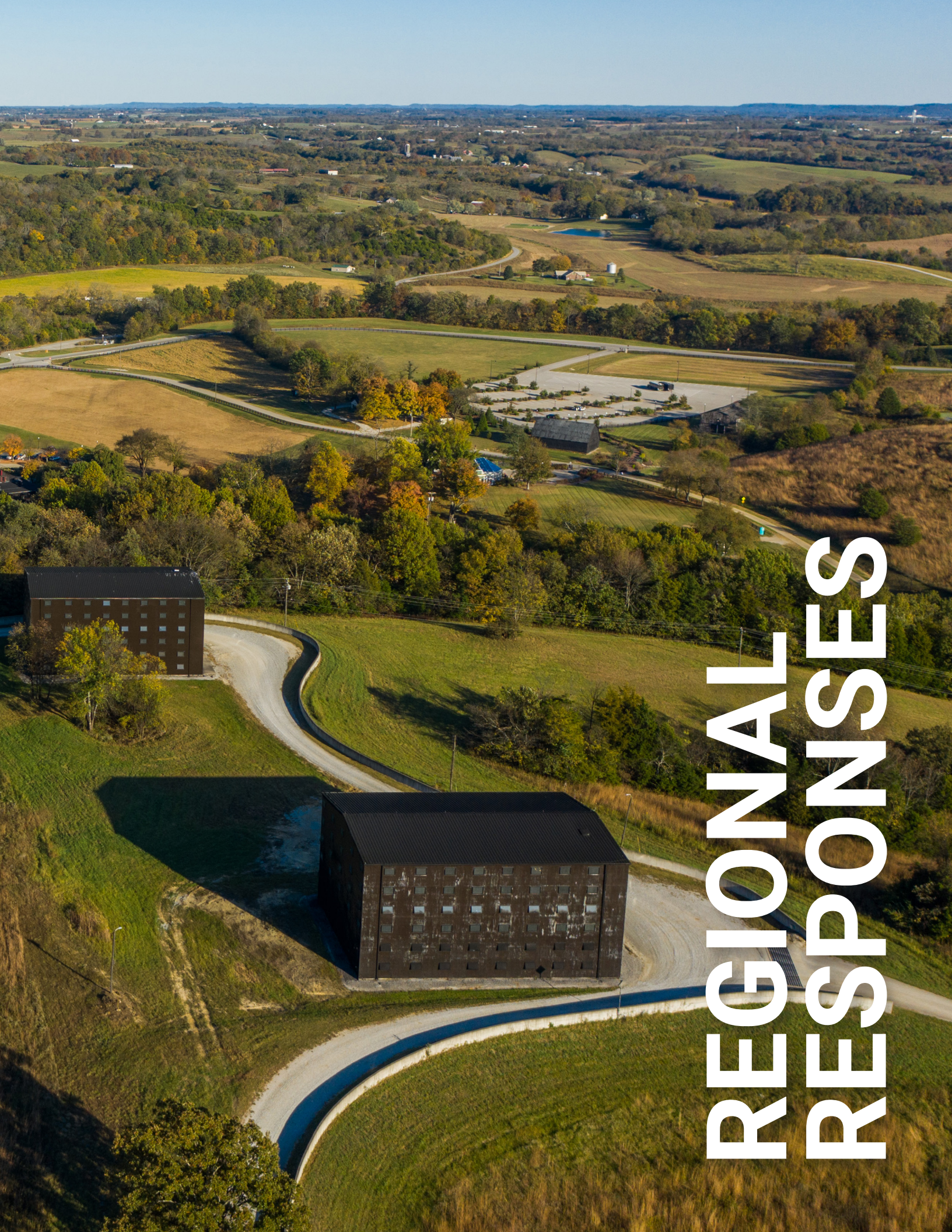
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An aerial photograph of a rural landscape featuring a mix of green and brown trees, open fields, and a small cluster of buildings. A large yellow rectangle is superimposed over the center of the image, containing the Table of Contents text.

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REGIONAL RESPONSES

CHAPTER 1:

Chapter 1 A. (Regional)

A description of the planning process undertaken to produce the regional plan, including a description of how all local areas were afforded the opportunity to participate in the regional planning process.



Three different Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDAs) came together to outline common goals, priorities and the planning approach for the Central Kentucky Regional Plan. Staff from the three areas agreed to work together through remote meetings, calls, and emails to develop a plan equally reflective of the region's unique needs and challenges. Staff from the three areas scheduled remote meetings among representatives, and each Board was given an opportunity to comment on and contribute to the final regional plan. Each Board votes separately on the final regional plan.

The local planning process was compact due to the swift turn around required for submittal of the comprehensive plan. The initial step in the planning process was to establish a timeline for the gathering of required information. Second, several one-on-one question and answer sessions were held with Board members and staff. To gain additional input staff referred to surveys and interviews conducted during recent planning sessions.

To foster an open dialogue and gather input, committees of the NKWIB discussed related questions, especially the eight additional elements.

Local participation in the planning process is vital to creating a comprehensive and inclusive plan that establishes buy-in with partners and the community. The request for participation was done primarily through electronic communication. The use of technology was essential in the sharing and gathering of information quickly over a large area. Partner and public input was requested in various ways including: an email to all contacts; a press release to local media; and, marketing on social media sites controlled by the Bluegrass Workforce Innovation Board (BGWIB)/Kentucky Career Center - Bluegrass.

**NOTE: Kentuckiana Works is not referenced in this plan due to the waiver provided from Governor of Kentucky for the Kentuckiana area to develop a Regional plan with Indiana.*



**Chapter 1 B. (Regional)
Provide 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. [WIOA Sec.
108(b)(1)(A)] and [20 C.F.R. §
679.560(a)]**

Regional Analysis of Economic Condition

The largest sector in the Northern Kentucky Region is Health Care and Social Assistance, employing 93,031 workers. The next-largest sectors in the region are Manufacturing (89,192 workers) and Retail Trade (74,176). High location quotients (LQs) indicate sectors in which a region has high concentrations of employment compared to the national average. The sectors with the largest LQs in the region are Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting (LQ = 1.55), Manufacturing (1.52), and Transportation and Warehousing (1.31).

Sectors in the Northern Kentucky Region with the highest average wages per worker are Management of Companies and Enterprises (\$109,679), Finance and Insurance (\$76,944), and Utilities (\$73,737). Regional sectors with the best job growth (or most moderate job losses) over the last 5 years are Transportation and Warehousing (+11,774 jobs), Health Care and Social Assistance (+5,664), and Construction (+4,259).

Over the next year, employment in the Northern Kentucky Region is projected to expand by 2,633 jobs. The fastest growing sector in the region is expected to be Health Care and Social Assistance with a +1.2 percent year-over-year rate of growth. The strongest forecast by number of jobs over this period is expected for Health Care and Social Assistance (+1,089 jobs), Accommodation and Food Services (+422), and Transportation and Warehousing (+394).

These projections reflect the need of increased health care and service workers established during the pandemic of 2020 and reflect the sentiment of the qualitative information gathered from employer interviews.



Additional Lincoln Trail Response:

The Lincoln Trail Workforce Development Area (LTWDA) continues to see its demand sectors grow, especially in Advanced Manufacturing, Healthcare, and Construction. More efficient technologies and robotics continue to change the dynamics of manufacturing by eliminating some low-skill job functions but at the same time creating jobs requiring higher skills with more technical responsibilities. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the latest available occupational projections may change based on future workforce demand.

Production Occupations from 2018 to 2028 are expected to grow in the LTWDA by less than 1percent, lower than the 1.1percent statewide. In 2019 and 2020 new and expanding manufacturing industries in the eight-county region announced a total of 692 new jobs of which 57percent were due to the announcement of a steel plate manufacturing mill by Nucor with an investment of over \$1billion. 23percent of the remaining new jobs were in Food/Beverage Production, namely in distillery operations with investments over \$133million. Manufacturing employment in the LTWDA totals 19percent and wages in that sector make up 23percent of total wages in the region. The Healthcare sector will continue to expand as it has in the past. There are no healthcare occupations that are currently in decline. In the LTWDA healthcare jobs are projected to grow 11percent, slightly more than the 10percent Statewide.

The year-long, and ongoing, pandemic that has created physical and mental stress on healthcare workers may have a significant impact on the number of healthcare job openings in the coming years due to retirements/resignations. Increasing demands by an aging population needing specialized care will also influence hiring trends for nursing, occupational and physical therapy as well as other specialties. A report by the National Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM) in 2018 states that 10,000 baby-boomers are retiring every day.

Skills shortages in the Construction sector sometimes cause delays in new commercial projects as well as new residential construction. Construction occupations in the region are anticipated to grow 2.4percent by 2028 which is more than the Statewide projection of 1.5percent. The tourism industry continued to increase in the region until the pandemic shutdowns and mandated reductions in tourism activity occurred. Travel expenditures increased by 6.7percent from 2018 to 2019. 2020 will be a different story but 2021 should see an increase in tourism traffic as the pandemic subsides.

Employment in tourism and travel industry increased 1.7 percent in 2019 in the eight counties. Due to the pandemic 2020 will certainly show a reduction in tourism employment but should start showing a rebound later in 2021. The entrepreneurial spirit and small business environment continue to thrive in the Lincoln Trail Area, specifically in the Elizabethtown-Fort Knox Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) which includes Hardin, Meade, and Larue Counties. The Covid pandemic has caused interruptions/closures in the small business community. Resources such as the federal CARES Act, Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), KY Small Business Development Centers, Revolving Loan Fund/Business Relief Program with the Lincoln Trail Area Development District, and local venture groups will provide opportunity and hope for small businesses to navigate through these uncertain times.

The Elizabethtown-Ft. Knox MSA was recognized as number five in the nation for annual growth in business services jobs in Newgeography's 2016 report. The region continues to adapt to the fluctuation in personnel, both military and civilian, at Fort Knox. The post continues to bring in small to medium-sized military units that help alleviate reductions from the past due to downsizing. The most recent addition was in 2020 when the Fifth Corps (V Corps) was activated, sending 635 soldiers to Fort Knox as well as their dependents. Army Cadet training for future officers now takes place on post as well as a major portion of ROTC training in the summer months. These incremental military increases also have brought additional civilian personnel as well boosting other sectors such retail trade, accommodation and food services, and real estate. An added bonus is the increase in military spouses coming to the area giving business and industry another labor force with varied experience to recruit from.

**Chapter 1 C. (Regional)
Provide an analysis of
the regional workforce,
including current labor
force employment (and
unemployment) data and
information on labor market
trends and the educational
and skill levels of the
workforce in the region,
including individuals with
barriers to employment.[WIOA
Sec. 108(b)(1)(C)] and [20
C.F.R. § 679.560(a)]**

Economic and Workforce Overview

The 34-county Central Kentucky Region is an economic engine of Kentucky. Stretching from Boone County in the north to Lincoln County in the south and Breckenridge in the west to Powell County in the east. This region has 28.3 percent of Kentucky's counties and has 35.9 percent of its labor force – 717,721 jobs in total, according to the most recent Kentucky Labor Market Information website (kylmi.ky.gov). The jobs are more concentrated than the workers are; among a 34-county labor force of 1.5 million, the largest counties represent only 58.5 percent of the total workers. Indicating that many people commute from surrounding counties into the job centers.

Current economic conditions in the 34-county region are overall better than the national average. According to the most recent data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics Local Area Unemployment Statistics, the composite Q3 2020 unemployment rate for the entire 34-county region was 5.2 percent compared to the national average of 6.4 percent.

2-Digit Industry	Empl	Avg Ann Wages	LQ	5yr History	Annual Demand	Forecast Ann Growth
Health Care and Social Assistance	93,031	\$53,901	0.89		9,878	1.2percent
Manufacturing	89,192	\$63,271	1.52		9,239	-0.1percent
Retail Trade	74,176	\$30,647	1.02		9,719	-0.2percent
Educational Services	63,176	\$47,661	1.08		5,927	0.1percent
Accommodation and Food Services	61,307	\$18,103	1.07		10,347	0.7percent
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	45,733	\$34,274	1.02		5,576	0.6percent
Transportation and Warehousing	44,235	\$51,465	1.31		5,115	0.9percent
Public Administration	40,030	\$52,957	1.15		3,648	0.0percent
Construction	37,605	\$52,881	0.90		3,791	0.3percent
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	32,352	\$66,529	0.65		3,026	0.8percent
Remaining Component Industries	129,950	\$56,354	0.75		13,951	0.1percent
Total - All Industries	710,785	\$47,907	1.00		80,137	0.4percent

As of December 2020, the three counties with the lowest unemployment rates were Spencer and Woodford County at 4.2 percent, and Bourbon at 4.5 percent. However, several counties in the region are experiencing high unemployment due to the pandemic. Rural counties with the smallest labor forces have some of the highest unemployment rates; Lincoln County, with a labor force of 9,593 has an unemployment rate of 7.7 percent. Boyle County, with a labor force of 11,347 has an unemployment rate of 6.8 percent. Grayson County had an unemployment rate of 6.5 percent.

According to ACS data, the Central Kentucky Region has a healthy labor force participation rate of 63.9 percent, noticeably exceeding the Kentucky rate of 59.2 percent and even the national labor force participation rate of 61.5 percent. Still, the labor force participation rates also vary quite a bit, from 47.0 percent in Estill County to 70 percent in Boone County. In fact, in the Central Kentucky Region, of the 57.4 percent of the people who are not in the workforce are over the age of 55 (which is almost the same as the statewide rate of 57.5 percent of non-workforce participants being 55 and over).

An overwhelming majority of the population over the age of 25 in the Central Kentucky Region-- some 90.1 percent--have a high school diploma or higher. However, only 29.8 percent have a bachelor's degree or higher. Again, there are wide disparities between counties with a spectrum that goes from 9.9 percent of the population with a bachelor's degree or higher in Estill County to 43.6 percent in Fayette County.

Unfortunately, many individuals in the Central Kentucky Region with barriers to employment are struggling. Roughly 13.5 percent of Northern Kentucky residents have a reported disability and only 40.0 percent are active in the labor force. Single parent families make up 33.3 percent of the population. While barriers like poverty make-up 15.4 percent, lack of transportation (6.3 percent), English as a second language (ESL) (4.3 percent), and disconnected youth (2.2 percent) make up much of the top challenges for employment for individuals in the Central Kentucky Region. These barriers have been made even more challenging by the pandemic. Children have been forced into remote education and leaving parents with no options but to be home for during normal business hours. Transportation services have been cut most of the few counties in the region that supplied public transportation. ESL classes have halted temporarily and with many public facilities closed, youth have been left without an outlet.

Leading Industries

The Central Kentucky Region is well diversified. According to quarter 3 data for 2020 from the Industry Snapshot for the Central Kentucky Region, Healthcare is the largest industry, comprising about 93,000 jobs in the Central Kentucky Region. Manufacturing is next with 89,000 jobs, followed by Retail at 74,000 jobs, Educational Services (63,000), and Food Service at 61,000. This shows a significant shift since 2016, with Retail falling from the top spot to third with more projected losses to the industry over the next five years. Industries showing the greatest potential growth over the next five years continues to be Healthcare with an annual growth forecast of 1.2 percent, Transportation and Logistics at 0.9 percent, and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services at 0.8 percent.

The highest regional average wages are in Manufacturing (\$63,271) and Transportation and Warehousing (\$51,465). The lowest is in Accommodation and Food Service (\$18,103). *(This analysis uses average wages because median wages are unavailable at the county level; however, in many cases, median wages would be a preferable measure of wages.)*

Between 2000 and 2019, the biggest industry gains in the Central Kentucky Region were in Healthcare (19,006 new jobs), and Transportation and Warehousing (5,947). Manufacturing has actually lost a net 2,163 jobs in the last 19 years, though the sector is up 12,746 jobs since 2010. In some ways, that simply points to how badly manufacturing jobs suffered in the Great Recession; but that the long-term trends for manufacturing have been declining jobs. Construction is likewise up since 2010 (6,049 new jobs) but down since 2000 (-1,931 jobs). Retail jobs in 2019 were close to 2000 levels (73,360 jobs) after losing 9,669 jobs in the Great Recession.

Since 1990, the biggest growth has come in the Business Services sector. In fact, the growth of the Business Services sector is one of the underappreciated stories in Northern Kentucky's economic transformation over the last 25 years. In 1990, this sector was half the size of Manufacturing; now it's larger than Manufacturing. The Business Sector has grown nearly 100 percent in the last 25 years. If combined with Finance, this sector would now represent nearly 1 in 5 jobs in the Central Kentucky Region.

Top Jobs

According to data from JobsEQ, there were a total of 66,096 online job postings in the Central Kentucky Region in the fourth quarter of 2020. The top in-demand occupations in the Central Kentucky Region the fourth quarter of 2020 were Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers with 5,447 online job postings, followed by Retail Salespersons at 3,525, Stocker and Order Fillers at 2,590, and followed by Registered Nurses at 2,417. Some 24,000 of the top job postings or 41.4 percent advertised for High School Diploma or higher.

Site: (https://kystats.ky.gov/Reports/Tableau/Industry_Profiler_2018)

Additional Lincoln Trail Response:

Economic and workforce conditions continue to improve in the LTWDA and mirror the overall improvement in the State of Kentucky and United States. The civilian labor force at the end of 2019 was 125,918 an increase of 1,279 from 2018. The number employed increased by 1,140 and those unemployed increased by 139. The unemployment rate continued to be low for the Lincoln Trail Area. The annual rate for 2018 was 4.3percent and for 2019 it was 4.4percent. Covid-19 again resulted in a retreat in 2020 from the previous years' economic positive news. Preliminary data for December 2020 show the civilian labor force decline by 5,393 and those employed declining by 6,588. The unemployment rate for the region at the end of 2020 stood at 5.5percent. The labor participation rate has increased from the Great Recession of 2008 but only slightly. Rates for counties in the region range from a 51percent rate in Breckinridge County to a high of 66percent in Washington County. Contributing factors are similar to state and national trends such as lack of required skills needed for open jobs causing people to leave the labor force, Baby Boomer retirements (previously mentioned 10,000 per day), high number of applicants and current recipients of disability payments, etc. Covid-19 will continue to have an adverse effect on participation rates through 2021 due to school closures, childcare and family health issues that will keep some workers out of the labor force until all aspects of life return to some normalcy.

The LTWDA has an 93.0percent high school graduation rate for persons ages 25+ which is slightly higher than the state average of 92.0percent. GED completers who enroll in a postsecondary institution is 26.6percent compared to the State average of 29percent. The new GED Plus program (accelerating career pathways) with Kentucky Adult Education's Skills U should increase enrollments both regionally and statewide since it allows students to earn a tuition-free college credential through the Work Ready Kentucky Scholarship Program in the high-demand sectors. The percentage of 2018-2019 LTWDA high school graduates attending in-state college is 49.5percent, slightly lower than the state rate of 50.5percent.



Chapter 1 D. (Regional)

An analysis of workforce development activities, including education and training in the region. This will include an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities and capacity to provide the workforce development activities to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of employers in the region.

Each of the three Workforce Development Boards in the Central Kentucky Region have their own approach to workforce development activities. There are, however, many themes in common: Regional economic expansion in the Central Kentucky Region has caused a shortage of job candidates with the necessary skills both “hard” and “soft”. Most employers offering good paying jobs are requiring something beyond high school whether it’s a short-term certification/credential or an Associate degree. Workforce, education, and economic development partners in the Central Kentucky Region include the Kentucky Career Center’s, secondary school systems, post-secondary institutions, economic development offices, training consortiums, chambers of commerce, SHRM groups, jails,



public libraries, and innovation centers. They are all working together to develop and implement customized curriculums and certifications to meet the soft skills as well as the technical skills requirements that employers need. Examples of these include: soft skills classes at the KCC-Lincoln Trail Office in Elizabethtown and provided virtually in the Bluegrass area; WIN Career Readiness Courseware which includes the Kentucky Essential/Soft Skills Certificate; National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) through adult education centers; work ethic certifications in several school systems in the region; Workforce Solutions with Elizabethtown Community and Technical College (ECTC); Tech Ready Apprentices for Careers in Kentucky (TRACK) that has been established



in several school systems in the Lincoln Trail area; Hardin County Schools Early College and Career Center (EC3) in Elizabethtown that allows juniors and seniors ready for college-level curriculums a pathway to learn in-demand sectors (if a student completes two years at EC3 they will have two years of college credit); Project Lead the Way (PLTW); Knox Coding Academy.

Two new initiatives at ECTC will help alleviate skills shortages in the region's workforce. One of those is a mobile training unit that can provide requested training for company employees on site, saving participating companies time and money. The unit has been in operation since 2019 and although the pandemic had interrupted its operation a few onsite classes with limited participants have recently been completed. It is hoped to be in full operation later in 2021. The second initiative is a university center that will bring in four-year institutions that will provide Bachelor's degree programs but only if these programs are determined to be needed by input from employers in the Lincoln Trail Area. These two initiatives will provide much needed help in increasing the skill levels of current employee as well as future workers. In the Bluegrass efforts to reduce recidivism is a focus with providing employability/soft skills trainings to inmates who are close to release. These individuals complete soft skills training through a workshop coordinator, then are introduced to a Case Manager who assist them with a job search, resume assistance and possible work experience. The Kentucky Employs Youth (KEY) initiative is growing in the Bluegrass, as well, starting as an out-of-school youth only initiative the project has grown to include school systems in multiple counties. The KEY program allows youth aged individuals to do real-life career exploration through work experience in fields of interest for up to 480 hours.

• **STRENGTHS**

- **Employer Involvement:** Without employers, no one would get jobs. That's why workforce efforts in the Central Kentucky Region are developed with deep employer engagement and continuous feedback. Programs are designed and modified to meet employer needs.
- **Sector Focus:** Healthcare, Logistics, and Manufacturing are the core sectors identified as most important in each region based on the regional analysis. Some regions have also identified other sectors of focus, such as Business Services, Information Technology, Construction, and Installation, Maintenance, & Repair.
 - In an effort to address a long-term problem that has been worsened by the COVID19 pandemic, the Bluegrass LWDA has added **Childcare and Education** as a sector in an effort to address the shortfall of childcare workers, teachers, and businesses. With the addition of this sector, the Bluegrass can work to increase the number of licensed childcare facilities in the Bluegrass. The lack of childcare facilities and workers for those facilities was a repeated concern to both employers and job seekers during their strategic planning public forums.
 - The Northern Kentucky LWDA addressed the employment issues in the Childcare and Education sector by partnering with **EC Learn** to provide workforce services to childcare providers and dislocated employees. Through a NDWG, the Northern Kentucky LWDA provided Child Development Certification training for dislocated childcare employees.
 - The **Greater Knox Coding Academy** was initiated as a pilot program operated by Elizabethtown Community and Technical College (ECTC) in January 2020 through a Statewide Reserve Grant administered by the Lincoln Trail Workforce Development Board. The Coding Academy was designed to support the civilian workforce shortages in the IT field at Ft. Knox. The Coding Academy allowed students to enter the job market within months through short term certifications in Java and Security+ and CompTIA



A+. Based on discussions with Fort Knox contractors many of these coding positions have starting annual salaries over \$65,000. In addition to the coding instruction, all students received assistance with career readiness, resume writing, job interviewing, networking, dressing for success, social media and emotional intelligence. Based on the positive results of the pilot, the program will continue to be offered and has been placed on the State ETPL. In addition, several companies have supported the program with sponsorships to assist with program operations and student fees.

- **Career Pathways and Education Alignment:** From career counseling, to individual training accounts, to increasing collaboration with higher education and K-12 institutions, Northern Kentucky workforce boards are working to improve our education-workforce pipeline and ensure that it meets the needs of a 21st century workforce. A great deal of that coordination comes from an involved board who are a reflection of the employers seen throughout the Central Kentucky Region. These employers work closely with education representatives on the local workforce boards to guide board support staff through discussion of their needs and an understanding of the present and future labor market from a first-hand perspective.
- **Business Services Teams:** In multiple Central Kentucky Regions, Business Services Teams serve to establish relationships with area employers in order to provide valuable assistance in the form of career fairs, computer assessments, and various hiring incentives. With the pandemic, Business Service Teams have had to become creative in assisting employers with identifying potential candidates. The concept of a job fair, for example, has changed from a walk-up booth to a drive-thru and virtual job fairs. The Northern Kentucky LWDA Business Service Teams speaks with a different business each week during “Live with the KCCI, a Facebook Live event. The Bluegrass Business Service Team provides customized Facebook videos for businesses hiring in the area.

- **CHALLENGES**

- **Post-secondary Education, Technological Disruption & Need for Quality Short-Term Training:** One of the greatest economic challenges of our time is the speed with which technology is changing the labor market landscape. As one example, the Central Kentucky Region employs approximately 22,000 Truck Drivers, according to data from JobsEQ, many or all of whom may be susceptible to automation in the next 10-15 years.

This is part of a larger trend: jobs that pay family-supporting wages now overwhelmingly require some form of post-secondary education. Workforce development activities that emphasize flexibility, short-term training options, and durable skill sets will be well positioned to guide the Central Kentucky Region through the coming years. Analysis of KYLMI data indicates that the short-term training (two-years or less) most likely to connect to jobs that pay above a family-supporting wage are: computer technician, automotive technicians, tractor trailer drivers, and engineers.

- **Career Centers:** In multiple areas, the Kentucky Career Centers were identified as a challenge. The creation of seamless service delivery will need to come from a cultural shift with the Commonwealth, as well as, through the placement of all partner staff in a single location. Inclusion, collective planning, and streamlining of authority will need to take place in order for the customer to be the focus. During strategic planning, the Northern Kentucky Area is working to incorporate how to expand the service footprint through local libraries and create and provide virtual service experiences, similar to other areas in the region.
- **Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DEI):** Over the last couple of years, it has become evident for the Commonwealth to be successful in eliminating disparities that exist for racial and ethnic minority populations, change is necessary. The Kentucky Chamber of Commerce January 2021 report, “Achieving Equity to Build a

Stronger Kentucky”, created goals and recommendations to reach diversity, equality, and inclusion. The local workforce development areas must also implement tactics to achieve equity as we pursue workforce development for our communities.



- **Outreach:** Public outreach efforts need to be increased through a planning process in order to create a clear vision; this has been seen as a need for some time and Bluegrass has written it into their strategic plan.
- **Barriers to Employment:** As discussed, there are many individuals in the Central Kentucky Region who, for a variety of reasons, are having a harder time getting a job than the general population. The local Workforce Development Boards are working to address barriers to employment in various ways, such as:

- **Transitions 2 Transformation** is a program that focuses on the individuals with highly challenging barriers to employment. Individuals in recovery, reentering the workforce after incarceration, disabled, homeless, ESL, etc are all provided a special case manager who focuses on these unique barriers and works with employers to transition them into the workforce at a slower and more managed pace. Workforce staff also make referrals to partnering agencies who specialize in individuals with particular barriers to employment. WIOA staff attempt to work closely with programs like Jubilee Jobs, Child Care Council, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, and others in providing additional support for individuals with significant barriers to employment.
- With funding through the CARES Act, the Bluegrass hired a **Resource Navigator**. The purpose of this position is to assist visitors to the Kentucky Career Center – Bluegrass a single point of contact to receive referrals for various needs that could not be met by the career center or its internal partners (examples: clothing, housing, transportation assistance, medical or utility assistance). This position has proven so successful in its ability to provide immediate referral assistance to those in need, the position will remain a permanent resource after the CARES funding has ended.
- The **Objective Assessment** is the first personal communication visitors to the Kentucky Career Center – Bluegrass have with the participant; it lays the framework for the services the Talent Development Specialist and participant agree upon for the participant to successfully complete their pathway to self-sufficient employment. All potential participants are given an objective assessment, which includes: a review of academic and occupational skill levels, career goals, and strengths of each participant. The purpose of the objective assessment is to identify the appropriate services and career pathways to develop an Individual Employment Plan/Individual Service Strategy along with the participant.
- **CareerEdge** is an online system that trains and measures employability skills. Job seekers have been utilizing this service to improve their employability skills. Employers have taken advantage of this opportunity for staff who need to improve on this skill or for individuals who have been targeted for leadership positions.
- The **‘Lift Up’ project** creates a one-stop delivery system for job training and transition to employment for individuals in treatment for SUD (Substance Use Disorder) living in the Northern Kentucky area. The project is funded by a federal SAMHSA grant and is a collaboration between St. Elizabeth Healthcare, Life



Learning Center and the Northern Kentucky WIB. Lift Up' participants work on increasing independence and productivity by providing pre-vocational training, substance use treatment and transitional services to employment. The KCC-NKY work with local employers to encourage transformational employment hiring. The goal of the grant is to serve 350 participants per year for five years.

- The **Northern Kentucky Career Link Program** was specifically designed to respond to employment challenges brought about by the COVID pandemic. The program offers temporary job opportunities and includes grant funding to help eligible dislocated workers pursue education or necessary certificates and credentials to find new work.
- **City Futures** is a workforce development program designed to connect residents of Covington's City Heights neighborhood to quality employment services, including career coaching, job readiness workshops, job training programs, resume services and funding for occupational training services in high-demand sectors. By connecting with the Kentucky Career Center, program participants can access multiple agencies' resources and support services to enhance their job search experience. Participants also receive financial coaching and family support services to assist them on their path to achieving their hope and dreams.
- The Lincoln Trail Workforce Development Board's Workforce Crisis Taskforce partnered with Hardin Memorial Health, now Baptist Health Hardin, to implement an **expungement pilot program** that can be replicated throughout the region. Through this program, employers are able to assist employees with the expungement process and associated costs to remove qualifying Class D felony convictions from their records which can be a barrier to successful employment. As the need for skilled, available workers continues to grow, this creates new paths for residents to enter the workforce. As a result of the successful pilot program, a how-to-guide was created for employers to use to create a similar program.

- **AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY**

- **Sharing Best Practices**: Some local Workforce Development Boards have begun using the Kentucky Center for Education and Workforce Statistics to measure the efficacy of workforce programs and interventions. When programs are identified as particularly effective, they should be shared with all Boards in the region, so that they can become best practices and standards for success.
- **Statewide Workforce Development Workshops**: The opportunities for local Workforce Development Boards staff to learn together, interact and share ideas with counterparts throughout the Commonwealth have been reduced. The creation and use of virtual workshops would allow for the staff development and exchange of ideas while reducing related travel expenses.
- **Virtual Career Center**: Since the onset of the pandemic, it has become clear an area of opportunity for the Bluegrass area is the creation of a virtual career center. The brick-and-mortar career centers have been closed to the public for nearly a year, yet the career centers continue to provide services virtually. Today there are more individuals with access to a cell phone or wifi service than there are individuals with reliable transportation. These individuals could benefit from an entirely online career center, where they can connect with a Talent Development Specialist and receive the same services, referrals, employability classes, and personal assistance they receive when they visit a physical location. A virtual career center could provide access to a new group of previously unserved or underserved residents, who could be transitioned into training and employment.
- **Videos**: The pandemic has also increased the use of social media platforms and the internet as a way to share information with clients and the general public. The Bluegrass area, since the onset of the pandemic,

has started creating videos regularly for posting on social media and the career center website. Three unique categories of videos are produced each week with new content.

1. **Workforce Wednesday:** This video series started as a live question and answer session about services in the career center at the beginning of the pandemic and has evolved into a series on all things workforce related. The video series is hosted by the career center's Workshop Coordinator and covers topics that range from: what is needed to be a successful employee, interviewing skills, budgeting, and how to overcome barriers to employment. Guests from employers to entrepreneurs are often scheduled to record tips from their perspective.

2. **Community Resource Minute:** The Community Resource Minute is hosted by our Resource Navigator. This video series hosts short interviews with various community partners throughout the Bluegrass area. It allows the organization to explain firsthand, what they do and how individuals who may need their services can access them.



3. **Business Minute:** The last is the Business Minute, a short two to five-minute video highlighting a business in the Bluegrass who is hiring. It covers a brief history of the business and in-depth information on the position(s) they are hiring for. Videos for this are done in a variety of ways from animation, interviewing, or content provided by the business itself and is submitted by any of the four Business Services Representatives in the Bluegrass.

- **Statewide Workforce Development Workshops:** The opportunities for local Workforce Development Boards staff to learn together, interact and share ideas with counterparts in person throughout the Commonwealth have been reduced. The creation and use of virtual workshops would allow for the staff development and exchange of ideas while reducing related travel expenses.

Additional Lincoln Trail Response:

The Lincoln Trail Workforce Development Board (LTWDB) implemented a three-year strategic plan that concluded June 30, 2020. Consultants from Strategy Matters, LLC worked to bring together citizens from all segments of the region who understood that for the region to grow we need to expand the numbers of people in the workforce and ensure their skill sets meet the job requirements of employers in the region. This resulted in the Lincoln Trail Workforce Crisis Task Force. Three subcommittees have been working to create initiatives which can support increased labor force participation in the eight counties. One of the subcommittees is Growing Business Investment. This group is chaired by economic development professionals who are engaging industry leaders to address solutions to the child care issues many workers face, such as connecting employees to various child care options in their community, creating flexible savings account options for employees to cover child care expenses, and to get company buy-in to locate child care centers within or near industrial parks. Although the pandemic has paused this initiative, we hope to revisit it later in 2021. A subcommittee of the LTWDB recently reviewed proposals for a two-year strategic plan that will build upon the plan that just ended. This was awarded again to Strategy Matters, LLC.

1 E. (Local) Provide an analysis of the knowledge and skills required to meet the employment needs of the employers in the local area, including employment requirements for in-demand industry sectors and occupations. *[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(B)] and [20 C.F.R. § 679.560(a)]*

Please refer to this section of each area's local plan for response.

CHAPTER 2:

2 A. (Local)

Describe the local board's strategic vision and goals to support regional economic growth and self-efficiency. Include goals in preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment). Also, include as applicable a description of any plans to generate new strategic vision and goals in the coming year and indicate the timeframe for such activities to occur. Strengthen to the extent possible goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency.

[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E)] TEGL 7-20

Please refer to this section of each area's local plan for response.

2 B. (Local)

Describe how the local board's vision and goals relate to the Commonwealth's goals, initiatives and priorities as outlined in the WIOA State Plan.

Please refer to this section of each area's local plan for response.

2 C. (Local)

Describe how the local board's vision and goals take into account an analysis of the strategies in working partnership with the other entities that carry out the core programs, and the required partners in the alignment of resources

Please refer to this section of each area's local plan for response.

CHAPTER 3:

3 A. (Local)

Describe the local board's strategy to work with the entities that carry out the core programs and other workforce development programs to support alignment in order to provide services. Include programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.), that support the strategy identified in the State plan under section 102(b)(1)(E); H. R. 803–442.1.

Please refer to this section of each area's local plan for response.

3 B. (Local)

Describe how the LWDB, working with the entities carrying out core programs, will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment. Include how the local board will facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs, and improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable and stackable). *[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(3)]*

Please refer to this section of each area's local plan for response.

3 C. (Local and Regional)

Identify and describe (for each category below) the strategies and services that are and will be used to: 1. Meet needs and facilitate engagement of employers, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations, in workforce development programs in addition to targeted sector strategies; 2. Support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area; 3. Better coordinate workforce development programs with economic development partners and programs; 4. Strengthen linkages between the One-Stop Delivery System and Unemployment Insurance programs; and 5. Increase competitive, integrated employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities. 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 initiatives, use of effective business intermediaries and other business services and strategies that support the local board's strategy *[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(4)(A) and (B), and 20 C.F.R. §§ 679.550-580]*

Please refer to this section of each area's local plan for local response.

3 D. (Local and Regional)

Describe local and regional efforts to support and promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services in coordination with economic development and other partners. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(5) and 20 C.F.R. §§ 679.550-580]

Please refer to this section of each area's local plan for local response.

Entrepreneurial efforts, Information Technology, specifically Coding, and Childcare/Education are cross themed throughout the Central Kentucky Region.

Entrepreneurial:

- In the Northern Kentucky LWDA, there are a number of programs and networks designed to promote and support entrepreneurship skills and business success, to which the Career Center network should be more strongly tied. A partial list includes: Minority Business Accelerator; Blue North; accelerator programs including SoCap, Mortar, SquareOne and Aviatra; and a host of resources through Northern Kentucky University, including the Small Business Development Center, Collaborative for Economic Engagement and Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (CIE).
- In November 2020 the Bluegrass was contacted by the founders of the Julietta Market in Lexington. The market is a site in the downtown area of Lexington that new entrepreneurs/business owner can rent a stall within the market at a lower rate until they build up their business to rent/buy their own store front. The Julietta Market can hold up to 70 business owners and they charge a very low utility rate as well. Included in the rent, the business owners are provided an 18-24-month business course through a partnership with the University of Kentucky and the Small Business Development Center. Due to limited funding of the Julietta Market, the LWDB applied for the Governor's Statewide Reserve Grant to assist with books and supplies for the business owners. The LWDB was awarded the Grant and has since purchased the business textbooks, business journals, and additional supplies needed to complete the course.



To assist with the success of the new business owners, The Bluegrass LWDB is also providing WBL opportunities to the business owners. Of the current 60 business owners at the Julietta Market, 10 have signed agreements with WIOA to participate in our program. The business owners not only want to teach WIOA Interns, OJT, and WEX participants about how to operate a business, but also to learn their trade of their business. For example, the business owners do everything from making leather products and sewing, to making hygiene and make-up products. The business owners are excited to be teaching our participants with the hopes that they will eventually become entrepreneurs as well. The Bluegrass plans to continue to provide support to the Julietta Market.

Childcare/Education

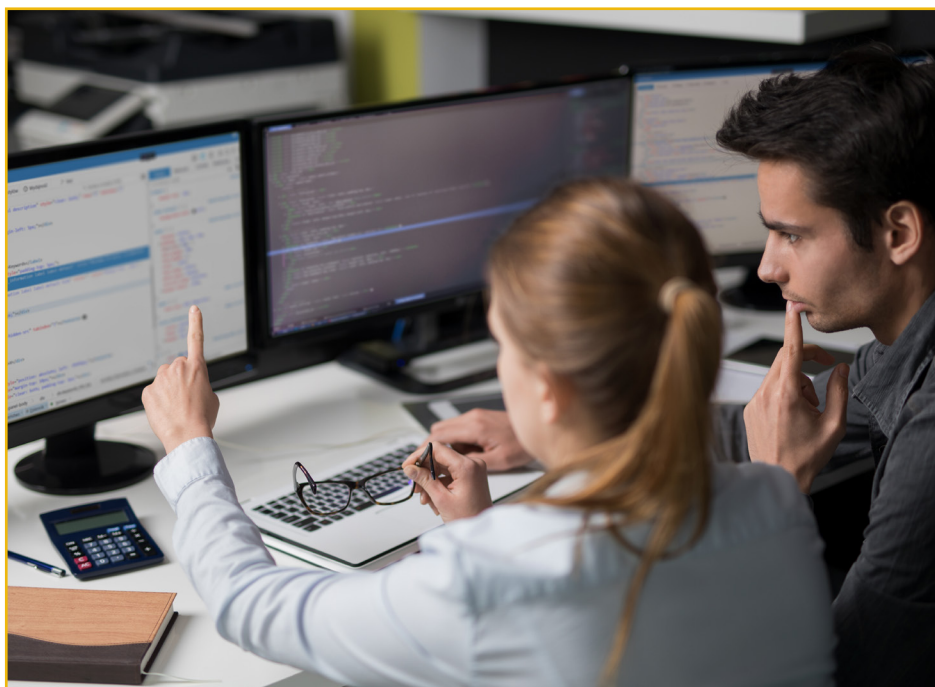
- The Northern Kentucky LWDA addressed the employment issues in the Childcare and Education sector by partnering with EC Learn to provide workforce services to childcare providers and dislocated employees. Through a NDWG, the Northern Kentucky LWDA provided Child Development Certification training for dislocated childcare employees.

- During the development of the Bluegrass LWDA's strategic plan, employers reported an issue with employee hiring and retention due to lack of affordable and available childcare. Though there are community organization and WIOA supportive services available to offset the cost, there was no way to immediately address the lack of safe available childcare. Upon review of this need the Bluegrass Workforce Innovation Board reviewed an occupational report on Childcare and Education in the Bluegrass area and determined it to be an area of high demand. As of February 2021, Childcare and Education became a high-demand occupation in the area and the Kentucky Career Center – Bluegrass, along with board support staff, will begin developing partnerships with childcare facilities and trainers to increase the number of childcare workers and entrepreneurs who are interested in opening childcare businesses. This sector was added in addition to the other high-demand sectors that reviewed via occupational report at least biannually by the BGWIB.



Information Technology/Coding

- The Greater Knox Coding Academy was initiated as a pilot program operated by Elizabethtown Community and Technical College (ECTC) in January 2020 through a Statewide Reserve Grant administered by the Lincoln Trail Workforce Development Board. The Coding Academy was designed to support the civilian workforce shortages in the Information Technology field at Fort Knox. The Coding Academy allowed students to enter the job market within months through short term certifications in Java and Security+ and CompTIA A+. Based on discussions with Fort Knox contractors many of these coding positions have starting annual salaries over \$65,000. In addition to the coding instruction, all students received assistance with career readiness, resume writing, job interviewing, networking, dressing for success, social media, and emotional intelligence. Based on the positive results of the pilot, the program will continue to be offered and has been placed on the State ETPL. In addition, several companies have supported the program with sponsorships to assist with program operations and student fees.
- The Bluegrass LWDA is currently planning to provide IT coding training to individuals across the 17-county. Through LMI data and discussions with employers in the Bluegrass, there is a desperate need for IT Coders in the Bluegrass. Other Local Boards across the state have provided Coding training which have proven to be very successful to provide the needed supply of coders to employers. The Bluegrass has met with Code Louisville, Bluegrass Community and Technical, and BC Skills to begin working towards this initiative. Our goal is to offer two coding classes per year with 25 participants in each class. There is discussion to partner with the Northern Kentucky LWDA on this initiative.



3 E. (Local)

Describe the type and availability of youth workforce activities, including activities for youth with disabilities. Identify successful models and best practices for youth workforce activities relevant to the local area. *[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(9) and 20 C.F.R. §§ 679.550-580]*

Please refer to this section of each area's local plan for local response.

3 F. (Local)

Describe how the LWDB coordinates education and workforce investment activities with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and to avoid duplication of services. *[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(10) and 20 C.F.R. §§ 679.550-580]*

Please refer to this section of each area's local plan for local response.

3 G. (Regional)

Describe efforts to coordinate supportive services provided through workforce investment activities in the local area including facilitating childcare, transportation and other appropriate supportive services for customers. *[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(11) and 20 C.F.R. §§ 679.550-580]*

There is currently no region-wide approach to coordinating services for childcare, transportation, and supportive services. As the following paragraphs make clear, childcare, particularly, is a large area of supportive services for which Kentucky's Workforce Development

Boards currently do not have much capacity. The easiest way for Workforce Boards to support childcare services--which are often a critical element of enabling workforce participation--would be to give local Workforce Boards control of childcare vouchers, as currently done in Texas. That said, up until now, each region has taken its own approach.

Bluegrass Response: The Bluegrass Local Workforce Area has policies that outline numerous supportive services for clients of WIOA. Some policies established by the BGWIB include: out-of-area job search assistance, relocation assistance, purchase of required supplies, assistance with fees, childcare, lodging, travel, transportation, and tutoring. Current efforts in the Bluegrass Local Workforce Area to coordinate supportive services include: referral to childcare service, assistance with travel, and assistance with expenses associated with training or interviewing.

Northern Kentucky Response: In Northern Kentucky, WIOA Youth staff provides transportation to youth to participate in post-secondary education and on a limited basis, to get to employment. Youth can receive transportation for post-secondary the entire time they are attending school. However, the Youth program will only fund the first month of transportation for employment. The Youth program works with each youth to budget their income so they may maintain employment. Northern Kentucky Adults and Dislocated workers do not receive supportive services. In circumstances where such a need arises, clients are referred to the appropriate community partner.

Lincoln Trail Response: The Lincoln Trail Workforce Development Board currently leverages community programs/ services and partners to provide supportive services. Appropriate referrals are made to other agencies to provide such supportive services such as child care, transportation, and etc. The WCTF's Removing Obstacles Subcommittee is identifying and addressing the policies and problems that prevent people from entering or staying in the workforce, and expanding programs and policies that support people in re-entering and staying in the workforce (i.e., Supporting Ride to Independence replication through the region or industries offering child care onsite or in the industrial parks.)

3 H. (Local)

Describe strategies to implement the operational goals of the local One-Stop Delivery System, maximizing coordination of services provided by DWI merit staff and the LWDBs contracted service providers to improve services and avoid duplication. *[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(12) and 20 C.F.R. §§ 679.550-580]*

Please refer to this section of each area's local plan for response.

3 I. (Local)

Describe how the local board will collaborate with SkillsU, consistent with the local plan (as described in WIOA Sec. 107(d)(11) and WIOA Sec. 232. *[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(13)]* This will include a discussion of how the Local WDB will carry out the review of local applications submitted under Title II consistent with WIOA sec. 107(d)(11) (A) and (B) (i) and WIOA sec. 232. Adult Education and Literacy grant review training and process oversight to be provided by the Kentucky Office of Adult Education.

Please refer to this section of each area's local plan for response.

3 J. (Local)

Please describe the direction given by the Governor and the local WDB to the One-Stop Operator to ensure priority for adult career and training services that will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individual who are basic skills deficient consistent with WIOA sec. 134 (c)(3)(E).

Please refer to this section of each area's local plan for response.

3 K. (Local)

Please describe how the Kentucky Career Centers are implementing an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA and by One-Stop Partners.

Please refer to this section of each area's local plan for response.

CHAPTER 4:

4 A. (Local)

Describe the One-Stop Delivery System in the local area including: 1. The local board's efforts to collaborate with employers, to provide continuous improvement of business services and to operate a "Job-driven" delivery system. 2. The local board's efforts to ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers services, including contracted services providers and providers on the eligible training provider list, through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, workers and jobseekers. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6) (A) and 20 C.F.R. §§ 679.550-580] 3. How the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the One-Stop Delivery System in remote areas, using technology and other means. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(B) and 20 C.F.R. §§ 679.550-580] 4. How entities within the One-Stop Delivery System, including One-Stop Operators and OneStop Partners, will comply with WIOA section 188, if applicable, 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. Also, include how the LWDB will providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(C) and 20 C.F.R. §§ 679.550-580] 5. Provide a description of the process used by the local board, consistent with subsection (d), to provide an opportunity for public comment, including comment by representatives of businesses and comment by representatives of labor organizations, and input into the development of the Local Plan, prior to submission of this plan. Local Areas are expected to provide accessible meetings for individuals with disabilities in this public hearing component.

Please refer to this section of each area's local plan for response.

4 B. (Local)

Describe the local board's assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(7) and 20 C.F.R. §§ 679.550-580].

Please refer to this section of each area's local plan for response.

4 C. (Local)

Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities. *[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(8) and 20 C.F.R. §§ 679.550-580].*

Please refer to this section of each area's local plan for response.

4 D. (Local)

Provide a description and analysis of youth workforce activities including activities for youth with disabilities. Identify successful models and best practices for youth workforce activities relevant to the local area. Describe strategies the LWDA will use for increasing the WIOA minimum Out-of-School Youth expenditure rate to 75 percent. Provide information on 11 types of work-based learning activities planned for youth. *[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(9) and 20 C.F.R. §§ 679.550-580]*

Please refer to this section of each area's local plan for response.

4 E. (Local)

Describe local board actions to become and remain a high-performing local board, consistent with the factors developed by the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB).

Please refer to this section of each area's local plan for response.

4 F. (Local)

Describe how training services will be provided in accordance with WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(G), the process and criteria for issuing individual training accounts. *[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(19)]* This should include how contracts will be coordinated with the use of Individual Training Account's and how the LWDB will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs.

Please refer to this section of each area's local plan for response.

CHAPTER 5:

5 A. (Regional)

Describe the replicated cooperative agreements, as defined by WIOA 107(d)(11), in place between the local board and Workforce Investment's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities. Also, include other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts of cooperation, collaboration and coordination. *WIOA Sec. 108(b)(14).*

Bluegrass Response: The Bluegrass Business Services Team had been working cooperative through group meetings and shared visits to employers, which was led by the LWDA Business Services Manager. Business Services is dedicated to building a collaborative group which includes representatives from each of our partners. In addition, the Office

of Vocational Rehabilitation has a signed Memorandum of Understanding with the BGWIB for the Kentucky Career Center - Bluegrass and are co-located in the One-Stop Kentucky Career Center - Bluegrass in Georgetown.

Lincoln Trail Response: There are no current replicated cooperative agreements in place between the LTWDB and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation in the Department for Workforce Investment with respect to efforts to enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts of cooperation, collaboration and coordination. The LTWDB has not been provided any guidance, nor any information regarding the development of cooperative agreements.

Northern Kentucky Response: The Northern Kentucky Workforce Development Area Memorandum of Understanding between partners delineates the efforts and services provided by the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. Guidance will be requested for cooperative agreements. WIOA 107(d)(11) states: "The local board shall coordinate activities with education and training providers in the local area, including providers of adult education and literacy activities under Title II, providers of career and technical education and local agencies administering plans under Title I of the Rehab Act of 1973." The Northern Kentucky WIB and OVR/OFB collaborate to enhance services to individuals with disabilities, individuals with other barriers to employment and individuals living in poverty. Services are co-located in the Kentucky Career Center to provide access to a wide variety of services.

5 B. (Regional)

Describe the establishment of the administrative cost arrangement including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate for the region.

Discussions of pooling funds for administrative costs have not occurred. However, at which time projects require such discussion all local areas are agreeable to meet and negotiate arrangements.

5 C. (Regional)

Describe the establishment of an agreement concerning how the planning region will collectively negotiate on and reach an agreement with the Governor on local levels of performance for, and report on, the performance accountability measures described in WIOA sec. 116(c) for local areas or the planning region

The Central Kentucky planning region may look at ways to negotiate local levels of performance collectively. Several items are needed for this to become a reality: a complete commitment by all core partners to work more collaboratively to achieve performance and most importantly a technology platform that all partners can utilize to capture, collect, analyze and negotiate performance information. A functional shared data platform is critical for this to become reality.

5 D. (Local)

Identify the local grant recipient of Title 1 responsible for the disbursement of grant funds. *[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(15)]*

Please refer to this section of each area's local plan for response.

5 E. (Local)

Describe the competitive and non-competitive processes, as well as the process for sole-sourcing, used for procuring goods and services within the local area. This includes but is not limited to the process used to award funds to a one-stop operator and other sub-recipients/contractors of WIOA Title I adult, dislocated worker and youth services. *[WIOA Sec.108(b)(16)]*

Please refer to this section of each area's local plan for response.

5 F. (Local)

Describe the indicators currently used or intended by the local board to measure performance and effectiveness of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under subtitle B and the one-stop delivery system, in the local area. *[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(17)]*

Please refer to this section of each area's local plan for response.

Additional Elements:

AE 1. (Local and Regional

Identify the local grant recipient of Title 1 responsible for the disbursement of grant funds. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(15)]

Please refer to this section of each area's local plan for response.

The Central Kentucky Region's workforce areas are committed to engaging individuals with barriers into the workforce, through both the WIOA-funded activities that it oversees; as well as; through the Career Center's MOU partners and general partnerships throughout our region. As has been described throughout this plan, there are many resources and initiatives focused on individuals with barriers in all regions, and it is critical for all partners to collaborate and align so that these resources are as accessible as possible.

- **Priority must be provided in the following order:**
 - First, to Veterans and eligible spouses who are recipients of public assistance, individuals who are basic skills deficient, or those identified as being low-income; note that these populations have top priority in all WIOA and other DOL-funded programs.
 - Second, to individuals in WIOA Adult programs from specified priority groups--recipients of public assistance, individuals who are basic skills deficient, or those identified as being low-income--who are not Veterans or their spouses in priority group 1
 - Third, to Veterans and eligible spouses who are not included in WIOA's priority groups
 - Fourth, priority populations established by the Governor and/or Local WDB.
 - Last, to non-covered persons outside the groups given priority under WIOA.
- **Potential Strategies:**
 - Full integration with all required partners
 - Cross-train staff from different programs to understand other partner programs and to share their expertise about the needs of specific populations, including those most in need, so that all staff can better serve all customers
 - Staff the center with career counselors skilled in advising job seekers of their options, who are knowledgeable about local labor market dynamics, aware of available services inside and outside the KCC/AJC, and skilled in developing customers' skills for employment success
 - Develop and implement operational policies that achieve an integrated system of case management, using technology to achieve alignment in service delivery that meets customers' needs
 - Partner across programs, including community-based and philanthropic organizations, to effectively maximize necessary services, including supportive services, to those most in need while minimizing duplicative processes and resource use
 - Develop outreach strategies with partner programs to ensure that those most in need are identified and served
 - Encourage, develop, and implement the use of career pathways for those most in need.
- **Suggested Partnerships:**
 - Careful coordination of, and collaboration, with the regional partners to co-enroll OSY who are school drop outs, basic skills deficient, low income, and public assistance recipients
 - Closely partnering with the TANF program to help TANF participants obtain the skills they need to achieve self-sufficiency

- Individuals (over the age of 18) in receipt of SNAP currently or in the previous six months are eligible for priority in the WIOA Adult program
- AEFLA serves adults who are over 16 years of age and who are not enrolled or not required to be enrolled in school under a state's compulsory school laws. Participants are basic skills-deficient, English language learners, or without a high school diploma or its equivalent
- Vocational Rehabilitation: Individuals with disabilities are identified as individuals with barriers under WIOA, and may be eligible for statutory priority in the Adult program if they are low income, basic skills deficient, or recipients of public assistance
- Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) can integrate with the WIOA Adult program to serve and support low-income individuals and families.

AE 2. (Local and Regional)

Describe how you will use the results of any feedback to make continuous quality improvements.

Please refer to this section of each area's local plan for response.

The Bluegrass, Lincoln Trail, and Northern Kentucky Workforce Development Area (LTWDA) strive for continuous quality improvement and welcomes all feedback regarding the provision of workforce services in the Central Kentucky Region. There are a variety of sources the these three LWDAs use to gauge success and identify areas that need improvement.

- One of the leading indicators of success for the local area and region will be how effective the workforce system is in helping employers fill their critical needs of open positions. The LWDA's are listening to employer needs through a variety of avenues such as the Workforce Development Board, local Business Services Team, Chambers of Commerce, Talent Pipeline Management, SHRM and other employer-based organizations. The feedback received allows the LWDB's to target services to help meet specific employer needs whether that means more on-the-job training and incumbent worker training opportunities, job fairs or just meeting with employers to discuss the full array of workforce services. As an example, one of the benchmarks identified in the Lincoln Trail Workforce Development Board's recent strategic plan was to increase the workforce participation rate. Progress was being made prior to the pandemic but now employers are reaching out indicating they are facing greater challenges in meeting their workforce needs. We feel that opening up the work search requirement for unemployment insurance and the provision of more extensive Wagner Peyser services would lead to higher participation in WIOA services and a chance to increase the participation rate. Other examples can be identified from the community meetings held in the development of the Bluegrass Strategic Plan, where a number of employers, community members, and partners identified access to KCC-B in rural areas as an issue, as well as transportation. This feedback resulted in "virtual Kentucky Career Center – Bluegrass" as a strategic goal. The BGWIB will pursue funding for the development of an online full-service career center for individuals who either due to transportation, health issues, or sheer convenience will have full access to the services available through a physical location, virtually. This will include the ability for individuals to provide required identifying documentation and signatures where necessary.
- Other sources of feedback to assist the LWDAs in continuous improvement include the state and local monitoring processes and customer and employer satisfaction surveys. In addition, WIOA mandated performance measures are, historically, a key component in determining if the program is performing satisfactorily but concerns regarding the reliability of data in the KEE Suite system make it difficult to depend solely on these metrics. As a result of incorporating all sources of feedback into the continuous improvement process the LWDA's are better able to identify and meet the region's needs, ensure compliance with the law and regulations and improve the services being provided in the region.

- The addition of a COVID19 Response Policy, BGWIOA-N20-015 to address the changing needs of our participants is a direct result of the Bluegrass LWDA's desire for continuous improvement. The policy clarifies operations during the pandemic "shutdown", allowing the area to continue to serve participants in a remote manner. This has led to increased need to ensure the quality of data collection. For example, we are temporarily accepting email/scanned document signatures to be accepted as originals at this time. All additional documents are required to be uploaded into the state system, KEE Suite, for quality monitoring.
- Lastly, Board involvement; each area has process and/or initiatives in place for continuous quality improvement. The KCC – NKY, for example, has a CQI process in place for their career center operations and direct services provision, overseen by the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Committee. This group meets regularly. One area of recent focus has been virtual and drive-through hiring events. Over the last year, the CQI Committee has monitored both attendance and feedback from the virtual and drive-through hiring events and continues to make changes in response to those events' outcomes. When the NKWIB receives monthly Key Performance Indicator (KPI) reports, the customer and employer satisfaction rates are included. Through this planning process, board members have indicated an interest in reading specific feedback from time-to-time, so that feedback will be shared moving forward.

In the Bluegrass, the discussion of a Policy Taskforce. This group made up of both staff and Board member would review current local policies to ensure accuracy, relevancy, and functionality. The initial discussion is that the group would meet annually to and specifically for this purpose, ensuring an additional level of CQI.

The LWDB's abilities to create ad hoc committees also provides for continuous quality improvement. The ad hoc committees utilize members and partners for special projects and problem solving, resulting in more board engagement in solutions. Each workforce area utilizes these workgroups in varying amounts.

AE 3. (Local and Regional)

Describe activities of core programs and program specific information on the alignment process

Please refer to this section of each area's local plan for response.

The state plan has identified a statewide Memorandum of Agreement to be implemented in the near future. Since information is not available to the local workforce development areas or planning regions at this time, the portion of the State Plan identifying this process is included as reference.

A statewide Memorandum of Agreement between Kentucky Workforce System Partner Programs for the Integrated Workforce System is nearing completion and execution. The purpose of this Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between state-level workforce system partner programs is to establish cooperative and mutually beneficial relationships and successfully accomplish the following:



1. Streamlining statewide identification and sharing of common core services by function rather than by agency;
2. Effective blending of funds by function rather than agency to the extent not inconsistent with federal law;
3. Participation in a common and coordinated system of referral;
4. Participation in a common case management system; and
5. Achievement of established performance goals grouped by function rather than by agency, as defined by the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board and the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet.

The MOA will define roles and responsibilities for the local staff and contractors, including providing the following workforce services in the KCC system:

1. Assisting individuals in obtaining employment that leads to self-sufficiency;
2. Providing employers with access to qualified and appropriately skilled employees who have been assessed, trained and possess appropriate credentials and certifications;
3. Delivering effective programs offered through a seamless and integrated workforce development delivery that eliminates duplication of services;
4. Reducing administrative costs and accommodating the needs of employers;
5. Holding participant organizations accountable for costs, appropriate use of state and federal funding, performance and metrics; and
6. Reacting to the current demand for skilled workers by specific industries and identified sectors of unfilled jobs.

The MOA will also identify the roles and resources that workforce system partner programs will contribute to integrate service delivery and support operations of the KCC system in all areas of the state. It also is intended to reflect state programs; commitments and activities to work in collaboration to implement the following priorities of the state's workforce strategic plan:

1. Employers – Actively engage employers to drive Kentucky's workforce development system.
2. Education – Align and integrate P-12, adult education and post-secondary education to provide lifelong opportunities for Kentuckians that prepare them for the rapidly shifting realities of work in the future.
3. Workforce Participation – Increase Kentucky's workforce participation by creating opportunities, incenting workforce participation, and removing employment barriers for Kentuckians.
4. Organization and Resource Alignment – Focus resources on the most effective initiatives and improve the return on our workforce investment, utilizing data to constantly improve workforce development in Kentucky.

The long list of partner entities, state agencies, and programs that will be parties to this MOA includes:

- | | |
|---|--|
| • Education and Workforce Development Cabinet | • Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board |
| • Department for Workforce Investment | • Kentucky Council on Post-Secondary Education |
| • Kentucky Centers for Statistics | • Conference of Presidents |
| • Kentucky Department of Education | • Kentucky Commission on Military Affairs |
| • Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development | • Kentucky Chamber of Commerce |
| • Kentucky Community and Technical College System | • Kentucky Housing Corporation |
| • Kentucky Labor Cabinet | • Job Corps |
| • Cabinet for Health and Family Services | • Kentucky Association of Counties |
| • Department for Community Based Services | • Kentucky League of Cities |
| • Department for Aging and Independent Living | • Kentucky Association of Area Development Districts |
| • Division of Disability Determination Services | • National Federation of Independent Businesses |
| • Kentucky Justice and Public Safety Cabinet | • Kentucky Human Development Institute |

These parties will commit to providing integrated delivery of comprehensive workforce services in Kentucky to the job seeker and business customer in a welcoming, inclusive environment.

AE 4. (Local and Regional)

Describe the process for data collection and reporting of all core programs.

Please refer to this section of each area's local plan for response.

All core programs (Adult, D/W and Youth) are tracked and reported on via a state maintained platform called KEE Suite. KEE Suite is a customized Salesforce platform used by Talent Development staff to input customer participation and outcomes regarding Basic Career Services and WIOA funded activities. LWDA Boards regularly receive updates on or review Key Performance Indicators (KPI) that reflect the outcomes of the area's efforts as fiscal agent/sub grant recipient and the one-stop system.

Measurable statistics in the KPI reports include: job orders posted, new available positions, job referrals/ candidate prescreening, job placements, employer contacts, and new business outreach, all calculated monthly. These reports also review the cumulative year-to-date totals of Job fairs, on-site hiring events, internships/OJT, Business tours, and clients in training. Labor Market information is also included including labor participation rate, unemployment rates as well as customer satisfaction rates of both the job seekers and the employers.

Also, the Central Kentucky Region has agreed to look at ways to collectively negotiate local levels of performance. Several items are needed for this to become reality:

- A complete commitment by all core partners to work more collaboratively to achieve performance and most importantly a technology platform that all partners can utilize to capture, collect, analyze and negotiate performance information.
- A shared data platform that is reliable is critical for this to become reality.
- The current KEE Suite system is unable to provide this data and more importantly partner agencies continue to develop separate reporting systems that may make this action unattainable.

AE 5. (Local and Regional)

Describe the policies and procedures in place for Rapid Response and coordination with local and state agencies for layoffs, natural disasters etc.

Please refer to this section of each area's local plan for response.

See Chapter 4(C) for additional information on this response.

Regional Response: The Business Services Team (BST) Rapid Response (RR) Coordinator will serve as the main point of contact for notification of all impending layoff or closures. Notification may come in a variety of forms such as a WARN, employees of the affected company, communication from KCC Partners, media or public announcements, etc. The BST RR Coordination will also notify the State Rapid Response unit immediately, upon learning of an impending dislocation.

The BST RR Coordinator will contact the employer regarding Rapid Response services as soon as possible but no later than two business days of receiving the notice of dislocation.

The initial contact with the employer will allow the BST RR Coordinator to verify the layoff, provide information to the employer about Rapid Response services and encourage the employer to participate in an informational meeting with the Rapid Response Team members to customize a plan for Rapid Response services. In most instances, the BST RR Coordinator and the RR Team member representing the Career Development Office and Unemployment Insurance will attend the initial employer meeting on behalf of the Rapid Response Team.

Information and discussion during the initial employer meeting may include the items listed below. If the employer chooses not to have an initial meeting, these items will be discussed and arranged during the initial contact period.

- The potential for averting the layoff or disclosure may be discussed, with prior consultation from state or local economic development representatives.

- An overview of services offered by Rapid Response Team partners, additional service providers and other resources in the local area to meet the short and long-term needs of the affected workers. These services may include reemployment services, job training, healthcare options and unemployment insurance, to name a few.
- Customized format for the Rapid Response employee sessions, content and benefits to the employer and employees.
- Assessment of the employer's layoff plans and schedule.
- Identification of the employees affected by the dislocation such as average wage, skills level, education attainment and years of service.
- Company benefits available to employees, i.e., severance pay, insurance coverage, relocation/reemployment opportunities or job development/job search activities.
- Information regarding the petition process for Trade Assistance Allowance.
- Determination if any special accommodations for the employee sessions will be needed such as provisions for the visually or hearing impaired or foreign language interpreters.
- Dates, times and locations will be determined for the employee sessions.

Following the initial contact and/or employer meeting, the BST Rapid Response Coordinator will coordinate and oversee the implementation of the planned Rapid Response services in the following ways:

- Notifying and coordinating with the designated Rapid Response Team members and additional partners the meeting dates, times and location as well as other pertinent information regarding the layoff and employees.
- Notifying the State Rapid Response unit of the planned activities.
- Ensuring that each partner understands their role during the session, which is to provide an overview of services and answer questions pertaining to their respective programs.
- Providing information to the LEO's and other officials regarding the Rapid Response activities.
- Providing a Rapid Response session agenda to the employer and Rapid Response team members.
- Arranging workshops and/or other customized services based on the needs of the employees and as determined by the employer.
- If the company has an approved Trade petition a representative from this program will provide information regarding TAA services.
- The Rapid Response Coordinator will report all data elements, as required, in the State data systems within 10 days of the Rapid Response event.



Rapid Response Partners include:

- Kentucky Career Center/America's Job Center
 - WIOA Dislocated Worker Program
 - Reemployment services and Unemployment Insurance
 - Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
 - Veterans Services
 - TAA – if applicable
 - Kentucky Adult Education (Skills U)
- Local Workforce Development Area
- Health Department (Some areas)
- Affordable Care Act Healthcare Representative
- Local Community and Technical College (Some areas)
- Other partners deemed necessary based on the needs of the employees.

Materials covered includes:

- KCC Services:
 - Reemployment Services
 - Focus Career Registration
 - WIOA training activities
 - KEE Suite Registration
 - TAA – if applicable
 - Internet sites that provide information on job search, partner services, etc.
 - Information on workshops, which cover resume writing, interviewing skills, job search assistance, etc.
- Health Department Services such as women's cancer screenings, WIC, immunizations, etc. (Lincoln Trail)
- Adult Education (Skills U) Services
- Affordable Care Act Healthcare Information
- Community and Technical College non-credit courses at no charge. (Lincoln Trail)

Lincoln Trail Response: The Lincoln Trail Workforce Development Board follows the state's Preliminary Policy on Implementation of Rapid Response services and activities (No policy number, date issued – 11/1/15 and effective date – 1/1/16.) The Lincoln Trail Workforce Development Area submitted a revised Rapid Response Plan to the Cabinet in August of 2018. The approved plan is on file with the Department for Workforce Investment.

AE 6. (Local and Regional) Describe strategies for and/or toward work-based training models.

Please refer to this section of each area's local plan for response.

The LWDBs have identified individualized training, on-the-job training, incumbent workers training, transitional jobs, customized training, apprenticeships, work experience and other alternative work-based training services as options for training opportunities. The availability of training is abundant at this time. For employment related activities, the Workforce Development Boards have identified at a minimum, direct referrals to jobs, career assessment, individual employment planning, workshops and referrals to outside services/agencies with specific services. They may be identified differently depending on the area, but each workforce area has a group that work with the community to review and identify training and employment needs. In the Lincoln Trail WDA, it is known as the Board's Workforce Crisis Task Force; in the Bluegrass its a combined function of the Business Services Team (employers) and One-Stop Operator (partners). These groups work with local businesses and community leaders on identifying ways to increase business investment, eliminating barriers to employment and removing obstacles to employment. The region has ample employment opportunities but few people skilled, qualified or willing to seek employment.

Using dedicated sources of information gives us the knowledge and tools to set priority sectors and make necessary adjustments as economic conditions and/or business needs changes. The Education and Workforce Development Cabinet's central purpose for the Business Services Teams (BST) is "to coordinate, promote, conduct outreach and provide access to workforce partners and resources designed for employer clients. Kentucky's workforce programs are designed to meet the needs of employers in relation to the economic needs of their respective region.

The Business Service strategy has four primary components:

1. Identify a single point of contact for client development within each WIOA area.
2. Streamline workforce resource delivery.
3. Unify and coordinate outreach and information.
4. Leverage multiagency data sharing system.

The purpose of Business Services and Business Services Teams per the recently issued BST manual:

Intended to promote, market, connect and provide access to initiatives such as:

- Work Opportunity Tax Credit,
- Unemployment Tax Credit,
- Worker Adjustment Retraining Notice (WARN),
- Layoff Aversion and Rapid Response,
- Federal Bonding,
- Incumbent worker training programs,
- On-the-job training programs,
- Customized training programs
- Target recruitment,
- Apprenticeship promotion,
- Assistance for apprenticeships,
- Recruiting employers to KCCs and
- Connecting job seekers and employers by facilitating relationships.

In addition to the WIOA related resources and requirements, within Kentucky there are additional resources that provide direct services and resources to employers. These should be incorporated within the Business Service strategy and include but are not limited to:

- Training incentive programs;
- Customized training
- Talent Pipeline Management Systems;
- Labor Market Information; and
- Sector strategy and career pathway development.

Collectively, both Federal and State based programs are designed to meet the needs of employers in relation to the economic needs of each respective region. An educated, adaptable, qualified labor market is the primary objective for workforce development in Kentucky; this sustained improvement of the Commonwealth's economy is accomplished through the alignment and ongoing analysis of business personnel needs and skills training.

Kentucky's Business Service strategy includes a partnership of local and state workforce development organizations dedicated to providing proactive workforce development and skills development resources to business clients. This strategy offers a streamlined approach to assisting business with recruiting talent, training new and existing employees, and developing tomorrow's workforce. At its core, the Business Services strategy consist of five primary organizations who provide direct resources and services to employers:

- Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDB)
- Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet (EWDC)
- Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development (CED)
- The Kentucky Chamber's Workforce Center (Workforce Center)
- Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS)

The strategy exists to provide unified, efficient, quality and seamless workforce services and resources to new, existing and expanding companies within the Commonwealth. Additionally, the KWIB's Strategic Plan's goals include increasing employer engagement and aligning resources of system partners. Both are essential in increasing the workforce participation rate and providing job seekers with career opportunities.

Business Service Teams are designed to provide a primary point of contact for employer customers. The structure is comprised of three levels, each of which may act as a point of entry for contact with companies. Level one consists of local BSTs and a BST lead. BST leads are Kentucky Career Center (KCC) system partner personnel responsible for coordinating BST teams locally and delivering services to business and industry in their workforce area. BSTs include all local representatives from the five core state partners, as well as additional local partners.

Level two includes the Workforce Project manager (WPM). WPMs will be housed regionally within EWDC's Office of Employment and Apprenticeship Services and are individuals dedicated to employer engagement as the primary function of their job. Initially, there will be five WPMs assigned to cover the workforce innovation regions: Central, South, East and West. The Central Kentucky Region will be covered by two WPMs (Kentuckianaworks/Lincoln Trail and Northern Kentucky/Bluegrass). Each WPM will be assigned to two Workforce Innovation Areas and will assist the local BST lead with coordination of each local BST. The Cabinet for Economic Development's Office for

Workforce and Community Development will also assign WMPs to each BST to coordinate workforce issues pertaining to new and expanding projects approved by the Kentucky Economic Development Finance Authority (KEDFA).

Level three consists of the State team that include four partners from the EWDC, CED, KCTCS, and the Workforce Center. These organizations must work synergistically to ensure that companies receive unified

and coordinated information and services related to their workforce development needs. State partners also coordinate with their regional and local colleagues to ensure information is shared among agencies across Kentucky.



Additional partners such as the Council on Post-Secondary Education (CPE) and Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) – Career & Technical Education (CTE) should also serve in a support roll to BSTs at the local and state level in order to provide opportunities for employers to participate in curriculum development, skills development programs, college and university career development/job placement, and to enhance work-based learning opportunities.”

The LWDAs have OJT, customized incumbent worker programs and policies in place and actively promotes the advantages and benefits to employers for training needs for both new hires and current employees. The Board works closely with training consortiums via local economic development offices in the region to promote these programs and other business services that will assist in addressing local workforce skill needs.

In an effort to increase competitive integrated employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) assists businesses in hiring, developing, and keeping valued employees. An OVR counselor will conduct an assessment to determine eligibility for services. After eligibility is determined, the counselor’s role is to provide information, resources, guidance and counseling, and choices related to an individual’s strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, capacities, and abilities so the individual can prepare for and enter a job.

OVR also provides an array of services at no cost including prescreening of applicants based essential job requirements, on-site job trainer and support services if deemed necessary (coordinated by OVR and performed by Communicare), restructuring/work site adjustment, accessibility survey of complete work site, assistive technology, devices and specialized equipment plus other required follow-up services.

The business services team regularly meets with the economic development agencies in the region to provide updates on activities and solicit input/need for services, information and products they need to assist them in their efforts in recruitment and retention. We regularly provide labor market information and other information as requested. We are always prepared to participate in any discussions with companies upon their request to discuss workforce issues, solutions and options.

AE 7. (Local and Regional)

Describe the Eligible Training Provider procedure including initial eligibility, criteria for selection and information addressing factors related to performance indicators.

Please refer to this section of each area's local plan for response.

Beginning in 2015, the process and responsibility of initial and subsequent eligibility for approved training providers for inclusion on the Commonwealth's Eligible Training Provider Listing (ETPL) was designated to the state ETPL Coordinator, who is housed within the Education and Workforce Development Cabinets Department of Workforce Investment. This was devised to create a unified and consistent system across the Commonwealth for all private and non-profit training providers to have access to participants receiving training services through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs.

As such, initial eligibility, data collection, determination of subsequent eligibility and all other functions of the development and maintenance of the ETPL are conducted by the state ETPL Coordinator. The most recent guidance regarding the ETPL and its functions can be found at <https://kcc.ky.gov/Documents/20-002percent20ETPL.pdf>.

As for the local perspective, we strive to make sure that customers have all appropriate information when choosing a provider for training services, with some areas in the Central Kentucky Region requesting a copy of the ETPL for their area to review. The areas utilize the state maintained website, <https://etpl.ky.gov/ETPL/Default.aspx>, to refer participants to eligible programs and to gather information about course length, cost, and other pertinent information. Additionally, the website is designed to provide information regarding the past performance of particular training providers and programs to assist participants in the decision-making process. Local areas do maintain the right and ability to regionally exclude programs based on performance issues as well as operational existence. These are decisions that must be voted and approved by local workforce boards and submitted in a timely fashion to the state for consideration and incorporation into the website.

AE 8. (Local and Regional)

Describe how the LWDA/Region will establish or continue to improve an Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program (IELCE) that provide educational services consisting of literacy and English language acquisition integrated with civic education that includes instruction of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation.

Please refer to this section of each area's local plan for response.

Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be delivered in combination with integrated education and training activities. IELCE includes services for English Language Learners that include literacy as well as instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation. IELCE may include elements such as workforce training, enabling competency in the English language and acquisition of basic and advanced skills to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens. In Kentucky, SkillsU offers the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) program.

One of the components of the program is the Test of English for International Communications (TOEIC), which measures the ability of non-native English-speaking examinees to use English skills in the workplace. The program administers the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and Internet-based Test (TOEFL iBT), which tests all four language skills that are important for effective communication: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The test helps nonnative speakers demonstrate that they have the English skills needed for success.

TOEFL iBT emphasizes integrated skills and provides better information to institutions about the student's ability to communicate in an academic setting and their readiness for academic coursework. With Internet-based testing, ETS (Educational Testing Services) can capture speech and score responses in a standardized manner.

The program provides multiple services including: preparing adults who are English Language Learners (ELLs) for unsubsidized employment in an in-demand occupation or career pathway which leads to economic self-sufficiency; assist ELLs in achieving competency in English reading, writing, speaking and comprehension; prepare ELLs on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation; prepare ELLs without a high school diploma for its equivalent (GED); lead to ELLs entering post-secondary education or training. Individuals coming through a Kentucky Career Center in the Central Kentucky Region with a need for these services are referred to the Skills U program.

Due to the demographic differences of each area in the region, the program sizes vary. English as a Second Language (ESL) population is a small population in the LTLWDA, the providers do not have an IELCE grant but serve students, as needed. The NKLWDA has a program through Gateway Community and Technical College. The BGLWDA provides services to approximately 110 students enrolled through the Bluegrass Community and Technical College SkillsU program.

In addition, the pandemic has had a direct impact on enrollment this fiscal year and some last year. However, Adult Education has switched all courses to a hybrid model. The program continues to serve students even though it is challenging, due to language barriers and technology.



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We the undersigned attest that this submittal is the Regional and Local Plan for our Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) and certify that this plan has been prepared as required, and is in accordance with the applicable Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Regional Innovation and Local Comprehensive Plan Guidance.

LOCAL WORKFORCE INNOVATION BOARD

BOARD CHAIR

Name:

Title:

Signature:

Date:

BLUEGRASS LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA

CHIEF LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIAL

Name:

Title:

Signature:

Date:

CHIEF LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIAL

Name:

Title:

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