****

**Southeast Arkansas**

**Workforce Development Area**

Southeast Arkansas Economic

Development District

****

**Local Plan**

**PY 2024-2027**

*By:*

**Chief Elected Officials of Southeast Arkansas**

&

**Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board**

Southeast Arkansas Economic

Development District

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Section** | **Pages** |
| Section 1: Workforce and Economic Analysis | Page 3 |
| Section 2: Strategic Vision and Goals | Page 18 |
| Section 3: Local Area Partnerships and Investment Strategies | Page 24 |
| Section 4: Program Design & Evaluation | Page 33 |
| Section 5: Compliance | Page 46 |
| Section 6: Plan Assurances | Page 49 |
| Appendix C : Performance Goals | Page 53 |
| Appendix D: Planning References and Resources | Page 54 |

**Section 1: Workforce and Economic Analysis**

* 1. **Provide an 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)(l)(A); 20 CFR 679.560(a)]**

***Note:* Per WIOA Sec. 108(c), existing economic regional and/or local area analyses may be used** if **sourced data and/or derived analyses are economically relevant and current (i.e., within two years of this issuance guidance).**





**Southeast Arkansas Profile**

**Population Growth (2010-2020): -10.84%**

**Projected Employment Growth (2020-2030): 1.93%**

**Unemployment Rate (Not Seasonally Adjusted) (2020): 7.0%**

The Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Area (WDA) consists of 10 counties: Arkansas, Ashley, Bradley, Chicot, Cleveland, Southeast Arkansas Profile Population Growth (2022-2024): 0.21% Projected Employment Growth (2020-2030): 1.93% Unemployment Rate (Not Seasonally Adjusted) (2020): 7.0% Desha, Drew, Grant, Jefferson, and Lincoln. Two states border the Southeast Arkansas WDA, Louisiana to the south and Mississippi to the east; and the Pine Bluff Metropolitan Statistical Area is located in the Area.

The Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Area (WDA) consists of ten counties: Arkansas, Ashley, Bradley, Chicot, Cleveland, Desha, Drew, Grant, Jefferson, and Lincoln. Two states border the Southeast Arkansas WDA, Louisiana to the south and Mississippi to the east. The Pine Bluff Metropolitan Statistical Area is in the area.

The Southeast Arkansas WDA is expected to increase employment by 1,504 between 2020 and 2030. Goods-Producing industries are projected to experience a net loss of 233 jobs, while the Services-Providing industries are predicted to gain 2,165 jobs. The area is estimated to lose 428 Self- Employed Workers. Population in the area declined 10.84 percent from 2010 to 2020, with a loss of 23,166 residents, bringing its residency to 190,554. The not-seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate for 2020 was 7.0 percent.

**Leisure and Hospitality** is slated to be the top and fastest growing supersector, gaining 1,439 new jobs, an increase of 30.41 percent. Driving this growth is *Food Services and Drinking Places*, with a gain of 1,063 jobs. *Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Professional, and Similar Organizations* is predicted to increase its labor force by 52.46 percent between 2020 and 2030 to become the fastest growing industry in the Southeast Arkansas WDA. On the negative side of the labor market, five supersectors are estimated to see net losses, with the **Manufacturing** supersector forecast to cut 377 jobs, while the **Information** supersector could see a 21.63 percentreduction in its own workforce. *Paper Manufacturing* is predicted to be the top declining industry, losing 356 jobs, 13.36 percent of its workforce. *Broadcasting (except Internet)* is estimated to be the fastest declining industry, cutting its small area workforce by 36.36 percent.

Southeast Arkansas WDA employment is expected to increase by 1.93 percent between 2020 and 2030, the slowest WDA in the state. Of the 8,785 job openings projected to be available annually, 3,451 would be from employees leaving the workforce, 5,184 from employees changing jobs, and 150 from growth and expansion. **Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations** is predicted to be the top and fastest growing major group, with a gain of 1,112 new jobs, a 24.15 percent increase.

*Activities and Education* is slated to increase staffing by 69.23 percent, becoming the fastest growing occupation in the area. On the negative side of the economy, **Office and Administrative Support Occupations** is expected to be the top declining major group, losing an estimated 467 jobs, 5.92 percent of its workforce. The **Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations** major group could decline slightly faster at a rate of 5.99 percent. *Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers* is predicted to be the top declining occupation, with a loss of 243, while Switchboard Operators, Including Answering Service is estimated to lose a third of its workforce to become the fastest declining occupation.

In order to meet the demands of employers in the SEAWDA, efforts have been made to develop a strong business services team in the area. The program provider now employs a Business Services professional who is diligently training and working with local businesses to assess needs and challenges. Over sixty new employers have been engaged in a WIOA business services activity, ranging from outreach meetings to participating as a work experience worksite, to hiring events, to having discussions on implementing training programs including apprenticeships to address skills gaps and workforce issues in Southeast. In addition, the team is now using Arkansas Job Link to track and record contacts made with local businesses.

# Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Area

## 2020-2030 Industry Projections by Major Division

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **NAICS Code** | **NAICS Title** | **2020 Estimated Employment** | **2030 Projected Employment** | **Numeric Change** | **Percent Change** |
| **000000** | **TOTAL ALL INDUSTRIES** | **77,773** | **79,277** | **1,504** | **1.93%** |
| 006010 | Self Employed Workers, All Jobs | 6,218 | 5,790 | -428 | -6.88% |
| 101000 | Goods Producing | 19,327 | 19,094 | -233 | -1.21% |
| **101100** | **NATURAL RESOURCES AND MINING** | **3,510** | **3,718** | **208** | **5.93%** |
| 110000 | Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting | 3,452 | 3,659 | 207 | 6.00% |
| 210000 | Mining | 58 | 59 | 1 | 1.72% |
| **101200** | **CONSTRUCTION** | **2,047** | **1,983** | **-64** | **-3.13%** |
| **101300** | **MANUFACTURING** | **13,770** | **13,393** | **-377** | **-2.74%** |
|  | **Non-Durable Goods Manufacturing** | **7,959** | **7,649** | **-310** | **-3.89%** |
|  | **Durable Goods Manufacturing** | **5,811** | **5,744** | **-67** | **-1.15%** |
| 102000 | Services Providing | 52,228 | 54,393 | 2,165 | 4.15% |
| **102100** | **TRADE, TRANSPORTATION, AND UTILITIES** | **12,291** | **12,293** | **2** | **0.02%** |
| 420000 | Wholesale Trade | 1,849 | 2,014 | 165 | 8.92% |
| 440000 | Retail Trade | 7,292 | 6,955 | -337 | -4.62% |
| 480000 | Transportation and Warehousing | 2,611 | 2,784 | 173 | 6.63% |
| 220000 | Utilities | 539 | 540 | 1 | 0.19% |
| **102200** | **INFORMATION** | **245** | **192** | **-53** | **-21.63%** |
| **102300** | **FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES** | **2,510** | **2,506** | **-4** | **-0.16%** |
| 520000 | Finance and Insurance | 1,907 | 1,903 | -4 | -0.21% |
| 530000 | Real Estate and Rental and Leasing | 603 | 603 | 0 | 0.00% |
| **102400** | **PROFESSIONAL AND BUSINESS SERVICES** | **3,349** | **3,814** | **465** | **13.88%** |
| 540000 | Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services | 966 | 1,138 | 172 | 17.81% |
| 550000 | Management of Companies and Enterprises | 341 | 329 | -12 | -3.52% |
| 560000 | Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services | 2,042 | 2,347 | 305 | 14.94% |
| **102500** | **EDUCATION AND HEALTH SERVICES** | **17,632** | **17,706** | **74** | **0.42%** |
| 610000 | Educational Services | 7,073 | 6,947 | -126 | -1.78% |
| 620000 | Health Care and Social Assistance | 10,559 | 10,759 | 200 | 1.89% |
| **102600** | **LEISURE AND HOSPITALITY** | **4,732** | **6,171** | **1,439** | **30.41%** |
| 710000 | Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation | 634 | 990 | 356 | 56.15% |
| 720000 | Accommodation and Food Services | 4,098 | 5,181 | 1,083 | 26.43% |
| **102700** | **OTHER SERVICES (EXCEPT GOVERNMENT)** | **2,795** | **3,396** | **601** | **21.50%** |
| **102800** | **GOVERNMENT** | **8,674** | **8,315** | **-359** | **-4.14%** |

**Top 10 Growing Industries Ranked by Net Growth**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **NAICS Code** | **NAICS Title** | **2020 Estimated Employment** | **2030 Projected Employment** | **Numeric Change** | **Percent Change** |
| **722000** | **Food Services and Drinking Places** | **3,714** | **4,777** | **1,063** | **28.62%** |
| **813000** | **Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Professional, and Similar Organizations** | **1,483** | **2,261** | **778** | **52.46%** |
| **624000** | **Social Assistance** | **2,652** | **3,024** | **372** | **14.03%** |
| **561000** | **Administrative and Support Services** | **1,955** | **2,260** | **305** | **15.60%** |
| **311000** | **Food Manufacturing** | **3,789** | **4,012** | **223** | **5.89%** |
| **424000** | **Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods** | **963** | **1,143** | **180** | **18.69%** |
| **111000** | **Crop Production** | **1,121** | **1,294** | **173** | **15.43%** |
| **541000** | **Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services** | **966** | **1,138** | **172** | **17.81%** |
| **493000** | **Warehousing and Storage** | **607** | **703** | **96** | **15.82%** |
| **484000** | **Truck Transportation** | **791** | **862** | **71** | **8.98%** |

**Top 10 Fastest Growing Industries Ranked by Percent Growth (Minimum Employment of 25)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **NAICS**  **Code** | **NAICS Title** | **2020**  **Estimated Employment** | **2030**  **Projected Employment** | **Numeric Change** | **Percent Change** |
| **813000** | **Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Professional, and Similar Organizations** | **1,483** | **2,261** | **778** | **52.46%** |
| **722000** | **Food Services and Drinking Places** | **3,714** | **4,777** | **1,063** | **28.62%** |
| **424000** | **Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods** | **963** | **1,143** | **180** | **18.69%** |
| **541000** | **Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services** | **966** | **1,138** | **172** | **17.81%** |
| **493000** | **Warehousing and Storage** | **607** | **703** | **96** | **15.82%** |
| **561000** | **Administrative and Support Services** | **1,955** | **2,260** | **305** | **15.60%** |
| **111000** | **Crop Production** | **1,121** | **1,294** | **173** | **15.43%** |
| **488000** | **Support Activities for Transportation** | **351** | **404** | **53** | **15.10%** |
| **624000** | **Social Assistance** | **2,652** | **3,024** | **372** | **14.03%** |
| **484000** | **Truck Transportation** | **791** | **862** | **71** | **8.98%** |

**Top 5 Declining Industries Ranked by Percent Growth (Bottom Five)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **NAICS**  **Code** | **NAICS Title** | **2020**  **Estimated Employment** | **2030**  **Projected Employment** | **Numeric Change** | **Percent Change** |
| **322000** | **Paper Manufacturing** | **2,664** | **2,308** | **-356** | **-13.36%** |
| **999100** | **Federal Government, Excluding Post Office** | **1,577** | **1,371** | **-206** | **-13.06%** |
| **814000** | **Private Households** | **490** | **317** | **-173** | **-35.31%** |
| **452000** | **General Merchandise Stores** | **2,176** | **2,023** | **-153** | **-7.03%** |
| **611000** | **Educational Services** | **7,073** | **6,947** | **-126** | **-1.78%** |

**Top 5 Declining Industries Ranked by Percent Growth (Bottom Five)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **NAICS Code** | **NAICS Title** | **2020 Estimated Employment** | **2030 Projected Employment** | **Numeric Change** | **Percent Change** |
| **515000** | **Broadcasting (except Internet)** | **22** | **14** | **-8** | **-36.36%** |
| **814000** | **Private Households** | **490** | **317** | **-173** | **-35.31%** |
| **517000** | **Telecommunications** | **126** | **93** | **-33** | **-26.19%** |
| **443000** | **Electronics and Appliance Stores** | **103** | **78** | **-25** | **-24.27%** |
| **491100** | **Postal Service** | **343** | **271** | **-72** | **-20.99%** |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **SOC Code** | **SOC Title** | **2020 Estimated Employment** | **2030 Prejected Employment** | **Numeric Change** | **Percent Change** | **Annual Exits** | **Annual Transfers** | **Annual Change** | **Total Annual Openings** |
| **00-0000** | **Total, All Occupations** | **77,773** | **79,277** | **1,504** | **1.93%** | **3,451** | **5,184** | **150** | **8,785** |
| **11-0000** | **Management Occupations** | **7,224** | **7,170** | **-54** | **-0.75%** | **304** | **320** | **-5** | **619** |
| **13-0000** | **Business and Financial Operations Occupations** | **2,249** | **2,380** | **131** | **5.82%** | **63** | **132** | **13** | **208** |
| **15-0000** | **Computer and Mathematical Occupations** | **432** | **433** | **1** | **0.23%** | **8** | **22** | **0** | **30** |
| **17-0000** | **Architecture and Engineering Occupations** | **524** | **533** | **9** | **1.72%** | **13** | **26** | **1** | **40** |
| **19-0000** | **Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations** | **651** | **612** | **-39** | **-5.99%** | **12** | **47** | **-4** | **55** |
| **21-0000** | **Community and Social Service Occupations** | **1,674** | **2,056** | **382** | **22.82%** | **67** | **119** | **38** | **224** |
| **23-0000** | **Legal Occupations** | **236** | **265** | **29** | **12.29%** | **7** | **10** | **3** | **20** |
| **25-0000** | **Education, Training, and Library Occupations** | **4,841** | **4,831** | **-10** | **-0.21%** | **189** | **214** | **-1** | **402** |
| **27-0000** | **Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations** | **318** | **379** | **61** | **19.18%** | **15** | **22** | **6** | **43** |
| **29-0000** | **Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations** | **4,235** | **4,245** | **10** | **0.24%** | **111** | **132** | **1** | **244** |
| **31-0000** | **Healthcare Support Occupations** | **3,888** | **4,202** | **314** | **8.08%** | **248** | **240** | **31** | **519** |
| **33-0000** | **Protective Service Occupations** | **3,026** | **2,938** | **-88** | **-2.91%** | **111** | **166** | **-9** | **268** |
| **35-0000** | **Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations** | **4,605** | **5,717** | **1,112** | **24.15%** | **404** | **518** | **111** | **1,033** |
| **37-0000** | **Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations** | **2,152** | **2,264** | **112** | **5.20%** | **127** | **161** | **11** | **299** |
| **39-0000** | **Personal Care and Service Occupations** | **1,564** | **1,588** | **24** | **1.53%** | **100** | **121** | **2** | **223** |
| **41-0000** | **Sales and Related Occupations** | **6,110** | **5,877** | **-233** | **-3.81%** | **317** | **476** | **-23** | **770** |
| **43-0000** | **Office and Administrative Support Occupations** | **7,891** | **7,424** | **-467** | **-5.92%** | **360** | **463** | **-47** | **776** |
| **45-0000** | **Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations** | **2,534** | **2,639** | **105** | **4.14%** | **104** | **292** | **10** | **406** |
| **47-0000** | **Construction and Extraction Occupations** | **2,535** | **2,492** | **-43** | **-1.70%** | **77** | **175** | **-4** | **248** |
| **49-0000** | **Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations** | **3,907** | **4,042** | **135** | **3.46%** | **125** | **245** | **14** | **384** |
| **51-0000** | **Production Occupations** | **9,693** | **9,269** | **-424** | **-4.37%** | **349** | **687** | **-42** | **994** |
| **53-0000** | **Transportation and Material Moving Occupations** | **7,484** | **7,921** | **437** | **5.84%** | **339** | **595** | **44** | **978** |

**Top 10 Growing Occupations Ranked by Net Growth**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **SOC Code** | **SOC Titel** | **2020 Estimated Employment** | **2030 Prejected Employment** | **Numeric Change** | **Percent Change** | **Annual Exits** | **Annual Transfers** | **Annual Change** | **Total Annual Openings** |
| **35-3023** | **Fast Food and Counter Workers** | **2,170** | **2,712** | **542** | **24.98%** | **237** | **258** | **54** | **549** |
| **31-1120** | **Home Health and Personal Care Aides** | **2,124** | **2,465** | **341** | **16.05%** | **147** | **130** | **34** | **311** |
| **21-2011** | **Clergy** | **384** | **624** | **240** | **62.50%** | **21** | **29** | **24** | **74** |
| **35-2014** | **Cooks, Restaurant** | **381** | **620** | **239** | **62.73%** | **30** | **43** | **24** | **97** |
| **53-3032** | **Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers** | **1,342** | **1,468** | **126** | **9.39%** | **58** | **95** | **13** | **166** |
| **35-3031** | **Waiters and Waitresses** | **379** | **495** | **116** | **30.61%** | **32** | **52** | **12** | **96** |
| **37-2011** | **Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners** | **1,018** | **1,107** | **89** | **8.74%** | **66** | **74** | **9** | **149** |
| **53-7062** | **Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand** | **1,279** | **1,352** | **73** | **5.71%** | **58** | **114** | **7** | **179** |
| **45-2093** | **Farmworkers, Farm, Ranch, and Aquacultural Animals** | **391** | **460** | **69** | **17.65%** | **18** | **49** | **7** | **74** |
| **53-7051** | **Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators** | **1,002** | **1,068** | **66** | **6.59%** | **31** | **79** | **7** | **117** |

**Top 10 Fastest Growing Occupations Ranked by Percent Growth (Minimum Employment of 25)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **SOC Code** | **SOC Title** | **2020 Estimated Employment** | **2030 Prejected Employment** | **Numeric Change** | **Percent Change** | **Annual Exits** | **Annual Transfers** | **Annual Change** | **Total Annual Openings** |
| **21-2021** | **Directors, Religious Activities and Education** | **91** | **154** | **63** | **69.23%** | **5** | **9** | **6** | **20** |
| **27-2042** | **Musicians and Singers** | **58** | **97** | **39** | **67.24%** | **5** | **4** | **4** | **13** |
| **35-2014** | **Cooks, Restaurant** | **381** | **620** | **239** | **62.73%** | **30** | **43** | **24** | **97** |
| **21-2011** | **Clergy** | **384** | **624** | **240** | **62.50%** | **21** | **29** | **24** | **74** |
| **13-1131** | **Fundraisers** | **31** | **44** | **13** | **41.94%** | **1** | **2** | **1** | **4** |
| **29-1171** | **Nurse Practitioners** | **95** | **126** | **31** | **32.63%** | **2** | **4** | **3** | **9** |
| **35-3031** | **Waiters and Waitresses** | **379** | **495** | **116** | **30.61%** | **32** | **52** | **12** | **96** |
| **11-3010** | **Administrative Services and Facilities Managers** | **119** | **155** | **36** | **30.25%** | **4** | **7** | **4** | **15** |
| **31-9096** | **Veterinary Assistants and Laboratory Animal Caretakers** | **47** | **60** | **13** | **27.66%** | **3** | **6** | **1** | **10** |
| **35-3023** | **Fast Food and Counter Workers** | **2,170** | **2,712** | **542** | **24.98%** | **237** | **258** | **54** | **549** |

**Top 10 Occupations Ranked by Annual Exits**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **SOC Code** | **SOC Title** | **2020 Estimated Employment** | **2030 Prejected Employment** | **Numeric Change** | **Percent Change** | **Annual Exits** | **Annual Transfers** | **Annual Change** | **Total Annual Openings** |
| **35-3023** | **Fast Food and Counter Workers** | **2,170** | **2,712** | **542** | **24.98%** | **237** | **258** | **54** | **549** |
| **11-9013** | **Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers** | **3,710** | **3,467** | **-243** | **-6.55%** | **221** | **125** | **-24** | **322** |
| **31-1120** | **Home Health and Personal Care Aides** | **2,124** | **2,465** | **341** | **16.05%** | **147** | **130** | **34** | **311** |
| **41-2011** | **Cashiers** | **1,447** | **1,341** | **-106** | **-7.33%** | **119** | **134** | **-11** | **242** |
| **41-2031** | **Retail Salespersons** | **1,874** | **1,790** | **-84** | **-4.48%** | **102** | **151** | **-8** | **245** |
| **43-9061** | **Office Clerks, General** | **1,427** | **1,340** | **-87** | **-6.10%** | **76** | **82** | **-9** | **149** |
| **37-2011** | **Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners** | **1,018** | **1,107** | **89** | **8.74%** | **66** | **74** | **9** | **149** |
| **33-3012** | **Correctional Officers and Jailers** | **1,752** | **1,641** | **-111** | **-6.34%** | **64** | **92** | **-11** | **145** |
| **53-3032** | **Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers** | **1,342** | **1,468** | **126** | **9.39%** | **58** | **95** | **13** | **166** |
| **53-7062** | **Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand** | **1,279** | **1,352** | **73** | **5.71%** | **58** | **114** | **7** | **179** |

**Top 10 Occupations Ranked by Annual Transfers**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **SOC Code** | **SOC Title** | **2020 Estimated Employment** | **2030 Prejected Employment** | **Numeric Change** | **Percent Change** | **Annual Exits** | **Annual Transfers** | **Annual Change** | **Total Annual Openings** |
| **35-3023** | **Fast Food and Counter Workers** | **2,170** | **2,712** | **542** | **24.98%** | **237** | **258** | **54** | **549** |
| **41-2031** | **Retail Salespersons** | **1,874** | **1,790** | **-84** | **-4.48%** | **102** | **151** | **-8** | **245** |
| **41-2011** | **Cashiers** | **1,447** | **1,341** | **-106** | **-7.33%** | **119** | **134** | **-11** | **242** |
| **31-1120** | **Home Health and Personal Care Aides** | **2,124** | **2,465** | **341** | **16.05%** | **147** | **130** | **34** | **311** |
| **11-9013** | **Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers** | **3,710** | **3,467** | **-243** | **-6.55%** | **221** | **125** | **-24** | **322** |
| **53-7062** | **Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand** | **1,279** | **1,352** | **73** | **5.71%** | **58** | **114** | **7** | **179** |
| **53-3032** | **Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers** | **1,342** | **1,468** | **126** | **9.39%** | **58** | **95** | **13** | **166** |
| **53-7065** | **Stockers and Order Fillers** | **955** | **999** | **44** | **4.61%** | **56** | **95** | **4** | **155** |
| **33-3012** | **Correctional Officers and Jailers** | **1,752** | **1,641** | **-111** | **-6.34%** | **64** | **92** | **-11** | **145** |
| **43-9061** | **Office Clerks, General** | **1,427** | **1,340** | **-87** | **-6.10%** | **76** | **82** | **-9** | **149** |

**Top 10 Occupations Ranked by Annual Openings**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **SOC Code** | **SOC Title** | **2020 Estimated Employment** | **2030 Prejected Employment** | **Numeric Change** | **Percent Change** | **Annual Exits** | **Annual Transfers** | **Annual Change** | **Total Annual Openings** |
| **35-3023** | **Fast Food and Counter Workers** | **2,170** | **2,712** | **542** | **24.98%** | **237** | **258** | **54** | **549** |
| **11-9013** | **Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers** | **3,710** | **3,467** | **-243** | **-6.55%** | **221** | **125** | **-24** | **322** |
| **31-1120** | **Home Health and Personal Care Aides** | **2,124** | **2,465** | **341** | **16.05%** | **147** | **130** | **34** | **311** |
| **41-2031** | **Retail Salespersons** | **1,874** | **1,790** | **-84** | **-4.48%** | **102** | **151** | **-8** | **245** |
| **41-2011** | **Cashiers** | **1,447** | **1,341** | **-106** | **-7.33%** | **119** | **134** | **-11** | **242** |
| **53-7062** | **Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand** | **1,279** | **1,352** | **73** | **5.71%** | **58** | **114** | **7** | **179** |
| **53-3032** | **Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers** | **1,342** | **1,468** | **126** | **9.39%** | **58** | **95** | **13** | **166** |
| **53-7065** | **Stockers and Order Fillers** | **955** | **999** | **44** | **4.61%** | **56** | **95** | **4** | **155** |
| **37-2011** | **Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners** | **1,018** | **1,107** | **89** | **8.74%** | **66** | **74** | **9** | **149** |
| **43-9061** | **Office Clerks, General** | **1,427** | **1,340** | **-87** | **-6.10%** | **76** | **82** | **-9** | **149** |

**Top 5 Declining Occupations Ranked by Net Growth (Bottom Five)**

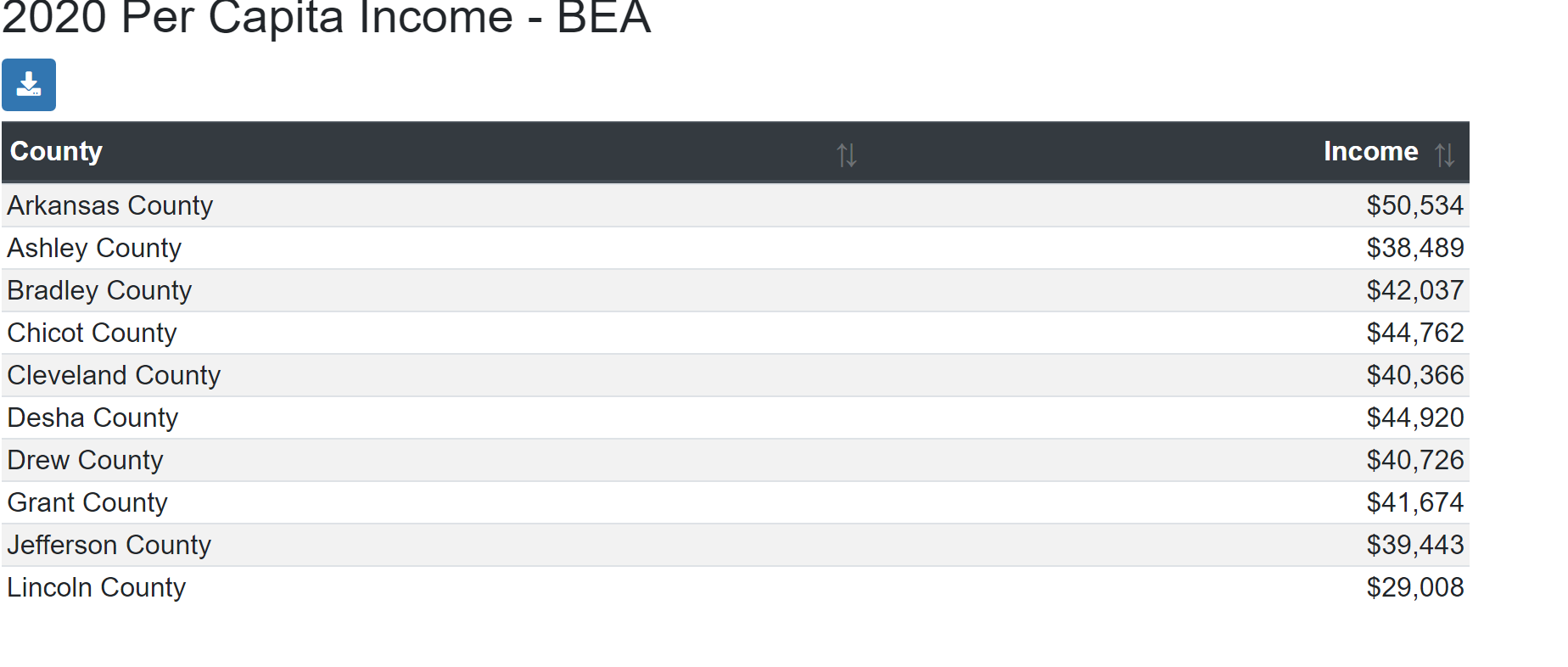
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **SOC Code** | **SOC Title** | **2020 Estimated Employment** | **2030 Prejected Employment** | **Numeric Change** | **Percent Change** | **Annual Exits** | **Annual Transfers** | **Annual Change** | **Total Annual Openings** |
| **11-9013** | **Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers** | **3,710** | **3,467** | **-243** | **-6.55%** | **221** | **125** | **-24** | **322** |
| **33-3012** | **Correctional Officers and Jailers** | **1,752** | **1,641** | **-111** | **-6.34%** | **64** | **92** | **-11** | **145** |
| **41-2011** | **Cashiers** | **1,447** | **1,341** | **-106** | **-7.33%** | **119** | **134** | **-11** | **242** |
| **41-1011** | **First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers** | **1,047** | **953** | **-94** | **-8.98%** | **35** | **69** | **-9** | **95** |
| **43-9061** | **Office Clerks, General** | **1,427** | **1,340** | **-87** | **-6.10%** | **76** | **82** | **-9** | **149** |

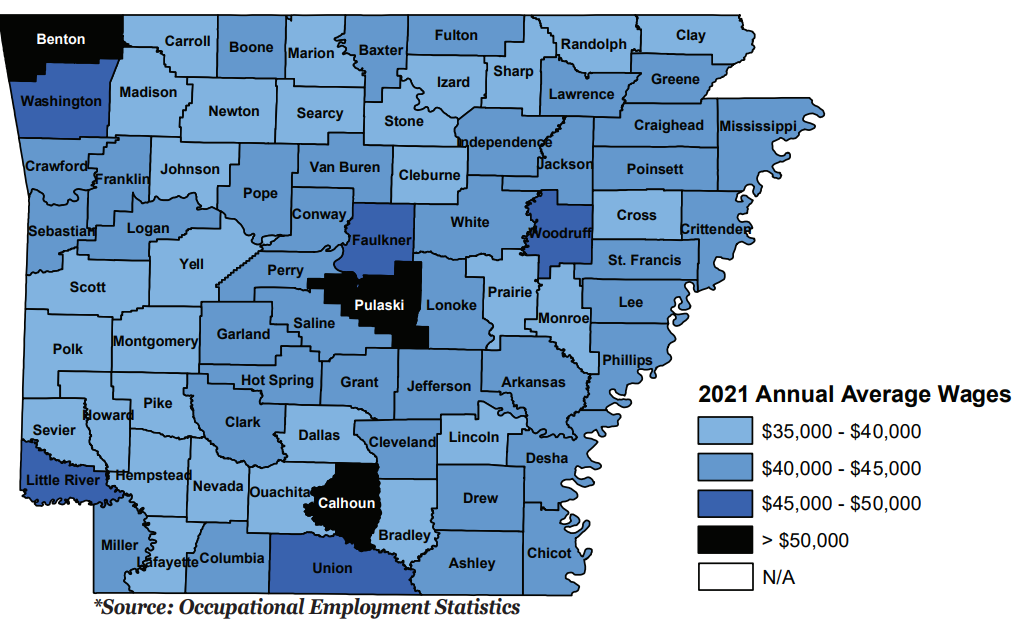
**Top 5 Fastest Declining Occupations Ranked by Percent Growth (Minimum Decline of 5)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **SOC Code** | **SOC Title** | **2020 Estimated Employment** | **2030 Prejected Employment** | **Numeric Change** | **Percent Change** | **Annual Exits** | **Annual Transfers** | **Annual Change** | **Total Annual Openings** |
| **43-2011** | **Switchboard Operators, Including Answering Service** | **18** | **12** | **-6** | **-33.33%** | **1** | **1** | **-1** | **1** |
| **31-9094** | **Medical Transcriptionists** | **21** | **15** | **-6** | **-28.57%** | **1** | **2** | **-1** | **2** |
| **51-4021** | **Extruding and Drawing Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal and Plastic** | **101** | **79** | **-22** | **-21.78%** | **3** | **6** | **-2** | **7** |
| **43-5051** | **Postal Service Clerks** | **85** | **67** | **-18** | **-21.18%** | **4** | **3** | **-2** | **5** |
| **43-5052** | **Postal Service Mail Carriers** | **221** | **175** | **-46** | **-20.81%** | **7** | **7** | **-5** | **9** |

Source (All Charts): [LT-LWDA-20-30.pdf (arkansas.gov)](https://www.discover.arkansas.gov/_docs/Publications/Projections/2018-2028/LT-LWDA-18-28.pdf)

State of Arkansas Workforce Development Areas-Longterm Industry and Occupational Projections: 2020-2030 (Pgs. 85-90)

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Source: Discover.arkansas.gov Labor Market Report- September 2023

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

One of the greatest challenges facing Southeast's workforce is the fact that it has one of the lower levels of education in the state. The Southeast region has a disappointing lack of Adults, aged 25 or older, with more than a High School diploma. Armed only with a high school diploma, job seekers are hard pressed to meet the employers' needs. Job seekers must receive hands on technical training in a broad sense.

Historically, the Southeast region has maintained a population where 39 % have at least a High School diploma; 4.3% have an Associate’s degree; 10.2% a Bachelor's degree and 4.4% Graduate or Professional degree. If the projections are accurate, the Southeast region will remain on the lower end of the higher paying occupations.

Southeast, like many other rural areas across the country, are teetering on the emergence of area widely diverse manufacturing opportunities and would be remiss to center future possibilities on past shortcomings.

The most common skill gap is not isolated to Southeast Arkansas and has been echoed nationally for decades. Parents no longer teach soft skills in the home. The situation is made worse in homes where generational dependence on welfare is the norm. It is unfair to place the burden on secondary schools who battle to keep students engaged. It is also unreasonable to expect employers to hire individuals who lack soft skills, so the problem will have to be addressed by training programs. Workforce programs, educational institutions, and training providers must collaborate to address these skills gaps and deficiencies. Employers must be engaged to identify their needs and to provide jobs to individuals working through training programs. Government must be engaged to make and change policies that will align with new training designs that meet the needs and challenges of jobseekers.

**Educational and Skill Levels of the Southeast Workforce**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Subject** | **Population 18 to 24 years** | **Less than high school graduate** | | **High school graduate**  **(includes equivalency), no college** | | **Some college or associate's degree** | | **Bachelor's degree or higher** | |
| **Arkansas** | 286,456 | 38,318 | 13.40% | 93,821 | 32.80% | 132,402 | 46.20% | 21,915 | 7.70% |
| **Arkansas County,**  **Arkansas** | 1264 | 138 | 10.90% | 376 | 29.70% | 691 | 54.70% | 59 | 47.00% |
| **Ashley County, Arkansas** | 1509 | 247 | 16.4% | 661 | 43.8% | 533 | 35.3% | 68 | 4.5% |
| **Bradley**  **County,**  **Arkansas** | 732 | 275 | 37.6% | 267 | 36.5& | 140 | 19.1% | 50 | 6.8% |
| **Chicot County, Arkansas** | 732 | 275 | 37.6% | 267 | 36.5% | 140 | 19.1% | 50 | 6.8% |
| **Cleveland**  **County,**  **Arkansas** | 528 | 114 | 21.6% | 234 | 44.3% | 161 | 30.5% | 19 | 3.6% |
| **Desha County, Arkansas** | 827 | 67 | 8.1% | 430 | 52.0% | 257 | 31.1% | 73 | 8.8% |
| **Drew County, Arkansas** | 2518 | 177 | 7.0% | 561 | 22.3% | 1652 | 65.2% | 128 | 5.1% |
| **Grant**  **County,**  **Arkansas** | 1306 | 170 | 13.0% | 705 | 54.0 | 408 | 31.2 | 23 | 1.8 |
| **Jefferson County, Arkansas** | 6107 | 363 | 5.9% | 3117 | 51.0% | 2588 | 42.4% | 92 | 8.8% |
| **Lincoln County, Arkansas** | 1042 | 329 | 31.6% | 387 | 37.1% | 234 | 22.5% | 92 | 8.8% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Subject** | **Population 25 years and over** | **Associate's degree** | | **Bachelor's degree** | | **Graduate or professional degree** | |
| **Arkansas** | 1,985,770 | 132,221 | 6.70% | 280,677 | 14.10% | 156,751 | 7.90% |
| **Arkansas County** | 11,988 | 1423 | 11.90% | 1340 | 11.20% | 647 | 5.40% |
| **Ashley County** | 13,411 | 795 | 5.9% | 1223 | 9.1% | 389 | 2.9% |
| **Bradley County** | 7251 | 506 | 7.0% | 644 | 8.9% | 264 | 3.6% |
| **Chicot County** | 7114 | 359 | 5.0% | 737 | 10.4% | 313 | 4.4% |
| **Cleveland County** | 5531 | 293 | 5.3% | 607 | 11.0% | 317 | 5.7% |
| **Desha County** | 7728 | 292 | 3.8% | 746 | 9.7% | 311 | 4.0% |
| **Drew County** | 11170 | 683 | 6.1% | 1703 | 15.2% | 949 | 8.5% |
| **Grant County** | 12,554 | 924 | 7.4% | 1648 | 13.1% | 6 | 4.8% |
| **Jefferson County** | 45,337 | 1971 | 4.30% | 7908 | 17.40% | 4310 | 9.50% |
| **Lincoln County** | 9871 | 452 | 4.6% | 609 | 6.2% | 253 | 2.6% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Subject** | **Population 25 years and over** | **Less than 9th grade** | | **9th to 12th grade, no diploma** | | **High school graduate**  **(includes equivalency), no college** | | **Some college, no degree** | |
| **Arkansas** | 1,985,770 | 103,458 | 5.20% | 182,659 | 9.20% | 681,486 | 34.30% | 448,518 | 22.60% |
| **Arkansas County** | 11,988 | 688 | 5.60% | 928 | 7.70% | 5020 | 41.90% | 1962 | 16.40% |
| **Ashley County** | 13,411 | 768 | 5.7% | 1220 | 9.1% | 6823 | 50.9% | 2193 | 16.4% |
| **Bradley County** | 7251 | 409 | 5.6% | 742 | 10.2% | 3111 | 42.9% | 1575 | 21.7% |
| **Chicot County** | 7114 | 511 | 7.2% | 1026 | 14.4% | 2725 | 38.3 | 1443 | 20.3% |
| **Cleveland County** | 5531 | 67 | 1.2% | 447 | 8.1 | 2584 | 46.7 | 1216 | 22.0% |
| **Desha County** | 7728 | 721 | 9.3% | 756 | 9.8% | 3415 | 44.2% | 1487 | 19.2% |
| **Drew County** | 11,170 | 462 | 4.1% | 994 | 8.9% | 4090 | 36.6% | 2289 | 20.5% |
| **Grant County** | 12,554 | 272 | 2.2% | 783 | 6.2% | 5351 | 42.6% | 2969 | 23.6% |
| **Jefferson County** | 45,337 | 1698 | 5.90% | 3427 | 7.6% | 16,927 | 37.30% | 9,096 | 20.21% |
| **Lincoln County** | 9871 | 630 | 6.4% | 1225 | 12.4% | 4753 | 48.2% | 1949 | 19.7% |

* 1. **Provide an analysis of the local 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)(l)(C)] and [proposed 20 CFR 679.560(a)]**

Southeast Arkansas saw a decrease in the labor force of 418 to 76,542 from 2021 to 2022, but employment increased by 249 to 72,999 for the same time period. Both the labor force and employment have decreased since 2018 by 4,843 and 4,551 respectively. Unemployment decreased by 667 to 3,543 from 2021 to 2022 and the unemployment rate decreased to 4.6 percent in 2022. After starting at 4.9 percent in January 2023, the unemployment rate fluctuated, ultimately settling to 4.2 percent in July 2023. The ratio of aged persons to youth is expected to continue to rise. This increase in the number and proportion of aged persons has big implications for health and social services, education, available workforce, and other areas. Individuals with disabilities have an 84 percent employment rate and face the reality of earning inadequate incomes. Less than 38 percent of Southeast Arkansas population ages 18 to 24 have a high school diploma.

Cashiers were estimated to have the most employees in Southeast Arkansas with 1,940 employed in 2022 with an average wage of $25,113. Fast Food and Counter Workers was the second largest occupation with 1,800 employed, earning an average wage of $24,974. General and Operations Managers, with an estimated employment of 1,460, had the highest average wage of the 10 largest occupations, earning $77,119 annually. Physicians, All Other topped the Occupations Paying the Most list with an annual salary of $249,514. Dentists, General, with an average annual salary of $200,803, ranked second on the Occupations Paying the Most list. The entry wage estimate for employers of all sizes was $25,818 for 2022. The median wage estimate for employers with 250-499 employees was $37,449, while wages for experienced workers averaged $53,793 for employers in all size categories. Of the 65,620 estimated employees in the area with hourly wage data, 8,904 made less than $12 an hour while 13,972 made $17 to $21.99 an hour. Employees making more than $27 an hour totaled 12,775.

Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods is projected to be the top and fastest growing industry in Southeast Arkansas, increasing its workforce by 175 new jobs, a 17.41 percent gain. On the negative side of the local economy, Paper Manufacturing could lose 266 employees, dropping 10.95 percent of its workforce. Waste Management and Remediation Service is set to be the fastest declining industry, cutting its workforce by 26.51 percent, moving from 83 jobs in 2022 to 61 jobs in 2024. Leisure and Hospitality is anticipated to be the top growing super sector, adding 228 jobs between 2022 and 2024, a 4.28 percent rise in employment.

Management Analysts is projected to lead Southeast Arkansas in numeric change, growing by 64 jobs, reaching an employment level of 374. Securities, Commodities, and Financial Services Sales Agents is predicted to be the fastest growing occupation, increasing its workforce by 37.29 percent. On the reverse side of the labor market, Paper Goods Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders is anticipated to be the top and fastest declining occupation, losing 58 jobs, or 10.88 percent of its workforce. Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations is estimated to be the top growing major group during the 2022-2024 projection period, with 122 new jobs, moving employment 2.48 percent to 5,036.

**Southeast Arkansas LWDA 2018-2022 Labor Force/Employment**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** | **2022** |
| Labor Force | 81,385 | 81,524 | 79,951 | 76,960 | 76,542 |
| Employment | 77,550 | 77,671 | 74,352 | 72,750 | 72,999 |
| Unemployment | 3,835 | 3,853 | 5,599 | 4,210 | 3,543 |
| Unemployment Rate | 4.7% | 4.7% | 7.0% | 5.5% | 4.6% |

*Source: Arkansas Division of Workforce Services*

**December 2023 Southeast Arkansas Labor Force Statistics**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **County** | **Labor Force** | **Employed** | **Unemployed** | **Rate** |
| Arkansas | 8,969 | 8,717 | 252 | 2.8% |
| Ashley | 6,271 | 5,904 | 367 | 5.9% |
| Bradley | 3,913 | 3,733 | 180 | 4.6% |
| Chicot | 2,708 | 2,540 | 168 | 6.2% |
| Cleveland | 2,964 | 2,855 | 109 | 3.7% |
| Desha | 4,803 | 4,553 | 250 | 5.2% |
| Drew | 7,528 | 7,216 | 312 | 4.1% |
| Grant | 8,456 | 8,209 | 247 | 2.9% |
| Jefferson | 25,068 | 23,897 | 1,171 | 4.7% |
| Lincoln | 3,539 | 3,385 | 154 | 4.4% |

Source: <http://www.discover.arkansas.gov/Employment/Labor-Force-by-County>

* 1. **Provide an analysis and description of workforce development activities, including type and availability of education, training and employment activities. Include analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of such services, and the capacity to provide such services, in order to address the education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers in the region. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(l)(D)] and [20 CFR 679.560(a)]**

Southeast's workforce development activities are coordinated through the following state agencies and WIOA Core partners: Title I-B: Youth, Adult and Dislocated Workers Program, the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services (ADWS) which includes Adult Education, AR Rehabilitation Services, and the Division of Services for the Blind. These agencies are responsible for all the core and non-core programs included in the combined regional and local plan. These agencies are also represented on the local workforce development board.

Arkansas Workforce Centers are at the forefront of the workforce activities and represent Southeast's version of the American Jobs Center. Southeast has five workforce centers spread across the region providing access to many Arkansans. One comprehensive center is located in Pine Bluff and four affiliate centers are located in Monticello, Dumas, Crossett and Lake Village. Satellite centers are open one day a week in the following locations: Dewitt, Stuttgart, and Sheridan. Satellite Centers are offices located at a local community college where Career Advisors are available on a part-time basis to provide WIOA services such as basic career services, job searches, and training assistance in that area to those who cannot come into the local workforce center.

The Arkansas Workforce Centers are overseen by the local workforce development board. The local board is comprised of representatives of local businesses, labor, partner agencies, and other key stakeholders to create a diverse and functional group. The board, in alignment with the States' vision, provides front line strategic implementation for state-wide initiatives in addition to their locally determined priorities. State initiatives include sector strategies, career pathway development, and delivery of standardized business services. Local priorities include layoff aversion, specific career pathway development, youth programs, targeted sector partnerships and others.

The local board has procured a one-stop operator for the daily operation of the perspective center(s) in accordance with WIOA 121(d). The Board carries out workforce activities by partnering locally though Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) to implement core, non-core, and other partner programs. Arkansas Workforce Centers are fully integrated with WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG), Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Unemployment Insurance (Ul), Adult Education and Family Literacy, Vocational Rehabilitation. Local partnerships and integration also exist in many areas with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training Programs and others.

Typical customers entering the center are engaged by an intake process that is designed to identify the needs of the individual by gathering information and then utilizing the appropriate resources for those needs. In some cases, the resources are initiated by a referral to a partner program. Customers are given solutions and next steps to their questions, barriers, and issues by connecting directly with the appropriate workforce system partner as part of this philosophy.

The Adult Education section of ADWS funds local adult education programs, community-based and/or privately-operated literacy councils, and special projects state and federal grants. The service delivery systems are diverse. Program services are provided through a variety of local entities, including public schools’ systems, community-based organizations, colleges, community colleges, technical institutes. Local programs provide adult education services such as teaching academic skills to people who function from beginning reading through a high functioning educational level and English as a Second Language (ESL). These services are free and provided in classes held in locations throughout each program's service area. Additional programs such as Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy (WAGE™) and Career Readiness Certification are also offered in educational institutions, career centers, workplaces and correctional institutions. Adult Education assists all partners through detailed assessments, individual specific remediation and preparing individuals for either the workplace or for industry specific formal training.

Division of Services for the Blind continues to support the Arkansas Workforce Centers. In the Fall of 2019, the program co-located their headquarters within the One-Stop Comprehensive Center in Pine Bluff and makes routine visits to the affiliate centers throughout the district.

**Workforce System Services - Unemployed and Underemployed**

Arkansas Workforce Centers offer the full array of career services outlined in WIOA 134(c)(2) for unemployed and underemployed jobseekers. Career services available at the centers vary because of local area inflexion and needs of particular employers and communities. Basic career services are available at all five centers throughout the Southeast region. Each center has computers, printers, copiers, printed resources, and staff to assist jobseekers. Many of the services, including Arkansas Job Link and Discover Arkansas LMI Portal, can be accessed anywhere through the internet via computer, smart phone, or tablet. Arkansas Job Link is the state job matching system and the virtual one-stop-shop where Arkansans can centralize all their career search activities. It allows jobseekers to self-enter his/her resume(s) and job search 24/7.

Arkansas Job Link also provides access to a toolbox of job search assistance links, including career exploration, training resources, self-marketing tools, Unemployment Insurance information, and additional job banks. The built-in event calendar communicates upcoming hiring events, job fairs, workshops, trainings and other workforce activities. In addition, the TorQ system, a web application that empowers job seekers to take on new jobs and career paths using a powerful, unique algorithm that gives employers and workforce professionals rock-solid skills validation for their hiring needs, serves as an extra resource for Jobseekers. The Discover Arkansas LMI Portal provides the general public with the most recent labor market information.

**Jobseeker Services**

Individualized career services within the Arkansas Workforce Centers vary across the region, but all the offices offer a full line of activities to prepare jobseekers for the modem workforce. They address many of the soft skills and technical skills training Arkansas employers require such as:

•Labor exchange services that provide labor market information to the individuals seeking services. The information is current and includes information on local, regional and national labor markets, such as: job vacancies, skills necessary to obtain the jobs, in-demand occupations and related earning potential and opportunities for advancement in those occupations

•Workforce Centers provide the following career services: outreach, intake and orientation, initial assessment, Labor exchange services, eligibility determination, referrals to programs, performance and cost information, information on unemployment insurance, financial aid information and follow-up services

•Workforce Centers and partners provide appropriate services for individuals to obtain or retain employment. These services include, but are not limited to individual employment plan (IEP), individual service strategy (ISS), career planning and counseling, comprehensive assessment, occupational skills assessment, short-term prevocational services, internship and work experience, including transitional jobs and industry partnerships, workforce preparation, out-of-area job search, English language acquisition, basic skills training, and financial literacy.

Unemployment Insurance (UI) claims are no longer handled at the local office. They are handled through the Unemployment Service Center and via the UI Hotline. Those needing to file for unemployment benefits still have access to computers located in the local office. The local office does have handouts available for UI claimants with information on how to file for unemployment, weekly claim, set up direct deposit, UI debit card information, file an appeal, and provide self-addressed envelopes to anyone needing to make repayment on an overpayment.

**Training Services**

Career services are not always enough to enable job seekers to obtain self-sufficient employment. In some instances, formal training is required. Arkansas Workforce Centers offer multiple training services such as: occupational skills training, pre-apprenticeships, registered apprenticeships, incumbent worker training, skill upgrading and retaining, entrepreneurial training, on-the-job training, customized training and adult education and family literacy activities.

Training services are funded through WIOA programs, Pell Grants, partner programs, and state and local grants, scholarships and private funds. The Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board is responsible for establishing and implementing local polices for eligibility, Individual Training Account (ITA) limits, and the identification of in-demand sectors or occupations. Through multiple initiatives and projects, Arkansas has focused training and career development activities on sector strategies /partnerships and career pathway development. The Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) has been updated pursuant to WIOA Sections 122 and 134 by Department of Workforce Services at the State level. This list ensures that Arkansans are able to make informed decisions on training providers and programs based on accurate data including completion and placement rates; labor market information; and wage expectations.

**Supportive Services**

In order to assist jobseekers in obtaining or retaining employment through career or training services, Arkansas Workforce Centers offer a variety of supportive services. The Southeast region has established supportive service policies that outlines types, eligibility, limits, etc. Examples of supportive services include, but are not limited to, childcare; transportation; tools and equipment; uniforms; travel expenses, utility assistance, rental assistance and testing fees. These services are made available as a means of rehabilitation to alleviate barriers for targeted populations. In addition to WIOA-funded supportive services, Southeast has developed relationships with community partners that provide additional assistance and other basic needs.

**Business Services**

The focal point of all workforce system activities is business and industry. These activities are taking place in the region and may include: **Access to facilities** -Use of Workforce Center facilities by a business for a variety of purposes such as meetings, trainings, orientations, interviews, etc.; **Assessments** - Any test or assortment of tests used to measure the skills, interests and/or personality traits of a jobseeker, potential employee, or current employee; **Business engagement** - Seminars, round tables, workshops, focus groups, etc.; **Business information** - Information given to a business pertaining to a variety of incentive programs or other information requested that provides a benefit to that business; **Hiring events** - A customized event for a single employer that assists with recruiting, interviewing, and hiring of one or more positions**; Job fairs**- Event for multiple employers that assists with the recruiting, interviewing, and hiring of one or more positions; **Job postings** - Staff-entered or web-entered job orders approved by staff; **Labor market information** - Information on state and local labor market conditions; industries, occupations, and characteristics of the workforce; area business identified skills needs; employer wage and benefit trends; short and long-term industry and occupational projections; worker supply and demand; and job vacancies survey results; **Rapid Response** - A variety of services to businesses that are facing restructuring and downsizing including onsite workshops for employees in transition; job placement assistance; and information on unemployment benefits; **Screening** - Any service that involves the initial evaluation of applications or resumes that assists the employer in the recruiting process**; Training and retraining** - Any service provided to a business that involves the training or retraining of current or future employees including OJTs, Incumbent Worker Training, etc.

**Mobile Units**- most aforementioned services can be provided at locations outside of Arkansas Workforce Center offices.

**Services to Persons with Disabilities**

The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services’ Vocational Rehabilitation Services section provides services to individuals with disabilities. Currently, there are significant barriers for people with disabilities in relation to attaining employment. A 2008 study (StatsRRTCl) indicated the employment rate for people with disabilities was 33.9 percent when compared to 79.1 percent for people without disabilities. Historically, there are significant barriers to the inclusion of people with disabilities into the overall strategy for economic development in Arkansas. The efforts of the Arkansas Rehabilitation Services and the Division of Services for the Blind (DSB) are leading the charge in providing targeted training and education for people with disabilities in order for them to develop the skills and abilities needed to attain competitive integrated employment in Arkansas.

**Southeast Arkansas Workforce System's Strengths and Weakness**

The strength of the Southeast Arkansas system is the availability of services throughout the predominantly rural area and a strong partnership with service agencies outside the workforce arena. The system partners have long term relationships with and are supported in the effort by the local chief elected officials and some key employers. The Southeast community tends to rally around new initiatives and ideas and take pride in their region.

The major weakness in the local system is the lack of public transportation, and an abundance of negative press leading to a far-reaching negative perception of the area's labor force. Housing proves to be an additional weakness in Southeast Arkansas. The need for broadband and internet services in our rural areas, often can be a challenge for residents and agencies seeking to serve customers in remote or satellite sites.

**Section 2: Strategic Vision and Goals**

**2.1 Describe the local board's strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment). Include goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) in order to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(l)(E)]**

The local board will strive to prepare an educated and skilled workforce through partnerships with all core partner agencies, utilizing various training efforts as: Adult Education, Registered Apprenticeship, Institutional Training, Literacy/ Workplace Training, and Work Experience, on-the-job training, and customized training.

Stronger partnerships with the two education cooperatives in the region: Southeast Arkansas Education Service Cooperative and Arkansas River Education Service Cooperative will assist with early intervention of providing services to students who have not completed secondary training but will be planning for a career. In addition, more strategic planning with leaders from community colleges and universities, with the focus on developing joint point programs designed to be tailor-made for individuals with barriers to employment, who need a non-traditional route of navigating through career pathways.

Planning cannot be done in silos. Organizations who seek the same or similar missions must come to the same table and write goals and plans together so that they align and benefit jobseekers and not complicate the process. The goal is to build upon and improve the current regional economic condition by recruiting new industry to create opportunity and supporting the growth of existing employers, in efforts to enhance the economic self-sufficiency of the citizens of Southeast Arkansas. Evidence of this goal being achieved will be the increase of employment and job retention rates for Adults and Dislocated Workers, increased credential rates form Adults, Youth, and Dislocated Workers, increased training and placement rates for Youth, which will all lead to earnings increase for all WIOA populations. Earnings increase for individuals who may have once been dependent on government assistance or unemployed or undereducated will reflect on the overall conditions of the economy of Southeast Arkansas. These goals align with performance measures negotiated for the area.

The local board will work closely with the board staff in aiding in recruitment of the Adult, Youth and Dislocated Worker populations to aid in meeting all measures set by the State. The local board recommends that Board Staff reach out to old and current training providers to encourage them to become training providers and encourage current providers maintain their performance entries into the AJLA system. By increasing providers, credential attainment will increase in Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker funding streams. Also, by increasing providers and training sites, will also aid in increasing enrollments in all funding streams too. Connecting and supporting small businesses will aid the Southeast area to attain the employment outcome measures set.

### Goals

**Strategic Goal 1**: Develop and strengthen partnerships with employers, the educational system, workforce development partners, and community-based organizations to deliver a platform that will prepare a skilled workforce for existing and new employers.

*Goal 1 Objectives*:

1. Expand employer partnerships through the Business Services Team, chambers of commerce, economic development partners and other opportunities.
2. Increase the use of all work-based learning programs as viable talent development opportunities by continuing the education and communication between partners, employers, and trainers.
3. Continue to partner with K-12 education, higher education, career and technical education, adult education, disability service providers, community-based organizations, and non-profits to understand barriers and resources available to individuals, so individuals can succeed in training programs in our region.
4. Analyze and address barriers to collaboration between state, regional, and local business services teams.

**Strategic Goal 2**: Enhance service delivery to employers and jobseekers.

*Goal 2 Objectives*:

1. Promote and fund training that leads to industry recognized credentials and certification in demand occupations through scholarships, on-the-job training, and work experiences.
2. Support career pathways development and sector strategy initiatives to meet business and industry needs.
3. Develop a common business outreach strategy with a common message that will be utilized by Northwest Workforce system partners.
4. Support the development of functional teams to enhance services.
5. Ensure a comprehensive array of services are provided to employers to meet unmet workforce needs.
6. Outline business solutions and provide training to LWDB staff and stakeholders on mobilizing resources, including peer-to-peer learning opportunities

**Strategic Goal 3**: Increase awareness of the State’s Talent Development System

Goal 3 Objectives:

1. Increase access to the workforce development system through a no wrong door approach to services throughout the system.
2. Participate in an image-building outreach campaign to educate Arkansans about the services and the career development opportunities available in Northwest Arkansas.
3. Utilize technology, including social media, to better connect jobseekers and employers with the talent development system in Northwest Arkansas. Develop partnerships with libraries and other community organizations to provide access to the workforce system via computers.

**Strategic Goal 4**: Address Skills Gap

**Goal 4** Objectives:

1. Participate in a skills and asset analysis to determine the skills gap present and resources available to solve the skills issue in Northwest Arkansas.
2. Work with partners in education at all levels to help implement a plan to close skills gaps in Northwest Arkansas. Review current job readiness standards and evaluations being used within the workforce system to find best practices that could be replicated.
3. Use labor market information provided by the Department of Workforce Services and contract with a vendor that will provide detailed labor and skills analysis as well as evaluation of post-secondary education performance to determine effectiveness of training to bridge the skills gaps.
4. Seek grants available to education and employers to fund training programs that address skills gaps.
5. Receive input from employers to address the skills shortages and identify alternative methods of recruiting and training workers, such as exploring nontraditional labor pools and methods of upskilling and offering efficient onboarding processes.

**2.2 Describe how the local board's vision and goals align with and/or supports the vision and goals for the State's workforce development system as established by the Arkansas Workforce Development Board. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(l)(E)] (See Appendix C: Transitional Planning References and Resources)**

Southeast will establish a workforce that is well educated, skilled, and working in order to keep Southeast's economy competitive in the global marketplace. The Southeast Workforce Development understands and embraces its role and responsibility in the bigger picture as established by the Arkansas Workforce Development Board. It is necessary for the Southeast local plan to align with the state plan in order to achieve uniformity and one common goal.

This will be achieved by fulfilling the following functions of the local boards :

Develop and submit a 4-year local plan for the local area in partnership with the Chief Elected Officials and consistent with WIOA sec. 108

Conduct workforce research and regional labor market analysis of Southeast Arkansas

Convene local workforce development system stakeholders to assist in the development of the local plan and identifying non-federal expertise and resources to leverage support for workforce development activities

Lead efforts to engage with a diverse range of employers and other entities in the region

Lead efforts to develop and implement career pathways within the Southeast Arkansas Workforce Area by aligning the employment, training, education, and supportive services that are needed by adults and youth, particularly individuals with barriers to employment

Lead efforts in the Southeast Arkansas Workforce Area to identify and promote proven and promising strategies and initiative for meeting the needs of employers, workers and job seekers and identify and disseminate information on proven and promising practices carried out in other local area for meeting such needs

Develop strategies for using technology to maximize the accessibility and effectiveness of local workforce development system for employers, and workers and job seekers

Conduct oversight of youth workforce investment activities, adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities, and the one-stop delivery system

Negotiate and reach agreement on local performance indications with Chief Elected Officials and the Governor

Negotiate with Chief Elected Officials and required partners on the methods for funding the infrastructure cost of one-stop centers in the Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Area

Select providers of youth workforce investment activities, providers of training services, providers of career services and One-stop operator

Work with State of Arkansas to ensure there are sufficient numbers and types of providers of career services and training services serving the local area and providing the services in a manner that maximizes consumer choice, as well as providing opportunities that lead to competitive integrated employment for individuals with disabilities

Coordinate activities with education and training providers in the Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Area

Develop a budget for the activities of the Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board, with approval of the Chief Elected Officials and consistent with the local plan and the duties of the Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board

Assess on an annual basis the physical and programmatic accessibility of all one-stop centers in the Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Area and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

**2.3 Describe how the local board's vision and goals contributes to each of the governor's goals. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(l)(E)] (See Appendix C: Transitional Planning References and Resources)**

**Strategic Goal 1: Develop an efficient partnership with employers, the educational system, workforce development partners, and community- based organizations to deliver a platform that will prepare a skilled workforce for existing and new employers.**

Goal 1 Southeast Arkansas Objectives:

* Develop employer partnerships in diverse manufacturing to support and expand manufacturing engagement.
* Identify and promote best practices (private and public) for developing and sustaining partnerships.
* Expand partnership with economic development to refine sector strategies.
* Increase the utilization of Registered Apprenticeship programs as viable talent development opportunities.
* Utilize the ACT Work-Ready Communities Platform to convene partners from education, workforce, government, business/industry and economic development.

**Strategic Goal 2: Enhance service delivery to employers and jobseekers**.

Goal 2 Southeast Arkansas Objectives:

* Develop a common intake process for jobseekers and businesses that will efficiently connect each with services available from all workforce development partner programs.
* Promote training that leads to industry recognized credentials and certification.
* Support transportable skill sets for transportable careers.
* Support career pathways development and sector strategy initiatives as a way to meet business and industry needs.
* Utilize Salesforce software to track business engagement activities.
* Utilize all avenues of communication whether it be through electronic means such as social media or printed materials.

**Strategic Goal 3: Increase awareness of the Southeast Region's Talent Development System**

Goal 3 Southeast Arkansas Objectives:

* Increase access to the workforce development system through one-stop approach to services.
* Implement a strong branding and outreach campaign that educates Arkansans about the services and the career development opportunities available in the region.
* Utilize technology, including social media and search engine optimization, to better connect jobseekers and employers with the talent development system in Arkansas.
* Cross-train all partners about services that all WIOA programs offer.
* Conduct/participate in an open house twice a year at various core partner locations in the 10 county regions. The open house event will give individuals, partners, and business leaders the opportunity to explore the various partner locations which will ultimately help each partner understand the services offered at each location.

**Strategic Goal 4: Address Skills Gaps**

Goal 4 Southeast Arkansas Objectives:

* Develop and implement an action plan to close the basic core, technical, and soft skills gaps in the Southeast region.
* Utilize the proven effectiveness of currently used job readiness standards and ensure coordination between the Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate program and the Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy (WAGE) program.

**2.4 Describe how the local board's goals relate to the achievement of federal performance accountability measures. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(l)(E)]**

For participants enrolling in educational training the goal is for the participants to complete their training and obtain their credential and measurable skills gain. These participants will also be directed toward higher paying jobs which will lead to self-sufficiency. Follow-up services will be provided to help ensure that the individual retains employment in the field, in which they were trained with hopes that employment extends beyond a year after exit. This goal also stands true for those participants receiving basic and individualized career services. Ultimately, the overall effectiveness of the system will be measured by the negotiated outcomes.

**Section 3: Local Area Partnerships and Investment Strategies**

**3.1 Taking into account the analysis described in Appendix B - Section 1, describe the local board's strategy to work with the entities that carry out the core programs to align resources available to the local area, in order to achieve the strategic vision and goals described in element 2.1. This analysis should include:**

1. **A description of the local workforce development system; include key stakeholders and entities associated with administrative and programmatic/service delivery functions. Examples include elected officials, advocacy groups, local workforce development board and committee structure, fiscal agent, operator(s), required program partners, and major contractors providing Adult/Dislocated Worker/Youth program elements. Describe respective roles and functional relationships to one another;**

The Chief Elected Officials (CEO) of the Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Area met April 11, 2024 and voted to contract with the Southeast Arkansas Economic Development District to serve as the Grant Recipient/Fiscal Agent for the Workforce Innovations and Opportunity Act.

The Chief Elected Officials of Southeast Arkansas and the Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board has entered into a Partnership Agreement which details the duties and responsibilities of each governing board. The SEAWDB, on October 18, 2023, voted to approve the Administrative Services/Board Staff Contract with SEAEDD.

The SEAWDB procured a one stop-operator, SEAEDD, which also services as program provider of WIOA Title I-B services.

The vision of the Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board is to serve as a strategic leader and conveners of local workforce development system stakeholders. The Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board partners with employers and the workforce development system to develop policies and investments that support public workforce system strategies that support regional economies, the development of effective approaches including local and regional sector partnerships and career pathways, and high quality, customer centered service delivery and service delivery approaches.

The purpose of the Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board is to:

1. Provide strategic and operational oversight in collaboration with the required and additional partners and workforce stakeholders to help develop a comprehensive and high-quality workforce development system in the local area and larger planning region;
2. Assist in the achievement of the State’s strategic and operational vision and goals as outlined in the Unified State Plan or the Combined State Plan; and
3. Maximize and continue to improve the quality of services, customer satisfaction, effectiveness of the services provided.

The board has four committees appointed by the board chair. They are: One Stop Committee, Planning Committee, Services to Persons with Disabilities Committee and Youth Committee. All required partners have been appointed by their various state agencies with a representative seat on the board. The board is comprised of other representatives from: business, workforce, education, labor unions, and government, as described in WIOA law. All parties of the Southeast system are aware of their respective roles and responsibilities under the Act and Regulations.

1. The committees shall function as follows:
2. Planning Committee
3. The Planning Committee shall draft the local plan and all alterations to the local plan.
4. The Planning Committee shall develop the local area budget with input from all standing committees.
5. The budget developed by the Planning Committee must be approved by the Board and Chief Elected Officials.
6. The Planning Committee shall review and recommend action on eligible training providers in accordance with state procedures.
7. One Stop Operations Committee
8. The One Stop Operations Committee shall be responsible for the overall design and maintenance of the one stop system.
9. It shall develop the memorandums of understanding with the various partnering agencies.
10. It shall be responsible for negotiating with the partnering agencies to leverage resources to support the system.
11. It shall be responsible for overseeing the one-stop operator and Title I-B Service Provider selection process.
12. Services to Persons with Disabilities Committee:
13. The Committee shall be responsible for the direction and oversight of services to persons with a disability with the overall program design.
14. The Committee shall review and recommend action on eligible training providers in accordance with the Americans’ with Disabilities Act and the actions of the Planning Committee.
15. The Committee shall review and recommend action on performance to the targeted population.
16. Youth Services Committee:
17. The Youth Committee shall be comprised of members of the Board and additional non-voting members as specified in the Act. The additional members shall be nominated by the Board and approved by the Chief Elected Officials.
18. It shall be responsible for the design and implementation of the youth services and activities.
19. It shall recommend to the Board the approval or disapproval of requests for funding from various providers.
20. Ad Hoc Committees shall be designated as necessary for specific purposes

The SEAWDB is also tasked with and required to perform all functions of a local workforce development board, as described in WIOA law and regulations; and as aforementioned in section 2.2 of this plan.

1. **A list of all Arkansas Workforce Centers in the local area and WIOA Title I-B offices; include address, phone numbers, and hours of operation.**

All centers are open from 8 am to 4:30 pm Monday through Thursday. 8 am to 12pm- Friday.



**AR WORKFORCE CENTER AT PINE BLUFF (Comprehensive)**

*SERVING JEFFERSON, CLEVELAND, & GRANT COUNTIES*

P.O. Box 9028, Pine Bluff, AR 71611

**1001 Tennessee St. Pine Bluff, AR 71601**

**Phone: 870. 619.4803 Fax: 870.495.2785**

**AR WORKFORCE CENTER AT DUMAS (Affiliate)**

*SERVING DESHA & ARKANSAS COUNTIES*

P.O. Box 10

**130 W. Waterman** **Dumas, AR 71639**

**Phone: 870. 619.4487** **Fax: 870.527.4598**

**AR WORKFORCE CENTER AT MONTICELLO (Affiliate)**

*SERVING DREW, BRADLEY, & LINCOLN COUNTIES*

P.O. Box 619

**477 South Main St.** **Monticello, AR 71655**

**Phone: 870.224.7075**  **Fax: 870.376.4271**

**AR WORKFORCE CENTER AT LAKE VILLAGE (Affiliate)**

*SERVING CHICOT COUNTY*

**103 Main St. Lake Village, AR 71653**

**Phone: 870. 619.4744 Fax: 870.376.4602**

**AR WORKFORCE CENTER AT CROSSETT (Affiliate)**

*SERVING ASHLEY COUNTY*

**P.O. Box 1220**

**304 North Alabama Crossett, AR 71635**

**Phone: 870. 619.4737** **Fax: 870.376.4936**



1. **An organization chart that depicts the local board, administrative and fiscal entities, and service providers. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(l)(F)]**

The Honorable Governor of the State of Arkansas

Arkansas Workforce Development Board

Chief Elected Officials of Southeast Arkansas

Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board

*(Appointed by CEOs)*

Fiscal Agent

*(Selected by CEOs)*

Administrative/Board Staff

*Selected by SEAWDB*

One Stop Operator

WIOA Title I-B Service Provider

*(Selected by SEAWDB)*

**3.2 Describe the workforce development system in the local area that identifies the programs that are included in that system and how the local board will work with the entities carrying out core and other workforce development programs to support alignment to provide services, including 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)(l)(E). [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(2)]**

**Note: The six (6) core programs identified by WIOA are: Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Adult Education and Literacy, Wagner-Peyser Program, and Vocational Rehabilitation.**

The workforce development system in Southeast Arkansas is proactive and inclusive, as evidenced by the diverse membership of the Southeast Board, which not only includes the required partner agencies, but local community-based organizations with vast experience in providing services to Veterans and persons with disabilities. Also represented on the board are individuals who represent Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education and Registered Apprenticeship Programs. The local board is partnering with UAM's Work Ready Communities project and other entities as they are identified to seamlessly align all services and opportunities available to the benefit of the jobseeker and the employers.

**3.3 Describe how the local board, 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, including 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)]**

The Southeast Workforce Development Board is committed to expanding access to services for eligible individuals. The Board's Title I Provider, under the direction of the Board, has fostered an atmosphere of coordination and cooperation between all partner agencies. This atmosphere will provide for and facilitate the co-enrollment of individuals, particularly individuals with disabilities and other barriers. Strategic efforts have been made to strengthen the lines of communication between programs. Staff of all core programs are being cross-trained and educated about services provided by each partner. Partner meetings are held on the state and local level, which provide a unified service delivery approach to addressing the needs of customers. Additionally, co-locations have increased within the Southeast region. Access of programs have been expanded due to the ease of convenience of customers coming to one location to receive multiple services. Staff of core programs are now traveling more to rural areas and non-required partner facilities to increase outcomes through outreach. As barriers are identified, partners are more equipped to share resources with customers who may qualify for supportive, intensive and basic career services.

The Board and its represented partner agencies are working with the local two- and four-year higher education institutions and the registered apprenticeship programs to develop recognized, high demand, credentials that the industry needs to be successful.

The board has also identified an underserved diverse manufacturing cluster and will be meeting to establish a sector partnership with those employers. The intention is to develop common career pathways and common industry sector credentialing that is portable, not just for the Southeast area, but for the State. The initial business engagement meeting was hosted on May 18, 2017 with the assistance of Maher and Maher.

**3.4.** **Identify and describe (for each category below) the strategies and services that are and/or will be used to:**

1. **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.**

The Business Services Team consist of local partners and business individuals.  The team meets at least once a quarter to discuss strategies to help individuals in our region to engage in the programs that are available.  When planning events (i.e.. employment and resource fairs and forums), the team looks at what events are going on in the region, how we can collaborate with local organizations, and best location for the event.  The team ensures that we advertise each event early and consistently.  Outside of general marketing of the event, the team extends personal invitations in hopes of increasing participation.  Following events, the team discuss what went well and where there can be improvements for future events.

1. **Support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses.**

The Business Services Team goal is to educate the business industry of services available to them through the Arkansas Workforce Centers. The Business Services Coordinator actively attends chamber meetings, job fairs, and other community events. With the goal to increase knowledge of services, the Business Service Coordinator aims to increase visibility throughout the district.

1. **Better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development**.

One segment of the internal business services team is comprised of individuals with expertise in community and economic development. These individuals continually work with communities and grants designed to attract new industries or support and expand existing industries. Their involvement provides the necessary "seamless" connection, allowing them to both utilize center services and provide feedback as to the needs of a particular industry. Local industrial development groups, local Chambers of Commerce and educational institutions must be at the table after the sector partnership has been developed to give an additional perspective to the process.

Additionally, the Board advocates for policy and regulatory reforms that support both workforce development and economic growth objectives. By engaging with policy makers and advocating for policies that promote education, training, and workforce preparation, the Board seeksto create an enabling environment for economic development and job creation in the region.

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

While the one-stop system has long worked closely with unemployment insurance, the other partner agencies may or may not have been as fortunate. The linkage between partners will be strengthened through communication, co-locations and developed familiarity in partner meetings. Addtionally, the Southeast Arkansas Workforce Board collaborates with state agencies responsible for administering unemployment insurance programs to identify opportunities for process improvements, service enhancements, and policy reforms that promote alignment with workforce development goals and priorities. By engaging in ongoing dialogue and partnership with these agencies, the Board can address systemic barriers and streamline administrative procedures to better meet the needs of individuals accessing both unemployment insurance and workforce development services.

**3.5. Describe local and regional efforts to support and/or promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services, in coordination with economic development and other partners. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(5)]**

The Board will continue to support and promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services through the partner agencies and through the local economic development district.

SEAEDD has worked with small businesses since the early 1970's, aiding with business plan development and funding through the revolving loan program. The Southeast area also has access to the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluffs Small Business Incubator' s services and the Generator that helps entrepreneurs plan for start-up. Participants interested in learning entrepreneurial skills will be referred to and connected with skilled professional or mentors. As a part of the service delivery, internships, job shadowing and work experiences will be coupled with the training.

**3.6. Describe how the local board coordinates education and workforce investment activities with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(10)]**

Coordination in the Southeast area is currently under way by assisting all required partners with a very successful referral systems which avoids duplication of services. The partners have worked for many years to develop a referral format which contains most, if not all, information needed to enroll a prospective client into any partner system. Any participant that enters a workforce center for a request for services will be assessed to determine which partner would be better to assist them with the service they need. The local board will coordinate education and workforce investment activities with secondary and post- secondary education programs and activities through input at partner meetings. There is also collaboration between the board and secondary and post-secondary education programs providing services to the youth.

**3.7. Describe efforts to coordinate supportive services provided through workforce investment activities in the local area, including facilitating transportation for customers. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(11)]**

Southeast Arkansas is extremely rural, with the exception of the city of Pine Bluff. Outside Pine Bluff, transportation options are nonexistent and the coordination of supportive services between the partner agencies is critical. The Board and the agencies are doubling down on local efforts, crisscrossing all partner funding streams to coordinate the transportation needs. The Southeast Workforce Development Board has established a supportive services policy which relies, first and foremost, on partner agency support. In addition, the supportive services policy provides provision for individuals to be transported to training and employment through multiple methods. By meeting on a regular basis, the core partners are able to address supportive services ensuring all services available are offered and duplication of services is eliminated.

**3.8. Describe strategies to implement the operational goals of the local one-stop system, maximizing coordination of services provided by the State's employment services under the**

**Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.), and the local board's service providers in order to improve services and avoid duplication. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(l2)]**

The very essence of WIOA is the integration of service delivery among multiple workforce and talent development programs. Southeast has strong partnerships among state agencies, two- and four-year educational institutions, economic development, Registered Apprenticeship, and community-based organizations. A priority of the local board and critical to the implementation of the strategic plan is to eliminate duplication across programs and align core programs. Alignment of core and optional programs will be made possible by the following strategies.

Reflect Robust Partnerships

Foster the establishment of robust partnerships among partners. The one stop operator facilitates an integrated, co-located partnership that seamlessly incorporates services of the core partners and other workforce center partners. They have regular partners meeting in the comprehensive center and in other locations.

Organize Service by Function

Organize and integrate services by function (rather than by program); when permitted by a program' s authorizing statute and as appropriate, and by coordinating staff communication, capacity building, and training efforts. Functional alignment includes having workforce center staff who cross-trained to serve all customers seamlessly (including targeted populations) by providing a full range of services staffed by cross­ functional teams, consistent with the purpose, scope, and requirements of each program.

**3.9. Describe how the local board will carry out a review of local applications submitted under WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy, consistent with the local plan (as described in WIOA Sec. 107(d)(ll) and WIOA Sec. 232). [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(13)]**

The Board, and more specifically the Board's Planning Committee, serve as a regional clearinghouse reviewing local applications submitted under WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy. Responses to the Adult Education RFQ are reviewed, rated and returned to Arkansas Career Education, in accordance with their prescribed timeline.

**3.10. Based on the analysis described in Appendix B - Section 1, identify the industries where a sector partnership is currently being convened in the local area or where there will be an attempt to convene a sector partnership and the timeframe. Categorize the sector partnerships as active, emerging, or exploring as defined below.**

Active

The vision for collaboration between educators and employers is neither novel nor has it just come to light for this group of individuals. The partners in this grant have been working together and sharing dreams for an improved vehicle of change and a heightened regard for career and technical education for the past 30 years. More than ever before, many of the group see hope for real change and real progress. Instead of working independently ('in siloes ' as we say) we recognize this g

rant as an opportunity to accomplish great things. What have been good ideas and good intentions that may not have been accomplished previously due to territorial issues and/or conflicting regulatory processes, are coming together. One such vehicle of change and an integral goal of this grant is the Alliance's objective for counties to become ACT® Certified Work Ready.

Communities. Working toward aggressive goals will produce outcomes that identify future job needs; develop a productive workforce; and ascertain the competencies and skills needed to determine proficiencies and skill gaps of the workforce. To date-ten of the ten counties in Southeast Arkansas have reached ACT Work Ready Community status.

Arkansas has been a statewide partner of ACT® since January of 2008 to provide avenues for individuals to earn the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) in the form of the Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate (CRC). In partnership with Arkansas Department of Workforce Services and offering the Work Keys curriculum and NCRC testing; some members of the Alliance are familiar with the value of the ACT credential. The Governor of Arkansas and Department of Career and Technical Education has endorsed the curriculum, and high schools as well as Secondary Career Centers are offering the courses and testing around the state. In this region, the Southeast Arkansas Community Based Education Center in Warren and the Occupational Education Center in Monticello, along with several local high schools have been instrumental in getting young adults through this curriculum and armed with the nationally recognized credential before they graduate from high school.

All ten counties in the Southeast Arkansas area are participating in the county level ACT® Work Ready Communities (WRC) initiative. Although the aim is ambitious, the Alliance desires to demonstrate the benefits of increasing each community's attractiveness by becoming a certified ACT Work Ready Community. In agreement with the ACT initiative, it is the WRC Teams' belief that by obtaining job skills requirements from area businesses and industries and having a valid tool to measure individuals' skills, SEARK, SouthArk, UAM and the UAM Colleges of Technology can plan programs to develop the skills needed to match requirements, and then certify individuals in those essential skills needed for area jobs.

Continuously monitor and adjust to ensure that educational services provided from K-16 are based on realistic needs of current and future businesses. The initiative is in line with the Arkansas' workforce development goal of increasing the number of quality jobs/careers attained, improving the quality of lives, and rebuilding communities. Southeast Arkansas needs job

growth. Being an ACT® Work Ready Community ensures business and industry leaders that the skills they need for a successful workforce are being addressed in a systematic and productive manner.

Currently operating under the guidance of the University of Arkansas at McGehee and UAM Crossett and SEAEDD, priorities have been established and have moved well pass the implementation phase.

Emerging / Active

We are currently working on securing new partners who would be involved. We are planning to start an apprenticeship program with a garment factory and soon. We are also collaborating with Alleguard, a custom foam company to do an on-the-job training program. The Southeast Workforce Development Board will continue the support of large-scale job fairs and community outreach activities. Advertisements will also be printed periodically to help with engaging additional partners with other services to offer.

**3.11. Does the local board currently leverage or have oversight of funding outside of WIOA Title I funding to support the local workforce development system?**

Not at the present time, but plans are being made to aggressively secure and leverage more funds outside of WIOA.

**Briefly describe the additional funding and how it will impact the local system.**

N/A

**Section 4: Program Design and Evaluation**

**Many of the responses below should be based on strategic discussions between the local board and one-stop partners. Please provide a separate response for each of the elements listed below.**

**4.1. Describe the one-stop delivery system in the local area including:**

1. **The local board's efforts to ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services, including contracted service providers and providers on the eligible training provider list, and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, workers and jobseekers. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(A)]**

The Board's efforts to ensure continuous improvement of service providers includes but is not limited to, screening new and subsequent eligible training providers applications against the perceived needs of employers and clients. Additionally, the Planning Committee will review any available performance information to assess continuous improvement. The One Stop Committee will review the annual performance of the Title I Provider. The Title I Provider will also work with clients to align their training needs and choices with high demand career pathways.

1. **How the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system in remote areas, through the use of technology, and through other means. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(B)]**

Much of Southeast Arkansas is rural. It is incumbent upon the Board and Title I Provider to utilize technology to provide access. Information about WIOA services can be accessed online and on SEAEDD’s and state’s website. Career Advisors utilize email and social media to communicate and share information with customers. In addition, outside of the five main offices, career advisors travel to satellite locations to serve customers.

1. **How entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one­ stop partners, will comply with WIOA section 188, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(C)] (See Appendix C: *Transitional Planning References and Resources*)**

The Board and the partner agencies will comply with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility. All facilities are accessible, and the staff has been trained to serve customers with disabilities. The Title I provider collaborates with the Division of Services for the Blind and Arkansas Rehabilitation Services staff to ensure that proper accommodations and resources are available for all customers.

1. **List all required and optional program partners; indicate the program(s) each partner provides and the physical location where the program(s) can be accessed. Describe the roles and resource contributions of the partners. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(D)]**

The required partner agencies include the WIOA Title I Provider (SEAEDD), Title II- Adult Education, Title III- Arkansas Division of Workforce Services and Title IV- which includes DSB and Vocational Rehabilitation Services. Additional partners include: Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker and Older Worker programs. ADWS services include employer services, Veterans' services, and Unemployment Insurance. Adult education has numerous locations but are co-located in many of our workforce centers. Arkansas Rehabilitation Services and Services for the Blind has two offices, Monticello and Pine Bluff but staff travel to service customers in remote areas and in workforce centers. Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker Program is located in the Dumas Workforce Center. Arkansas Human Development Corporation provides free assistance to seasonal and migrant agricultural workers in AR. The Older Worker Program is not located in Southeast Arkansas but services the area and utilizes the workforce centers. ADWS is co-located in Pine Bluff and Monticello.

Most partners provide services throughout the local workforce development area comprised of ten counties: Arkansas, Ashley, Bradley, Chicot, Cleveland, Desha, Drew, Grant, Jefferson and Lincoln.

1. **Describe how the workforce centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated technology-enabled intake and case management information system for core programs [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(21)]**

ADWS is creating a universal MIS that would allow all partners access to the same system. This would allow for tracking, monitoring, recording and information sharing amongst partners. Until such option exists, our workforce center staff maximizes the utilization of currently available technology to consolidate, streamline services and enhance the overall customer experience.

**4.2. 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)]**

The Board has reviewed current eligible training provider and apprenticeship lists and has determined that there currently exists an adequate availability of quality training. The Board's Planning Committee periodically reviews and updates the eligible training provider list to ensure that training providers are current and performing at a suitable rate. This is measured by customer satisfaction assessed by program operator, performance and outcomes reported by training providers, and compliance with accreditation requirements.

Occupational skills training and work experience are services provided to eligible adult and dislocated workers. Occupational skills training provides clients with tuition and fee assistance in demand occupational skills training at 2 and 4 year colleges. Work experience provides another avenue for growing the skill set of job seekers in the local area. This provides a “hands on” approach to learning new job skills.

**4.3. 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)]**

The Governor's Dislocated Worker Task Force and the Division of Business Retention & Workforce Transition is responsible for the statewide rapid response and layoff aversion activities. Immediately upon receiving notice of a closure or workforce reduction, the Task Force contacts company officials. A community meeting is scheduled with elected officials and business leaders to create action plans to assist both the community and dislocated workers. To avoid duplication and confusion, local Title I Provider staff do not initiate contact with an employer regarding a layoff without first speaking with the Task Force Coordinator.

The Business Retention & Workforce Transition team may conduct a worker assistance workshop, attended by representatives of local and state agencies and affected workers to review available resources. Services and needs discussed at the workshop may include retraining and educational opportunities, unemployment insurance, social service programs, credit counseling, insurance options and resources to find a new job.

The Task Force Coordinator also serves as the liaison to the local chambers of commerce in the area. Information is provided to the chambers about the affected workers, including the types of impacted occupations and the employee's educational and skill levels. The local AWC staff builds on the services provided through the Governors Dislocated Workers Taskforce by providing information and services to the affected employees. Dislocated workers are given a full array of services available to them through the Arkansas Workforce Center partnership and community organizations.

State and local WIOA partners will continue to build and maintain relationships with the business community to help with early warning of potential layoffs and promote early intervention. Together, the following services will be provided:

* Layoff aversion activities which may include providing retraining the current workforce
* Immediate and on-site contact with employers and local community representative
* Assessment and planning to address the layoff schedule, assistance needs of the impacted individuals, re-employment prospects, and available resources
* Information and access to unemployment compensation benefits and programs, AWC Services, and employment and training activities, including Trade Act, Pell Grants, GI Bill WIOA DLW Program, and other resources
* Necessary services and resources, such as workshops, resource and job fairs to support re­employment assistance
* Trade Act petition services through the Governors Dislocated Workers Taskforce

**4.4. Describe the local board's assessment of 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)]**

**Note: This section must include a description of the program design elements as well as how the local area will implement the 14 program elements.**

**WIOA YOUTH PROGRAM ELEMENTS**

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| 1 | Tutoring, study skills training and instruction leading to high school completion, including dropout prevention strategies. Dropout prevention strategies can include, but are not limited to, placement in an alternative secondary school services setting, facilitating involvement of families and community, taking an individualized approach based on youth’s individual needs. | Provision of on-line coursework, one-on-one instruction, peer-to-peer interaction, or in a group setting. Referrals to partners providing educational services and the use of on-line tutorials. The Workforce Development Board authorizes incentives for the participants that achieve goals that contribute to their success. The primary goal of local Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act youth programming is to insure youth completion of a High School Diploma or its recognized  equivalent. |
| 2 | Alternative high school services which offer specialized, structured curriculum inside or outside of the public school system which may provide work, study and/or academic intervention for students with behavior problems, physical/mental disabilities, who are at risk of dropping out, and/or who are institutionalized or adjudicated youth | Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act youth programs will work closely with alternative schools throughout the West Central area. Alternative schools will be one source for referrals for eligible Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act youth participants. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act youth services will be designed to complement activities occurring within alternative schools. The primary goal will be for the youth to obtain their high school diploma or its  recognized equivalent. |
| 3 | Work Experience - Summer youth employment that takes place between May 1st and September 30th and consists  of employment for which | Participants will prepare for employment opportunities through the provision of various services including,  but not limited to: basic |

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|  | youth are paid a wage. Summer employment should be coordinated and linked with academic and occupational learning that leads to the career or employment goal as stated in the individual service strategy. Paid and unpaid work experiences, including internships and job shadowing are short-term, planned, structured learning experiences that occur in a workplace and are focused on career exploration and the development of work readiness skills. The primary purpose of work experiences is to expose youth to the requirements of work and to employers expectations. An employer may benefit from the work done by a youth, but the primary benefit must  be to the youth. | skill remediation; supervised work experiences; pre- employment abilities such as career planning, resume preparation, use of labor market information, completing applications, and interviewing skills attainment; attainment of core employability/work maturity skills such as dependability, honesty, problem solving skills, initiative, enthusiasm, team player; interpersonal skills, appearance, leadership, and cultural sensitivity.  Emphasis on jobs in in- demand and emerging industries will be required |
| 4 | Occupational skills training constitutes an organized program of study that provides specific vocational skills that lead to proficiency in performing actual tasks and technical functions required by certain occupational fields at entry, intermediate, or advanced levels. These include programs that lead to the attainment of a certificate or credential in a specific  occupation. | Enrollment into programs that provide recognized degrees, certifications, or marketable skills for in- demand and emerging occupations. |
| 5 | Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and  training for a specific | Services so students acquire the skills necessary to transition to and complete post-secondary  education and training |

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|  | occupation or occupational cluster. | programs, obtain and advance in employment leading to economic self- sufficiency and to exercise their rights and responsibilities of citizenship. See the chart  below. |
| 6 | Leadership development opportunities, which include community service and peer- centered activities that encourage responsibility, employability, and other positive social behaviors. | Examples include community volunteering, peer mentoring or tutoring, character education, citizenship education, including how and why to vote, serving on a youth council, community or advocacy organization board, leadership training consisting of how to work in a team, how to run meetings, diversity training, and life skills training such as parent education, financial education, goal  setting and conflict. |
| 7 | Supportive services to enable an individual to participate in Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act programs youth program  activities. | These may include, but are not limited to housing, meals, medical care, day care, transportation, school related supplies, training  related supplies, etc. |
| 8 | Adult mentoring for a period of participation and a subsequent period, for a total of not less than 12 months. This service may occur during program participation or during the Follow-up period. Adult mentoring is a one-to-one supportive relationship between and adult and a youth that is based on trust. High-quality adult mentoring programs include an adult role model  who builds a working | Referral to community, faith-based, and/or other organizations to provide one-on-one encouragement and direction; case manager may be the mentor. |

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|  | relationship with a youth and who fosters the development of positive life  skills in youth. |  |
| 9 | Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation, as appropriate. Includes activities after completion of participation to monitor youth success during their transition to employment and further education and to provide assistance as appropriate needed for a successful transition. | Follow-up services include, Adult Mentoring, Career Development Assistance, Child Care Assistance, Leadership Development, Linkages to Community Services, Peer Support Groups, Referrals to Medical Services, Regular Contact with Employer, Supportive Service (not elsewhere identified), Transportation Assistance, Work Clothing, Equipment  and Tools. |
| 10 | Comprehensive guidance and counseling which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral, as appropriate. | Referrals for comprehensive guidance and counseling will be done on a case-by-case basis.  Career Advisors will provide career counseling through the service Career Development. This will be an integral part of youth programming and provide the basis for the career advisors to help youth make and implement informed educational, occupational, and life choices. It includes imparting skills through counselor-directed learning opportunities that help youth achieve success through academic, career, personal, and social  development. |
| 11 | Financial literacy education | Financial literacy education is supported by activities such as partnerships with  financial institutions and to |

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|  |  | provide workshops at the local one stop. Youth gain the skills needed to create household budgets, initiate savings plans, and make informed financial decisions about education, retirement, home ownership, wealth building, or other savings goals. An example of financial literacy education is the FDIC approved Money  Smart curriculum. |
| 12 | Entrepreneurial skills training | Entrepreneurial skills training including the use of curriculum based training modules that teach youth the value of being skilled and applying those skills to meet a consumer need or demand; to think creatively and critically; to problem solve; how to recognize opportunities, and other skills related to entrepreneurialism.  Entrepreneurial skills training is supported by activities such as partnerships with economic development agencies and referrals to business  development organizations. |
| 13 | Services that provide labor market and employment information about in- demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services. | Workshops and other services that prepare youth for careers in in-demand and/or emerging occupations. Information is provided in the local one- stops or on-line systems such as the Arkansas Job Link. Information about in- demand industry sectors or occupations is available in  areas, such as career |

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|  |  | awareness, career  counseling, and career exploration services. |
| 14 | Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training | This includes the delivery of activities listed within the other program elements and other activities that provide exposure to post- secondary education options; assisting youth with placement into post- secondary education; and placement into training opportunities such as apprenticeships and occupational training Individual guidance and counseling, including career pathway discussion; assistance with applications for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid; and referral to enrollment and career counseling services at post-secondary  institutions. |

The SEAWDB has established working relationships with partners and multiple youth service providers who will carry out the functions described in each of the required 14 youth elements. Memorandum of Understandings are being signed to outline the duties of each provider. When possible, program operator- Southeast Arkansas Economic Development District, will provide services as deemed appropriate.

Models that seem to have been effective in the area is pre-apprenticeship and work experiences. Southeast partnered with training providers to develop a welding pre-apprenticeship, in hopes to meet a business/workforce need at SAF Holland of Dumas. Another model was successfully implemented, but with carpentry as the focus. Participants, all juvenile offenders in the Dermott Juvenile Detention Center, completed and are receiving work readiness training and other transitional services that will ensure a productive future after release.

**Youth Requiring Additional Assistance Policy**

Background: Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) law and regulations, the state or local workforce areas are to develop and define a Youth policy for “An Individual Who Requires Additional Assistance.” In Arkansas’ state plan, it states that this policy will be developed by each local area and is required to be included in the local plan. Said policy should be specific to the local area of service that applies to the predominant population of youth within service boundaries. This policy is used to enroll youth who may not have other barriers described in WIOA eligibility law and regulations. Along with the development of this policy, local areas are required to include acceptable eligibility documentation and criteria to be used by one-stop center staff in determining eligibility for youth clients. For clarity purposes and to ensure that this policy is clear and aligned with eligibility criteria for WIOA, WIOA eligibility criteria is also listed and described in the policy for staff reference. The full policy can be accessed here:

<https://www.southeastarkansas.org/workforce-development>

Note: Up to five percent of youth in a given program year (ISY and OSY, who ordinarily would be required to meet the low-income criteria for eligibility purposes, are allowed a low-income exemption based on this barrier).

**4.5. 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)(l9)]**

The individual training accounts (ITA) system is used by participants who are eligible for training services and choose to attend approved training. A case manager uses the WIOA Training Routing Form, the ITA Form, a Financial Aid Expenditure Form and documentation from institution to determine a participant' s financial need from WIOA. The individual selects the course of study from the eligible training provider list. The individual must have made application and received determination from other funding sources and present the award letter to the case manager to show the monetary amounts of unmet financial need. Consideration of all available funds, excluding loans, will determine the person' s overall need for WIOA funding. The ITA may be used to cover expenses for tuition, books, supplies and/or tools. Career Advisor will make sure that there is no duplication of services.

The Planning Committee appointed by the WDB Chair reviews the Eligible Training Provider applications. Once full board approval has been made, an Eligible Training Provider list will be distributed to all workforce centers.

Participants approved for training through the ITA system must choose one of the approved programs in order to receive an ITA. ITA's may be adjusted up or down based upon case necessity.

**4.6. If contracts for training services are used, describe processes utilized by the local board to ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs, regardless of how the training services are to be provided [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(19)]**

Once full board approval has been made, an ETP list can by accessed by all workforce centers, on the Arkansas Joblink website. Participants approved for training through the ITA system must choose one of the approved programs in order to receive an ITA.

**4.8 Describe the process utilized by the local board to ensure that training provided is linked to In-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area, or in another area to which a participant is willing to relocate. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(22)] and [WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(G)(iii)]**

All training providers will complete an online electronic application through Arkansas Joblink. All training must be directly linked to employment opportunities either in the local area or in an area to which an individual is willing to relocate. Any training for a participant that is paid for by WIOA funds must be on the Projected Employment Opportunities List for the state or local area. To be included on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), providers must submit an electronic application to the local board for their approval.

**4.7. Describe local board actions to become and/or remain a high-performing local board, consistent with the factors developed by the Arkansas Workforce**

**Development Board. These factors will include effectiveness and continuous improvement criteria for local boards. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(18)]**

Continuous monitoring of the programs to ensure compliance with the laws and performance measures are met. Board members should have a complete understanding of their role and inventory its own resources. Have policies and procedures in place. Update the labor market analyses and data to be aware of emerging trends. Work with community colleges to determine the needs of employers.

**Section 5: Compliance**

**Responses are focused on the local area's compliance with federal or state requirements. Please provide a separate response for each of the elements listed below.**

**5.1 Describe the replicated cooperative agreements, as defined by WIOA 107(d)(ll), in place between the local board and the Vocational Rehabilitation programs operated in the area with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(14)]**

The agreement between Vocational Rehabilitation and the Board provides for staff cross training, technical assistance and single points of contact with regards to employers. The parties also agree to utilize the Southeast common referral document which identifies services and eligibility for all required partner agencies and services. The local board will, with the area fiscal agent, share cooperative agreement oversight responsibilities.

**5.2 Identify the entity responsible for the disbursal of grant funds as determined by the Chief Elected Official(s). [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(15)]**

Southeast Arkansas Economic Development District, Inc. (SEAEDD) was named by the Chief Elected Officials to serve as the Fiscal Agent for grant funds. SEAEDD is located at 721 South Walnut Street in Pine Bluff.

**5.3 Describe the competitive processes to award the subrecipient agreements and contracts for activities funded by WIOA Title I programs 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)]**

The Board authorized the One Stop Committee to develop and advertise a formal request for qualifications (RFQ) for One Stop Operator / Youth Service Provider in March 2023 . The entire RFQ was published on March 29-April 12, 2023 in the legal section of the Arkansas Democrat Gazette. Applicants had until April 19, 2023 to respond. The One Stop Committee recommended to the Board to grant two extensions to the contract due to Committee member changes and the Board approved. The One Stop Committee reviewed and scored the application for the One Stop Operator and made their recommendation to the full board at the October 18, 2023 Board Meeting. The Southeast Arkansas Economic Development District, Inc. was selected to be the One Stop Operator and Title I Provider through June 30, 2026 with an option to renew for two additional program years. All future procurements will be handled in a manner consistent with the Uniform Guidance procurement provisions.

**5.4 Describe the local area's negotiated local levels of performance for the federal measures and their implications upon the local workforce system; attach the completed Performance Targets Template. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(l 7)]**

At this time, the State provides the performance measures for each Local Workforce Development Area. These measures are based upon the State's negotiation with the Department of Labor. The Board, in conjunction with the Southeast Chief Elected Officials are required, by law, to negotiate measures based upon existing and forecast economic factors.

**5.5. Describe the indicators used by the local board to measure performance and effectiveness of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers and the one-stop delivery system, in the local area. WIOA Sec. 108(b)(l7)]**

Financial and Programmatic reports will be provided to the full board at every Board meeting in order for the Board to remain informed of all activities throughout the Title I funding. The local WIOA program compliance officer will perform internal monthly desk reviews of the fiscal operations of the one stop operator. The monitor will also provide an annual program service monitoring report to the One Stop Committee of the local board. There will also be an annual OMB A-133 of the fiscal agent and One Stop Provider. A third-party entity will also monitor the One-Stop Operator to avoid conflict of interest. This service will be procured and handled by the One-Stop Committee.

The Planning Committee will review applications for the Eligible Training Provider List as necessary. They will make their recommendations to the full board.

**5.6 Describe the process used by the local board for the receipt and consideration of input into the development of the local plan in compliance with WIOA section 108(d). Describe the process to provide an opportunity for public comment prior to submission of the local plan. Be sure to address how members of the public, including representatives of business, labor organizations, and education were given an opportunity to provide comments on the local plan. [WIOA Sec. 108 (b)(20)]**

On February 21, 2024, the Local Plan committee met to discuss changes that needed to be implemented in the plan. This consisted of local partners and LWDB members.

Information regarding the public commentary will be added after the 30-day comment period. Workforce Center partners provided input in the plan at the partners meeting and via telephone calls and emails. Business, partner agencies, educators, and economic developers from throughout the local area are all represented on the board and had the opportunity to comment.

**5.7 Prior to the date on which the local board submits a proposed local plan, the proposed local plan must be made available to members of the public through electronic and other means.**

1. **Describe how the local board made the proposed local plan available for public comment. [WIOA Sec. 108(d)(l)];**

As required by Law, the completed Southeast Arkansas local plan will be advertised in the statewide newspaper giving the public time to review and submit any comments back to SEAEDD for a 30-day period. The plan will remain on display for that 30-day period and anyone wishing to review could stop by the local office of SEAEDD or access the document online.

1. **Describe how the local board collected and considered public comments for inclusion in the proposed local plan. [WIOA Sec. 108(d)(2)]; and**

Comments collected during the public comment period will be presented to the board for review and consideration.

**C. If any comments were received that represent disagreement with the proposed local plan, include such comments within the local plan's attachments. [WIOA Sec. 108(d)(3)]**

Disagreements or concerns received during public comment period will be addressed following the board’s review of these disagreements or concerns. Concerns will also be included as an attachment to the local plan.

**5.8. List the name, organization, and contact information of the designated equal opportunity officer for each workforce center within the local area.**

Mr. Gary Goggans

WIOA One Stop Operator/EEO Officer

477 South Main St

Monticello, Arkansas

(870) 224-7075

Section 6: Assurances

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| **Planning Process and Public Comment** | **References** |
| 6.1 The local board has processes and timelines, consistent with WIOA Section 108(d), to obtain input into the development of the local plan and provide the opportunity for comment by representatives of business, labor organizations, education, other key stakeholders, and the public for a period that is no less than 30 days. | WIOA Sections 108(d); 20 CFR  679.550(b) |
| 6.2 The final local plan is available and accessible to the public. | 20 CFR  679.550(b)(5) |
| 6.3 The local board has established procedures to ensure public access (including people with disabilities) to board meetings and information regarding board activities, such as board membership and minutes. | WIOA Section 107(e); 20 CFR 679.390  and 679.550 |
| **Required Policies and Procedures** | **References** |
| 6.4 The local board makes publicly available any local requirements for the public workforce system, such as policies, including policies for the use of WIOA Title I funds. | 20 CFR 679.390 |
| 6.5 The local board has established a written policy or procedure that identifies circumstances that might present conflict of interest for any local workforce development board or entity that they represent and provides for the resolution of conflicts. | WIOA Section 107(h); 20 CFR  679.410(a)-(c) |
| 6.6 The local board has copies of memoranda of understanding between the local board and each one-stop partner concerning the operation of the one-stop delivery system in the local area and has provided the State with the latest versions of its memoranda of understanding. | WIOA Section 121(c); 20 CFR  678.500-510 |
| 6.7 The local board has written policy or procedures that ensure one- stop operator agreements are reviewed and updated no less than once every three years. | WIOA Section 121(c)(v) |
| 6.8 The local board has negotiated and reached agreement on local performance measures with the local chief elected official(s) and the Governor. | WIOA Sections 107(d)(9) and 116(c); 20 CFR 679.390(k) and 677.210(b) |
| 6.9 The local board has procurement policies and procedures for selecting one-stop operators, awarding contracts under WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker funding provisions, and awarding contracts for Youth service provision under WIOA Title I in accordance with applicable state and local laws, rules, and regulations, provided no conflict exists with WIOA. | WIOA Sections 121(d) and 123; 20  CFR 678.600-615 and  681.400 |
| 6.10 The local board has procedures for identifying and determining the eligibility of training providers and their programs to receive WIOA Title I individual training accounts | WIOA Sections 107(d)(10), 122(b)(3),  and 123;  20 CFR 679.370(l)-(m)  680.410-430 |

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| 6.11 The local board has written procedures for resolving grievances and complaints alleging violations of WIOA Title I regulations, grants, or other agreements under WIOA and written policies or procedures for assisting customers who express interest in filing complaints at any point of service, including, at a minimum, a requirement that all partners can identify appropriate staff contacts and refer customers to those contacts. | WIOA Section 181(c); 20 CFR 683.600 |
| 6.12 The local board has established at least one comprehensive, full-service one-stop center and has a written process for the local Chief Elected Official and local board to determine that the center conforms to the definition therein. | WIOA Section 121(e)(2)(A); 20 CFR  678.305 |
| 6.13 All partners in the local workforce and education system described in this plan ensure the physical, programmatic and communications accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology, and materials in one-stop centers for individuals with disabilities. | WIOA Section 188; 29  CFR parts 37.7-37.9;  20 CFR 652.8(j) |
| 6.14 The local board ensures that outreach is provided to populations and sub-populations who can benefit from one-stop services. | WIOA Section 188; 29  CFR 37.42 |
| 6.15 The local board implements universal access to programs and activities to individuals through reasonable recruitment targeting, outreach efforts, assessments, service delivery, partner development, and numeric goals. | WIOA Section 188; 29  CFR 37.42 |
| 6.16 The local board complies with the nondiscrimination provisions of Section 188 and assures that Methods of Administration were developed and implemented. | WIOA Section 188;  29 CFR 37.54(a)(1) |
| 6.17 The local board collects and maintains data necessary to show compliance with nondiscrimination provisions of Section 188. | WIOA Section 185; 29  CFR 37.37 |
| 6.18 The local board complies with restrictions governing the use of federal funds for political activities, the use of the one-stop environment for political activities, and the local board complies with the applicable certification and disclosure requirements. | 2 CFR Part 225 Appendix  B; 2 CFR Part 230  Appendix B; 48  CFR 31.205-22; RCW |
| 6.19 The local board ensures that one-stop Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW) and business services staff, along with the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker program partner agency, will continue to provide services to agricultural employers and MSFWs that are demand-driven. | WIOA Section 167 |
| 6.20 The local board follows confidentiality requirements for wage and education records as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), as amended, WIOA, and applicable Departmental regulations. | WIOA Sections 16(i)(3) and 185(a)(4); 20 USC 1232g; 20 CFR 677.175  and 20 CFR part 603 |
| **Administration of Funds** | **References** |
| 6.21 The local board has a written policy and procedures to competitively award grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities (or applicable | WIOA Section 108(b)(16); 20 CFR |

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| federal waiver), including a process to be used to procure training services made as exceptions to the Individual Training Account process. | 679.560(a)(**15);** WIOA  Section 134(c)(3)(G); 20 CFR |
| 6.22 The local board has accounting systems that follow current Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and written fiscal-controls and fund-accounting procedures and ensures such procedures are followed to insure proper disbursement and accounting of WIOA adult, dislocated worker, and youth program funds. | WIOA Section 108(b)(15) |
| 6.23 The local board ensures compliance with the uniform administrative requirements under WIOA through annual, on-site monitoring of each local sub-recipient. | WIOA Section 184(a)(3); 20 CFR  683.200, 683.300, and  683.400-410 |
| 6.24 The local board has a written debt collection policy and procedures that conforms with state and federal requirements and a process for maintaining a permanent record of all debt collection cases that supports the decisions made and documents the actions taken with respect to debt collection, restoration, or other debt resolution activities. | WIOA Section 184(c); 20 CFR Part 652; 20 CFR 683.410(a), 683.420(a), 683.750 |
| 6.25 The local board will not use funds received under WIOA to assist, promote, or deter union organizing. | WIOA Section 181(b)(7); 20 CFR 680.850 |
| **Eligibility** | **References** |
| 6.26 The local board has a written policy and procedures that ensure adequate and correct determinations of eligibility for WIOA-funded basic career services and qualifications for enrollment of adults, dislocated workers, and youth in WIOA-funded individualized career services and training services, consistent with state policy on eligibility and priority of service. | 20 CFR Part  680 Subparts A and B; 20 CFR Part  681 Subpart A |
| 6.27 The local board has a written policy and procedures for awarding Individual Training Accounts to eligible adults, dislocated workers, and youth receiving WIOA Title I training services, including dollar and/or duration limit(s), limits on the number of times an individual may modify an ITA, and how ITAs will be obligated and authorized. | WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(G); 20 CFR  680.300-320 |
| 6.28 The local board has a written policy and procedures that establish internal controls, documentation requirements, and leveraging and coordination of other community resources when providing supportive services and, as applicable, needs-related payments to eligible adult, dislocated workers, and youth enrolled in WIOA Title I programs. | WIOA Sections 129(c)(2)(G)  and 134(d)(2); 20  CFR 680.900-970;  20 CFR 681.570 |

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| 6.29 The local board has a written policy for priority of service at its workforce centers for local workforce providers that ensures veterans and eligible spouses are identified at the point of entry, made aware of their entitlement to priority of service, and provided information on the array of employment, training and placement services and eligibility requirements for those programs or services. | Jobs for Veterans Act; Veterans’ Benefits, Health Care, and Information Technology Act; 20 CFR 1010;  TEGL 10-09 |

**Southeast State Negotiated Performance Goals**

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| **Core Indicators of WIOA Program Performance**  **Adult Performance** | **PY23 State Negotiated Goals** |
| Employment Rate- 2nd Quarter After Exit | 81.00% |
| Employment Rate- 4th Quarter After Exit | 80.00% |
| Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit | $6,449 |
| Credential Attainment Rate | 79.00% |
| Measurable Skills Gains | 69.00% |
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| **Core Indicators of WIOA Program Performance**    **Dislocated Worker Performance** | **PY23 State Negotiated Goals** |
| Employment Rate- 2nd Quarter After Exit | 85.00% |
| Employment Rate- 4th Quarter After Exit | 87.00% |
| Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit | $7,277 |
| Credential Attainment Rate | 81.00% |
| Measurable Skills Gains | 70.50% |
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| **Core Indicators of WIOA Program Performance**    **Youth Performance** | **PY23 State Negotiated Goals** |
| Employment/Education Rate- 2nd Quarter After Exit | 75.00% |
| Employment/Education Rate- 4th Quarter After Exit | 78.00% |
| Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit | $3862.50 |
| Credential Attainment Rate | 64.00% |
| Measurable Skills Gains | 61.00% |

**Appendix D: Planning References and Resources**

**I. State of Arkansas's Combined Workforce Development Strategic Plan (State Plan)**

On July 22, 2014, President Obama signed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) providing a framework for Governors and states to make changes to their workforce systems. The federal law sets the parameters for the workforce system which is an integral part of the State's ability to serve jobseekers and employers. WIOA will enable the State to align workforce priorities across multiple partners, training providers, employers and others to ensure we are creating a skilled workforce for today and the future.

An effective workforce development system will be built on a foundation of alignment, innovation, employer engagement, accountability structures and improved data. Arkansas will look beyond WIOA to set broad goals for a comprehensive workforce development system. We will do this by providing the highest quality of service to jobseekers and employers through well-coordinated approaches at the state and local levels. System access will be enhanced through the use of technology and creative partnerships with community organizations and other service providers. While access will be improved for all jobseekers, the provision of services and training will be focused on those most in need and hardest to serve.

The four main goals in the State' s Combined WIOA Plan are as follows:

**Strategic Goal 1: Develop an efficient partnership with employers, the educational system,**

**workforce development partners, and community -based organizations to deliver a platform that will prepare a skilled workforce for existing and new employers.**

**Goal 1 Objectives**:

1. Expand employer partnerships through the support of industry engagement.
2. Identify and promote best practices (private and public) for developing and sustaining partnerships.
3. Expand partnership with economic development to refine sector strategies.
4. Improve communication/participation between education entities, local and state boards, government agencies, community-based organizations, and employers.
5. Increase accountability and clarity of action between all workforce related boards.
6. Increase the utilization of Registered Apprenticeship programs as viable talent development opportunities.
7. Increase connections with employers and Vocational Rehabilitation agencies to provide support and employment for youth and adults with disabilities.
8. Partner with K-12 education, higher education, career and technical education, and adult education to provide consistent rules and eliminate barriers to implementing training programs around the State.
9. Explore data sharing opportunities with non-governmental organizations that are committed partners to the state' s workforce center system that will lead to improved intake, referral, and case management for customers served by multiple agencies (both public and private).
10. Expand small business participation.

**Strategic Goal 2: Enhance service delivery to employers and jobseekers**.

**Goal 2 Objectives:**

1. Develop a common intake process for jobseekers and businesses that will efficiently connect them with services available from all workforce development partner programs and identify any barriers to employment that need to be addressed.
2. Develop an integrated data system that will enable the sharing of information between partner agencies to more efficiently service both employers and jobseekers.
3. Promote training that leads to industry recognized credentials and certification.
4. Support transportable skill sets for transportable careers.
5. Support career pathways development and sector strategy initiatives as a way to meet business and industry needs.
6. Expand service delivery access points by the use of virtual service s.
7. Develop a common business outreach strategy with a common message that will be utilize d by all workforce system partners.
8. Develop a menu of services available at each service delivery access point that provides a list of the services and training opportunities available through Arkansas's talent development system.
9. Utilize customer satisfaction surveys to ensure continuous improvement of the State's talent development system.
10. Explore data sharing opportunities with non-governmental organizations that are committed partners to the state's workforce center system that will lead to improved intake, referral, and case management for customers served by mul6ple agencies (both public and private).

**Strategic Goal 3: Increase awareness of the State's Talent Development System**

**Goal 3 Objectives:**

1. Increase access to the workforce development system through a one-stop approach to services.
2. Change employer and jobseeker perceptions of the workforce system.
3. Develop a branding and outreach campaign that educates Arkansans about the services and the career development opportunities available in the State.
4. Utilize technology, including social media and search engine optimization, to better connect jobseekers and employers with the talent development system in Arkansas.
5. Develop a user-friendly website that provides a common repository of information about career development opportunities that are relevant to K-12 education, parents, educators, adults, employers, government agencies, and the general public.

**Strategic Goal 4: Address Skills Gaps**

**Goal 4 Objectives:**

1. Conduct a statewide skills and asset analysis to determine the skills gap present and resources available to solve the skills issue.
2. Develop and implement an action plan to close the basic core, technical, and soft skills gaps in Arkansas.
3. Utilize the proven effectiveness of currently used job readiness standards and ensure coordination between the Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate program and the Workforce Alliance for Growth in the Economy (WAGE) program.

**PY 2024 - PY 2027 Combined State Plan to be found on the** ADWS Website**.**

**Governor’s Workforce Strategy**

In February of 2023, Arkansas Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders signed an executive order establishing the governor’s workforce cabinet and the chief workforce officer position.

The executive order states that the Workforce cabinet will advise the governor on issues regarding workforce development and career education in Arkansas, and the Governor’s Chief Workforce Officer (“CWO’), shall be appointed by the Governor and will coordinate, manage, and direct the Governor’s workforce development policies and career education strategy for the State of Arkansas. It is anticipated that the Governor’s Workforce Strategy will be published in early 2024. Local workforce areas should reference this publication during the planning phase of regional and local plans.

**State Policy and Guidance**

State policy can be found at <http://dws.arkansas.gov/wioa.htm>

**Labor Market and Workforce Information**

**A. Discover Arkansas**

Labor Market Information Portal Arkansas Labor Market Information (LMI) is posted online using the Discover Arkansas web portal located at www.discoverarkansas.net and is available to the general public.

**B. Arkansas State Plan Economic and Workforce Analysis**

The Arkansas Combined State Plan includes an analysis of the current workforce. The data provided in Section II of the state plan under strategic elements may be very helpful to local boards in conducting a local area and regional economic and workforce analysis.

To provide local workforce boards in the state with tools for development planning in their own areas, data was downloaded and prepared from the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services Labor Market Information (LMI) website, <http://www.discover.arkansas.gov/> .The goal is to help stakeholders at the state and local level better understand future industry and occupational needs and to provide workforce development boards with the tools needed to better serve their areas.

The data available at http://arkansasresearchcenter.org/arc/index.php?cID=153 includes:

• Industries in 2018

• Job Growth in 2028

• Projected Job Growth by Workforce Development Area

• Projected Job Growth by Industry

• Percent Workforce in 2028

This

data demonstrate the current makeup of the workforce by major industry, as well as projections of the number of jobs these industries will need in 2022. To the right of the visualizations are "filters" to help explore the data choosing multiple regions to compare, such as United States vs Arkansas, Arkansas vs. workforce region, or directly compare regions.

The data available at [http://arkansasresearchcenter.org/arc/index.php?cID=154 i](http://arkansasresearchcenter.org/arc/index.php?cID=154)ncludes:

Arkansas Occupations, Current and 2022 Projections, which includes data visualizations concerning occupations in Arkansas, both currently and projections for 2022. Occupations are listed by their Standard Occupation Code (SOC) title. The SOC system is hierarchical. SOC Major Codes are the top-level occupational areas, such as "Construction and Extraction Occupations." At the next level would be SOC Minor, one of which for the above would be "Construction Trades Workers." Finally, there is SOC Detail, such as "Stonemasons" or "Carpenters." This web tool allows users to manipulate the data by indicating the level of detail desired.

III. Other Resources.

* TEN 1-15; Promising Practices in Achieving Universal Access and Equal Opportunity: A Section 188 Disability Reference Guide; July 6, 2015
* TEGL 37-14; Update on Complying with Nondiscrimination Requirements: Discrimination Based on Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Stereotyping are Prohibited Forms of Sex Discrimination in the Workforce Development System; May 29, 2015
* TEGL 05-23; Complying with Nondiscrimination Requirements: Discrimination Based on Actual or Perceived Religion, Shared Ancestry, or Ethnic Characteristics are Prohibited Forms of Discrimination in the Workforce System; November 3, 2023
* Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Baseline Indicator Explanation: Each State submitting a Unified or Combined Plan is required to identify expected levels of performance for each of the primary indicators of performance for the first two years covered by the plan. The State is required to reach agreement with the Secretary of Labor, in conjunction with the Secretary of Education on state adjusted levels of performance for the indicators for each of the first two tears of the plan.

To affect an orderly transition to the performance accountability system in Section 116 of the WIOA, the Departments will use the transition authority under WIOA sec. 503(a) to designate certain primary indicators of performance as "baseline" indicators in the first plan submission. A ''baseline" indicator is one for which States will not propose an expected level of performance in the plan submission and will not come to agreement with the Departments on adjusted levels of performance. " Baseline" indicators will not be used in the end of the year performance calculations and will not be used to determine failure to achieve adjusted levels of performance for purposes of sanctions. The selection of primary indicators for the designation as a baseline indicator is made based on the likelihood of a state having adequate data on which to make a reasonable determination of an expected level of performance and such a designation will vary across core programs.

**Chief Elected Officials of Southeast Arkansas**

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**Southeast Arkansas Workforce Development Board**

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