



2007-2009

**Draft
Operations Plan**

SECTION I ADMINISTRATION

1 Structure of Local Councils

A. South Central Workforce Development Council

The South Central Workforce Development Council is a nonprofit organization governed by a Board of Directors which is comprised of 27 members representing six different sectors of the local community with a majority representing the business sector.

Private sector representatives on the Board of Directors shall be selected from among individuals nominated by general-purpose business organizations and business trade associations after consulting with, and receiving recommendations from, other business organizations in the Workforce Development Area. Such nominations, and the individuals selected from such nominations, shall reasonably represent the industrial and demographic composition of the business community. At least three representatives of business shall represent business with substantial employment opportunities in the area; and at least three shall be representatives of small business employing fewer than 50 employees. Whenever possible, business representation shall include minority and women owned business.

K-12 Education representatives on the Board of Directors shall be selected from among individuals nominated by local educational administrative associations or agencies. Postsecondary representatives shall be selected from nominations received from vocational education institutions, institutions of higher education, or general organizations of such institutions within the service area, after consulting with, and receiving recommendations from, such institutions represented in the Workforce Development Area.

Representatives of economic development and business agencies shall be selected from among individuals nominated by general-purpose business organizations and business trade associations after consulting with, and receiving recommendations from, other business organizations and trade associations.

Labor representatives shall be selected from among individuals recommended by recognized state and local labor organizations/councils or appropriate building trades councils.

Community-based Organization (CBO) representatives shall be selected from among individuals nominated by a CBO or a local CBO association after consulting with, and receiving recommendations from, such institutions represented in the Workforce Development Area.

Representatives of the public welfare system, vocational rehabilitation agencies, and the public employment service shall be selected from among individuals nominated by the regional administrative offices within the Workforce Development Area.

Subcommittees of the South Central Workforce Development Council have been developed to ensure adequate and ongoing oversight, and to offer all stakeholders and partners of the local workforce system the greatest opportunity for participation.

The Executive Committee is comprised of the Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, and six (6) members of the Board of Directors. The Executive Committee meets each of the two months between the quarterly Board of Director’s meetings to conduct the regular business of the Council and may meet more frequently to conduct business of a confidential or time sensitive nature.

The WorkSource Oversight Committee, comprised of all participating partners of the WorkSource system, will advise the SCWDC on matters relating to system and policy planning and development regarding the local WorkSource system.

The Planning Committee is responsible for overseeing the procurement of service providers, policy development, marketing, special events and activities.

The Education, Business, and Industry Committee is responsible for overseeing business services, industry skill panels, and incumbent worker training.

Following is the number of seats by category. A current list of South Central Workforce Development Board of Directors members can be found at <http://www.co.yakima.wa.us/e&t/council-roster.htm>.

Category	Number of Members	Nominating Organizations
Business: Representatives of business with substantial employment opportunities in the local area. (At least three representatives in this subcategory) Representatives of small business employing 4 to 50 employees. (At least three representatives in this subcategory) Other business members	3 3 8	Local Chamber’s of Commerce and Economic Development Associations
Labor	3	Central Labor Council

Education K-12	2	Superintendents Association Community and Technical Colleges
Post Secondary	2	
State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies	1	State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies
Public Assistance Agencies	1	State of Washington Department of Social and Health Services
Economic Development/Business Organizations	2	Local Economic Development Organization or Chamber 's of Commerce
Community-Based Organizations	1	Local CBO or CBO Organizations
The Public Employment Service	1	State of Washington Employment Security Department

B. South Central Workforce Development Council Youth Council –

Duties of the South Central Youth Council include developing portions of the local plan related to eligible youth; recommending eligible providers of youth activities; recommending award grants or contracts on a competitive process for delivery of youth services; conducting oversight with respect to the eligible providers of youth activities in the local area; coordinating youth activities authorized under the WIA section 129 in the local area; and other duties determined to be appropriate by the Chair of the Board of Directors.

Membership of the Youth Council shall include members of the Board of Directors representing business and education who hold special interest or expertise in youth policy, and representatives of youth service agencies, juvenile justice and local law enforcement agencies. Membership may also include local public housing authorities, parents of eligible youth seeking assistance, former participants, organizations that have experience relating to youth activities, and Job Corps. Further, membership may include such other individuals as the Chair of the SCWDC Board of Directors, in cooperation with what the South Central Consortium, determines to be appropriate.

A current list of South Central Youth Council members can be found at <http://www.co.yakima.wa.us/e&t/council-roster.htm>.

C. Core and Intensive Services

The South Central Workforce Development Council (SCWDC) is not a One-Stop Operator and does not anticipate designation of this role. With the exception of the Dislocated Worker Programs in Yakima County, all core and intensive services are delivered within the WorkSource framework through contracted service providers.

The SCWDC does provide for the direct delivery of Dislocated Worker services in Yakima County. As with other programs, these too are delivered within the framework of South Central's One-Stop system.

Core services are delivered through a seamless system and designed to meet the unique needs of all customers. The services provide both employers and job seekers a convenient, powerful resource through an accessible system for which there is no wrong door. Core services provide business with the necessary information, technology, and assistance to locate and obtain skilled workers while providing job seekers with the tools needed to explore, acquire, and retain successful careers.

2 Local WIA Administrations and System Oversight

A. Fiscal Responsibility for Title 1B Grants

The counties of Kittitas, Klickitat, Skamania, and Yakima constitute Workforce Development Area IX pursuant to the Governor's approval dated July 1, 2006. As a county consortium of contiguous units of general local government, the South Central Consortium has been designated as the local grant sub recipient and local fiscal agent.

The South Central Workforce Development Council is organized as a nonprofit corporation by the Boards of County Commissioners of Kittitas, Klickitat, Skamania, and Yakima Counties, Washington, as provided for in Section 117 of Public Law 105-220--Aug. 7, 1998 Workforce Investment Act (WIA), to implement the WIA in the South Central Workforce Area, and in accordance with the Inter-local Cooperation Act of 1967, Chapter 39.34, RCW. The South Central Workforce Development Council is organized exclusively for educational, charitable, religious, scientific, and/or literary purposes, within the definition of Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended from time to time.

B. Competitive process used to award grants and contracts

With the exception of the Yakima County Dislocated Worker Program, selection of service providers will comply with our local competitive process as well as any Washington State Policy and other applicable federal regulations. The South Central Workforce Development Council will use a "Request for Proposal" (RFP) system applying the Competitive Negotiation Method.

This process will include the posting of public notice as open invitations to the public, including the faith-based community, to participate in the bid process for WIA funded services. The South Central Workforce Development Council also keeps a list of organizations who have previously expressed an interest in bidding for the delivery of I-B services. Those organizations are notified when the procurement process occurs.

The Youth Council will review proposals for the provision of Youth services and recommend the initial selection for a Youth services provider to the South Central Workforce Development Council. The Council will then make the final selection of Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker providers to be funded based on those proposals that are most responsive to the request, most advantageous to the workforce area, and most efficient in terms of quality and cost.

Example criteria for selection will include the following, with an assigned point system weighted by level of importance: program design; agency qualification, including program management financial viability; audit and performance reports; performance goals; cost analysis; and additional relevant categories.

C. Process and criteria for certifying WorkSource Centers and Affiliates

Validation of WorkSource Centers is a responsibility of the regional One-Stop Partnership using a three-fold process and a Validation Team led by business and labor representative(s). Each Validation Team receives an orientation to the validation process; explaining the team's role, responsibilities, duties and the aspects and goals of the process. The team approaches the validation effort from the customers', both job seekers and employers, viewpoints.

The first component of the process is a "Quality" self-assessment. The assessment is to be used to establish a quality baseline against which annual goals will be established to ensure continuous quality improvement. This self-assessment method requires the involvement of partners and frontline and management staff in the Center to insure a balanced appraisal of the quality of the various components of the Center.

The second facet of the process is an evaluation of the Center using a checklist as an evaluation tool. The checklist indicates the threshold criterion that needs to be met in order for a local office to be validated as a WorkSource Center in the One-Stop System. The Validation Team performs an on-site assessment comparing the Center's facilities and services against the minimum requirements indicated on the checklist. Once the evaluation is completed satisfactorily, the business and labor representatives sign-off on the checklist and notify the state office that the validation has been met.

If a Center fails to meet any of the required criteria, it will not be considered a validated Center and will be required to provide a direct response to the missing or erroneous required element(s). The Center may request another validation assessment as soon as the missing or erroneous criterion has been remedied.

The third and final aspect of the validation process is a signed commitment by the Center to utilize the regional partnership's adopted quality improvement method to continually improve services and performance. Periodic self-assessments are

performed and an action plan is developed that lists any deficiencies or areas of need identified in the self-assessment, along with the actions to be taken to remedy them. It is critical to have all staff of the Center involved in this on-going process.

Following are the primary criteria used in the local WorkSource Validation:

Employer Focus

- * Labor market information
- * Assistance in listing job orders
- * Assistance in filling job orders
- * Rapid response capability
- * Assistance for major layoffs and plant closures
- * Service plan for businesses

Job Seeker Focus

- * Availability of services for special populations
- * Veterans
- * Customers with disabilities
- * Customers requiring special assessments
- * Customers with limited English proficiency
- * Youth with special needs
- * Welfare recipients
- * Older workers
- * Migrant seasonal farm workers
- * Customers with limited resources
- * Dislocated workers

Accessibility

- * Services are accessible to people with disabilities
- * Services are accessible to people with limited English proficiency

Partnership

- * A resource sharing agreement or memoranda of understanding exists
- * A process for problem-resolution for issues arising on site among the partners exists
- * There are sustainability plans for future funding of the Center.

Required Programs and Services

- * WIA-Title 1B Youth
- * WIA-Title 1B Adult
- * WIA Title 1B Dislocated Worker
- * Title V of the Older Americans Act/SCSEP
- * Veterans' Employment Programs
- * Claimant Placement Program
- * Worker Retraining
- * Post Secondary Vocational-Technical Programs

- * Vocational Rehabilitation
- * Adult Basic Education Programs
- * ESL Programs
- * Worker Profiling
- * Labor Market Information
- * Labor Exchange
- * Access to Unemployment Insurance
- * (Note: the following services may be present depending of availability in area)
- * Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker Services
- * NAFTA/Trade Assistance Act
- * HUD Employment & Training
- * Early Intervention services to potentially dislocated workers
- * Rapid Response to plant closures
- * WorkFirst (employment services only)
- * Community Services Block Grant

Program Integration

- * The programs, services, staff, and partner affiliations appear seamless to the customers of the Center.
- * The initial point of contact staff has information and is trained on all programs and services.
- * Customer orientations provide information on all programs and services.
- * The facility layout lends itself to integration of programs and services

Other

- * Accountability
- * The Center understands what it is accountable for
- * The Center has a method of collecting information to measure performance.
- * A customer satisfaction system is in place.
- * Self-Assessment

Core Services

- * Initial Assessment (Evaluates job readiness based on job skills, experience, aptitudes, interests, and abilities.)
- * Job Counseling (Assists customers in determining available services and best use of information)
- * Job Referral and Placement (Allows access to available jobs and posting of resumes)
- * Employer Services (Provides access to labor market information; recruitment, screening, and referral of qualified applicants.)
- * Information and Referral (Access to information regarding services such as housing, food, and medical assistance; an efficient referral process is in place.)
- * Training and Re-Training Information (Provides information about basic skills, literacy, occupational skills training services and Apprenticeship opportunities)
- * Labor Market Information (Provides occupational supply and demand information; current occupational wage information)

- * Internet Access (Access to computers with Internet connections)
- * Unemployment Insurance Access (Telephone access to file for unemployment insurance benefits)
- * Translation Services (Services to customers in their first language; using AT&T services or Internet)

Intensive Services

- * Enrollment in intensive services is available and provides for:
- * Comprehensive and specialized assessments of skill levels
- * Diagnostic testing
- * Group counseling
- * Awareness of what intensive services are available.

Other

- * Training Services
- * Enrollment in training services is available and provides for:
- * Occupational skills training
- * On-the-job training
- * Private sector training
- * Skill upgrading
- * Job readiness training
- * Awareness of what training services are available.

D. Process for One-Stop Operator designation

At the onset of One-Stop System development, organizations of the South Central Partnership, comprised of all partners, agreed that One-Stop Operators should be organizations with the capacity to comply with facility and integration requirements. By agreement of the partners, the State of Washington Employment Security Department was designated as the One-Stop Operator for Career Development Centers in Sunnyside, White Salmon, and Yakima with an affiliate site in Goldendale. People for People, a local WIA I-B Operator, was designated the Operator for the Ellensburg Career Development Center and later, Yakima Valley Farm Workers was certified and received designation as an affiliate site for Toppenish. Lastly, the Skamania affiliate site was certified, and by agreement of the partners, was added to the sites operated by the State of Washington Employment Security Department.

E. Roles and functions of the One-Stop Operator(s) (See Attachment B)

The South Central Workforce Development Council has a local agreement in place with each One-Stop Operator. The agreement spells out the role which is described as a Managing Partner to coordinate activities throughout the One-Stop System. The One-Stop Operator is required to identify and address issues that arise regarding service delivery and performance. The One-Stop Operator works with co-located partners to create solutions, but is also empowered to make a final

determination when a decision cannot be reached or when timing to make a decision requires immediate action.

The One-Stop Operator is responsible for ensuring the integrated service delivery system at the local WorkSource Center and Affiliate sites supports SCWDC and state policies related to oversight and implementation of the One-Stop Delivery System. Further, the One-Stop Operator must function in a lead role to fully integrate the WorkSource Partnership products, protocols, and quality standards yet conforming to the SCWDC Strategic and Operations Plans.

F. Responsibilities of the One-Stop Operators

In WDA IX, One-Stop Operators have crafted a seamless service model to deliver the full range of core services. To achieve this result, the Operators serve a lead and central role in the coordination of resources and deployment of staff to meet the needs of customers on a daily basis. To ensure adequate resources are available to WorkSource customers, One-Stop leads hold regular meetings with center partners. During these meetings, customer flow and WorkSource usage is discussed to identify problem areas, bottlenecks, and the availability of partner resources to address issues and to continue to provide an uninterrupted stream of core services. While Wagner-Peyser and WIA I-B provide the bulk of staff resources, all partners find productive ways of supporting core services through technology, staff assistance or by providing specialized services (e.g. assistive technology, translation services) to ensure that every customer's needs are met.

Periodic reports from the WorkSource Membership System (swipe card) provide a detailed look at customer usage of resources and offerings within each center. The WorkSource Membership System provides real time data across six major categories (Job Search, Research, Resources, Interview, Group Activities, and Self-Assessment) with the ability to drill down to as many as eight specific subcategories. This information allows One-Stop Operators to analyze customer usage and determine, in coordination with partners, the most efficient and effective distribution of resources.

G. WorkSource Staff function as a Coordinated Team

Communication is a key to functioning as a successful multi-agency team. Staff teams, cross training and strong personal relationships have help build and support our existing one stop system locally. Partner organizations have provided, for the most part, clear direction to their staff in the WorkSource offices that coordination of functions is the expectation. This is especially true when services are provided by both the ES funded TAA program and the WIA funded Dislocated Worker program. Co-enrollments are common and these staffs must work together to coordinate, and not duplicate, services to their clientele. We will continue to reinforce the expectations that staff need to continue to work collaboratively and reinforce the

concept of multi-agency teams during combined bi-monthly staff meetings and other opportunities.

G. See Local Policy Attachments

- * Procurement
- * WIA Eligibility and Priority Policy for Adults
- * Priority of Services for Veterans (and applicable Spouses) and other relevant policies
- * Individual Training Accounts

3. Implementation of the Demand-driven Workforce System

A. Meeting the Current and Future Employment Needs of Employers and Participants

Sector strategy

The South Central Workforce Council (SCWDC) has adopted a sector approach as structure for the delivery of services. The sector approach focuses on key economic industries that cluster together, to support each other, and to be competitive in the global economic environment. The cluster forms around central businesses and includes additional businesses that are a part of the supply demand chain. When formulating the cluster approach, the Council uses the following criteria to identify the key industry sectors.

- * Importance to the economic base of the region
- * Industry leaders that are willing to participate through investment and skill panels
- * Industries that face critical shortages or the prospect of layoffs or closures
- * Industries are likely to grow, survive, and offer employment opportunities with livable wages
- * High-Skilled High-Wage jobs that are present and career ladders for advancement
- * Growth and employment within each industry, including the number of employees and the overall percentage of the workforce employed by a sector

Generally, when the major categories of employment are examined in the four counties, the overall concentration of employment is found in Agriculture-based Industries. Other concentrations of employment and growth are found in Health Care and Construction Industries. While the Manufacturing Industry has experienced some job loss in the last few years, it still represents one of the largest employing industries in the region and LMEA data shows jobs now being added and expected to continue into the future. It is expected that gains in productivity in these sectors will continue through business investments in equipment and technology as well as a more highly trained and skilled workforce.

The SCWDC is committed to provide demand driven workforce services to key industries that are critical to the region's economy. Severe health care personnel shortages continue to exist in the region and statewide. Additionally, skill gaps continue to exist in agriculture, manufacturing, and construction, as these sectors invest in new technology and restructure their workforce to remain competitive. Over the past several years, skills panels have proven to be an effective tool in addressing local workforce issues.

The skill panels are comprised of representatives from employers, labor, educators, local community and technical colleges, as well as other vested parties, and have been invaluable to the process of identifying workforce needs and scanning for future changes. The collective knowledge of these groups have served as a guiding body in developing training programs for new and incumbent workers, developing local strategies to meet labor shortages and increasing capacity of local training programs.

Centers of Excellence and Post Secondary Training

The SCWDC recognizes and values the important role that technical colleges play in preparing people for jobs in high demand industries in our community. Within Workforce Development Area IX, Yakima Valley Community College and Perry Technical Institute provide a vital role in the delivery of high quality training and are active partners in planning and formulating local workforce policy.

Washington State community and technical colleges' Centers of Excellence have become an important resource and partner to industries of the local area that are addressing worker and skill shortages. The South Central Health Skills Panel and the Center of Excellence for Allied Health through Yakima Valley Community College have been active partners in addressing critical health care worker shortages in the South Central area. These two entities have taken a leadership role in galvanizing a partnership of business representatives, education organizations and WorkSource providers to identify Health Workforce priorities, develop local solutions, and leverage resources to support implementation.

Examples of success from the forged relationships include expanded health care programs by creating and implementing a new Allied Health Program at Yakima Valley Community College. Scholarship programs that target diverse opportunities have been created, giving minorities and women in entry-level occupations the opportunity to gain a higher level of training for career and wage advancement. Roadblocks to clinical sites for health care trainees will be addressed by creating a coordination point through the Center of Excellence, enabling more students access to training and other programs.

The SCWDC Construction Skill Panel has worked closely with the Renton Technical College which serves as the Construction Center of Excellence. Staff of the local Workforce Council sits on the steering committee for the Center of Excellence which

meets quarterly. The steering committee oversees and provides input to statewide projects and provides general guidance for grant applications and seeking other project funding. Over the past few years, the center has provided support and technical assistance to numerous projects. The following projects are examples of this support and assistance between the center and the SCWDC.

The Associated General Contractors Education Foundation and the Renton Construction Center of Excellence received a Transitional Math Project grant. The grant focused on bringing together the Building Trades to develop construction math curricula, called *Construction Math Toolbox*, to be made available to schools locally, and in other parts of the state. The *Construction Math Toolbox* provides teachers with career guidance tools for students interested in the construction trades. SCWDC served as the liaison between the project and local school districts.

“*If I Had A Hammer*” is a nationally recognized curriculum that provides hands on construction experience for middle school students. Co-funded by the Renton Construction Center of Excellence, the SCWDC, and the Associated General Contractors Education Foundation the curricula are tailored to meet the needs of TANF women interested in construction trades.

B. Target Industries within Workforce Development Area

Industry sector	NAICS Title	NAICS Code
Health Care	Health care and Social Assistance	62
Manufacturing (wood, metals, plastics)	Manufacturing	31-33
Food Processing	Food Manufacturing	311
Construction	Construction	23

C. Supporting employment in targeted industries and demand occupations

The South Central Workforce Council (SCWDC) has prioritized the use of WIA funds for targeted industries and demand occupations through local ITA policy and through the use of discretionary funds to support the sector approach.

For WIA providers that deliver I-B adult and Dislocated Worker services, local policy requires first consideration be given to labor market demand in the local area or the area to which the trainee intends to relocate. The use of training is limited to skills relevant to demand occupations and can be used only for those occupations that the local board has determined to be in sectors of the economy that have a high potential for sustained growth and/or where documentation indicates employment prospects in the local area in addition to those occupations on the demand list.

For target industries of the local area, the Council makes every effort to use WIA funds in support of its four industry sectors, but understands the limitations. Discretionary project funds have been the primary source of WIA funds to provide training for incumbent workers. Incumbent worker training continues to be a valuable strategy for skill development among South Central's key sectors – Construction, Food Processing, Healthcare, and Manufacturing.

D. Coordination with Apprenticeship Programs

Occupations in the trades have been experiencing a tremendous shortage of available skilled workers. The increased public and private building projects in the South Central Workforce area, combined with an aging worker population, are fueling worker shortages in the construction industry throughout the local area. In response to the decreased number of workers in the field, the Council has identified the construction industry as a key industry in the Workforce Development area.

In 2003, the South Central Workforce Council, in partnership with the Building Trades, Yakama Nation, Associated General Contractors, Businesses and Yakima Valley Community College, was awarded the Statewide Apprenticeship Training Project (SAT) grant. The project sought to increase apprenticeship opportunities for new entrants through pre-apprenticeship training. It also sought to expand the skill sets of apprentices and journeymen to promote worker retention and to allow for flexibility into a wider range of jobs and advancement opportunities. The Tri-County Apprenticeship Program and Incumbent Worker Training (TAPIT) project served over 600 people of the local area, many of them hard-to-serve unemployed, providing them apprenticeship opportunities in the building trades through training, job placement, retention services, and wage progression assistance.

The ongoing result of the TAPIT project was the formation of the South Central Workforce Council's Construction Skills Panel, developed to ensure that the training offered met the basic needs for entry into apprenticeship programs and the industry as a whole. The skill panel, originally comprised of representatives from local labor organizations, employers, Yakama Nation, and post secondary institutions, has gained traction and expanded to include a representative from Educational School District 105 to assist with the connection to K-12.

In addition to establishing ongoing communication and coordination among partners, the skills panel has been the driver in forging new relationships and spawning new projects. This includes a Native American led mentoring program for the construction industry, which has been touted as a Promising Practice, established with the Yakama Nation Tribal Employment Rights Office (TERO).

The panel also served as a springboard for the development of the Building Apprenticeship Training (BAT) program at the Yakama Nation Housing Authority. This provided opportunity for tribal members to enter into Yakama Nation local apprenticeship programs. The Yakama Nation Housing Authority indentured over

40 employees into the BAT program in various industry tracks which included HVAC, electrical, painting, plumbing, and carpentry.

4 Efficient Use of Resources and Fiscal accountability

A. Budget Process in Centers and Affiliates

Given the multiple geographic regions of Workforce Development Area IX, there are currently three One-Stop Operators responsible for carrying out the budget process for cost and functions in each full and affiliate WorkSource Site in the region. This includes the State of Washington Employment Security Department for sites in Yakima, Sunnyside, Goldendale, White Salmon, and Stevenson; People For People for the Ellensburg site and Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic for the site in Toppenish.

While each area may vary in facility size and number of partners, the fundamental process for determining cost for key functions and services are the same. This includes:

- * Overall square footage and common areas of the facility
- * Other infrastructure costs such as technology and phones
- * Facility maintenance and repair such janitorial, snow removal, etc.
- * Overhead cost that may include such things as copiers and supplies, equipment maintenance, insurance, signage, etc.

For each partner and funding source residing (co-located) in a WorkSource site, costs are assigned according to formulas that consider full-time employees and square footage used as percentages of the whole. Some costs, such as internet connections, may include a base fee, and where appropriate, additional direct charges based on expanded services. Costs such as technology support may vary depending on the availability of support by the individual organization.

B. Cost Sharing within Centers and Affiliates

It is the intent of every career development center and affiliate site to make available the greatest level and range of services to local customers and to maximize the public dollar. In doing so, every one-stop operator works personally with each partner to cooperatively develop and negotiate a One-Stop Resource Sharing Agreement (RSA) that is fair and considerate of the varying resources of each program. This means that some partners who provide a benefit to the local WorkSource system, but have very limited budgets (e.g. older worker programs), may be given limited space and support at reduced or no cost.

Once Resource Sharing Agreements are put in place, they are reviewed on a regular basis to consider vacancies or cost changes. Partners are notified in writing when significant changes in rents or other infrastructure costs are necessary.

Negotiations for a revised RSA are completed in person, with partner decision makers, and the new RSA (or Addendum, if appropriate) is signed and put into place.

SECTION II OVERVIEW OF THE WORKSOURCE SYSTEM

1. Memorandum of Understanding

Consistent with the requirements of WIA, the South Central Workforce Council has developed a Memorandum of Understanding (**Attachment xxx**) with all partners of the local WorkSource system. The MOU describes:

- * The services to be provided through the one-stop delivery system.
- * How the costs of such services and the operating costs of the system will be funded through resource sharing agreements.
- * The methods for referral of individuals between the one-stop operator and the one-stop partners.
- * The duration of the MOU and the procedures for amendment during the term of the MOU.

The Workforce Council will ensure that the WorkSource operators and WIA and other program providers comply with the equal opportunity provisions of WIA Section 188 and its implementing regulations at 29 CFR Part 37.

2. Partner Program Participation Matrix

See **Attachments XXX**

3. Integration of Core Services

A. Core Services to Businesses

Labor market information, assistance in listing job orders and filling job orders is available in each of the WorkSource offices throughout this Workforce area. Knowledgeable Wagner-Peyser funded staff can provide special assistance to employer customers. Job orders are received and referrals made from an “Order Control” unit. Order control is staffed by experienced WorkSource Specialists who take employer job openings by phone and assists in matching registered job applicants to the orders received.

Staff serving targeted groups (Dislocated Workers, NAFTA/TAA, Veterans, TANF recipients, etc.) are encouraged to work together when contacting employers on behalf of their clients. A new tool has been introduced within the past year which allows staff to review the lists of employees drawing Unemployment Insurance (UI) Benefits from a specific employer. If the employer lists a job order with the

WorkSource office, claimants drawing UI benefits and impacting the employers experience rating will be referred to openings. This is being marketed specifically by the Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFW's) program specialists to the Agricultural employers in an attempt to obtain additional job listings.

South Central Workforce Council Staff has worked directly with the WorkSource Operations Division of Employment Security and other local areas to develop methods, practices, and templates to take job orders and enter job orders into SKIES. The overarching goal was to develop a consistent, useful, and professional process and format for job announcements that appear in SKIES and go2worksource.com. As a result of this effort, the group agreed that the common job order format must be easy to read, contain the appropriate use of bold/italic/bullets, and never use all caps or all bold. Further, all job listings would contain the following elements.

Duties and responsibilities (this includes tasks performed, responsibilities, machines, tools or equipment to be used, required travel and other information specific to job duties)

Hours / Days / Schedule (total hours per week of the job required along with any special schedule requirements)

Job Requirements (this would include a list of required (“must-have” experience, skills, abilities, education, knowledge of software, machinery, tools, requirements for certifications, licenses, etc, able to pass pre-employment drug screen, background check, etc., (All requirements to be listed in bullet format)

Preferred Qualifications (Per employer’s specifications)

Salary / Wage / Benefits

Closing Date / Closing Date / Deadline if Applicable

How to Apply

The WorkSource Centers in the South Central Workforce Area, under the leadership of the South Central Workforce Council and the WorkSource Oversight Committee, has clearly defined how business services will be packaged, marketed, and provided to the business community in a manner that is professional and consistent by all WorkSource partners in the region.

The purpose of the Business Services plan is to direct a focus toward the improvement and effectiveness of the services offered to businesses in our region. A key component of this improvement is the coordination of the many programs and partners that enables business to get assistance from us, not only to find workers, but for a variety of other services.

The following goals have been established for Business Services in our region:

Services to businesses will be offered as a system. All business service representatives will present themselves and WorkSource business services using the same WorkSource identity, the same materials, and selling WorkSource services rather than individual agency services.

Business services that are available are clearly defined. Available services have been clearly defined, entities have been designated to provide them, and all staff from all partners has been trained to understand this “menu of services”, and are able to describe and facilitate them for the business customer.

There are established levels/tiers of service, including at least basic core services – available to all businesses, and premium services – offered only to certain business customers.

Key performance measures will be developed / adopted to demonstrate the success of our business service program. The state provides performance information through the GMAP (Government Management Accountability and Performance) tool. This provides a great deal of information about basic core services available within the Centers such as job listings, fill rates, time to fill rates, wage rates, etc. Additional data regarding customer satisfaction are under development.

Improve and coordinate our marketing to business. Businesses shall receive a clear message about our “menu of services”. Marketing materials vary from office to office, and from partner to partner. The state has recently developed a package of attractive and consistent materials. These may or may not clearly represent what we have available in each local office. The materials have been developed that speak in clear language understandable by employers and speak to the benefits and value of using the system.

Staff the new, coordinated WorkSource Business Services Program. Resources are at a premium. Across four counties and seven WorkSource offices, fewer than three FTEs are allocated to providing services to business. A proactive and effective delivery of services to business in our region will require additional staff to be dedicated to the task. WorkSource partners continue to consider reallocation of resources to meet the business services challenges to ensure coordination of efforts, to streamline existing work and reduce duplication. The Workforce Council will continue to seek additional funding and develop fee-for-service activities to augment and partially support business services.

Employers shall have a convenient and comfortable place to avail themselves of tangible business resources. Each WorkSource Center will have a business resource area, which may or may not be physically located at the WorkSource Centers which provides access to LMEA, tax information, information on hiring and job descriptions, space for interviewing and for industry specific training.

B. Core Services to Job Seekers and Employers

Staff Assisted Core Services

Staff assisted core services provided in the South Central Development Workforce area includes a wide range of services intended to help job seekers obtain employment directly or through programs that provide training and support services for those with special needs. Services include:

- * Initial Assessment where background information is collected about the job seeker so WorkSource staff can guide them to the services within the center that best fits their need.
- * Referrals to Job Opportunities listed with WorkSource for those who possess the required experience, training, and qualifications specified by the employer.
- * Referral to Training Assistance where individuals lack the education and skills necessary for competitive employment, and where the person appears to be eligible based on initial assessment information.
- * Job Search Assistance and Job Finding Classes where individuals need to develop a current resume, interview skills, and techniques for actively seeking employment.
- * Providing Labor Market Information for individuals needing to explore career opportunities and to understand wage and growth expectations of the job.
- * One on one Resource Room Assistance for those individuals who are using computer labs and office equipment in their search for work.
- * Assistance preparing an up to date and effective resume.
- * Interviewing Skills to assist job seekers in communicating effectively and presenting themselves in the best light possible during the oral interview process.
- * Vocational Guidance to help those WorkSource customers develop occupational goals and the pathways they have to undertake to achieve their career objectives.

The delivery of core services is a shared responsibility and performed jointly by state Employment Security, Workforce Investment Act I-B and other one-stop partner staff. To ensure services are provided in a consistent manner and in the highest quality, all staff receives orientations regarding the basic level of service needed to be provided in the WorkSource Center. To understand partner services, organizations routinely share program information regarding resources, program opportunities, or eligibility changes. Regular staff meetings are held in each site for all WorkSource staff to review client flows, staffing requirements and to ensure information being provided is accurate and up to date.

Initial Assessment, Screening, and Referral

Upon their first visit, job seekers are provided a one on one orientation and brochures describing the menu of services available through the local WorkSource Center. The orientation and communication materials provide customers an overview of program and activities available to assist them with unemployment insurance benefits, training programs or job placement services.

Once the orientation is provided, front-end staff conducts a preliminary assessment. Staff records the individual's interest, employment needs and work background and identifying information. For those looking for work, staff-match the workers skills to jobs and refers them to current openings. Where special needs are clearly, identified, direct referrals are made to other WorkSource service providers. Individuals are registered in SKIES and assessment, information, and referral services are recorded as well for performance measure tracking.

WorkSource Menu of Services

- career assessment
- job search workshops
- job leads and referrals
- business services
- information about community resources
- training opportunities
- labor market information
- access to internet, fax, phones, and copy machines for job search or training
- benefits access to unemployment
- computer lab
- employment related translation

Partner Roles and Coordination of Functions

Improving the quality of services in all facets of WorkSource in the South Central area is an ongoing activity. In the local centers, regular meetings are held to review the GMAP process and progress. To help staff provide information consistently and thoroughly, a program guide has been developed that serves as a desk aide for programs, services available, eligibility, contacts, and application process. The current staff meeting process is also a vehicle for continuous improvement. By bringing partners of the WorkSource Center together, referral strategies can be reviewed for effectiveness and modification where required. Current and future plans for improvement include staff training where by a set every staff within the WorkSource Center will receive instruction on how to effectively interact with customers and deal with special populations such as disabled populations and limited English speakers.

C. Referral Methods to Program Services

Individuals are cross-referred to programs on a daily basis. As initial assessments are performed, WorkSource staff ask critical questions to identify particular needs. Where individuals are eligible for more than one program co-enrollments may occur. For potentially eligible participants, staff may make referrals in writing, by phone or by email. As a practice, program staffs communicate with one another to share information, to ensure the person followed through with the referral or to provide the results of the visit. If services can be provided, special agreements may be put into place that describes the nature, amount, and duration of services to be received.

D. Operational Integration of Partner Programs

Employment Security, along with community-based organizations and other local and state partners, have come together to create a local delivery system that provides universal services and access to all worker and business customers by seamlessly integrating services in the local system. Specific practices for improved integration include:

- * Ongoing meetings and discussions around continuous quality improvement.
- * The development of local customer feed back systems
- * The implementation of the WorkSource Membership System to track participant usage of centers and particular services within the centers
- * Joint Workforce projects that draw on the resource and skills of all partner organizations to deliver community-hiring events such as job fairs through out the region.

4. Integration of Services to Common Target Populations

A. Access to Services

The South Central Workforce Council, WorkSource, and partner agencies will provide all customers, including those with special need, universal access to all programs and services. To ensure this takes place, the South Central Workforce Council has implemented a local policy that requires all WorkSource partners to comply with the American's with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 188 and the Methods of Administration of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and Washington State laws and policies. In addition to this policy, local WorkSource staff will provide the highest level of service to other special need populations; this includes migrant seasonal farm workers and limited English speakers.

The South Central Workforce Council, WorkSource, and its partner agencies agree to uphold the highest standards of non-discrimination and provide their customers and employees, information concerning the requirements of federal and state disability and discrimination laws. Actions that are considered discriminatory may include, but are not limited to the following:

- * Denial of services, privileges, and benefits equal to that afforded to other customers;
- * Lack of provision of reasonable accommodation necessary to participate in activities as effectively as customers who do not have disabilities.
- * Perpetuating discrimination by providing significant assistance to, or contracting with, an agency, organization or business that discriminates on the basis of a customer's disability status.

All South Central Workforce Council, WorkSource, and partner agency staff are responsible for communicating a collective commitment to nondiscrimination to customers when appropriate. Communicating includes sharing the South Central Workforce Development Area's nondiscrimination policy, verbally and in printed format (i.e. non-discrimination statements and all written material provided by the Equal Opportunity Officer), and appropriately addressing concerns which are brought forward. All South Central Workforce Council, WorkSource, and partner agency staff are responsible for adherence to this policy.

B. Strategies to Integrate Services

TANF Recipients

The service approach to TANF parents throughout South Central WorkSource area can be described as collaborative and consultative. The overarching goal is to create an integrated and comprehensive accessible network that will meet WorkFirst customer's needs in a consistent manner. WorkFirst parents will be treated equally and receive the same set of core services as any other customer within the centers.

WorkFirst parents in the South Central area are referred by DSHS to the nearest WorkSource Center to begin the comprehensive evaluation. The comprehensive evaluation gathers information about a parent's skills, abilities, and interests with the goals of quicker placement in an employment pathway. The assessment information and services provided to the WorkFirst parent are documented in SKIES which allows for appropriate referrals and better coordination of services between partners in the development of a plan to assist the WorkFirst parents achieve self-sufficiency.

The South Central Workforce Council has a contract with the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development to provide the WorkFirst Work Programs, i.e. Community Jobs, Community Works, Community Service, and Community Work Experience for WorkFirst parents in Kittitas, Klickitat, Skamania, and Yakima Counties. The Council currently subcontracts these programs to the WIA Adult and a WIA Youth provider. These service providers have demonstrated the ability to leverage and maximize the WorkFirst and WIA resources to support a comprehensive training plan which includes retention and wage progression activities through WIA follow-up services.

Unemployment Insurance Claimants

It is the intent of the WorkSource system to increase the rate and speed at which Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants return to work by actively engaging claimants in appropriate re-employment efforts. The primary focus of this effort is to immediately provide reemployment services to those claimants who lack the job seeking skills to effectively find work. In most cases, UI claimants tend to want to return to work quickly. However, in some instances, retraining may be the quickest

way to get a claimant back to work in a stable environment and reduce future needs for additional unemployment insurance benefits. In these cases, a thorough initial assessment is completed and a referral to an appropriate WIA service provider is made for evaluation.

In instances where the Dislocated Worker staff are working with UI claimants, they will assist the individual with their Commissioner Approved Training (CAT) and Training Benefits (TB) applications and act as liaisons between the Unemployment Insurance Division and the claimant.

Services to the UI claimant often begin at the profiling process. Claimants are selected and called into a mandatory Job Hunter Orientation. The Job Hunter Orientation class addresses the claimant's responsibility surrounding their unemployment benefits, describes the job search process, introduces problem-solving strategies, and uses a Job Search Readiness Inventory to determine their current knowledge base. The class provides information about other local resources, including WIA programs for which they may be eligible. The class also provides an explanation of the entire Job Hunter Series and allows claimants to register for additional workshops. These services are provided utilizing a group service approach consisting of the six modules in the Job Hunter Workshop Series or a comparable series that is consistent with Job Hunter Quality Standards. These group activities support customer movement to self-service. These group level job search activities are open to all job seekers, and other point-of-service staff may refer their customers (e.g., Veterans, Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers, Dislocated Workers, WorkFirst, etc.) into the Job Hunter Workshop Series whenever such referral would benefit their customers.

Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFWs)

Given the rural and agricultural nature of the service area, the Council recognizes the need for service to migrant and seasonal farm workers in the South Central Workforce Area. In order to assure access, participation and employment for this segment of the population, Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker (MSFW) staff will provide and coordinate with partners the delivery of all farm worker services available through the local one-stop system and with OIC of Washington, the WIA 167 Program provider for Washington State.

Services will be provided through varied access points located in areas where MSFW worker and agricultural employer services are most in need. Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker staff will focus on providing services to this population and their families in their primary language. Those interested in improving their skill levels will be referred to partners that provide English as a second language, basic education, and skill training. Agricultural Workers, Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers, and Food Processing Workers are provided service in accordance with the Workforce Investment Act; and the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 653.

Dislocated Workers and Trade Act

When the system becomes aware of a substantial layoff or a WARN (Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification), the following steps are undertaken:

- * WorkSource partners will be mobilized. These partners include Unemployment Insurance staff, dislocated worker staff, community college representative, and where appropriate, organized labor.
- * Early contact is made with employer and employee representatives to determine layoff schedules, labor negotiation status, worker skills, promoting and coordinating the establishment of labor/management cooperation.
- * Information is disseminated and exchanged about the Dislocated Worker Program, Unemployment Insurance, WorkSource resources, business assistance, and appropriate rapid response resources to assure that the business, organized labor, and employees not represented by unions are aware of the services available.
- * Strategies are developed to meet the unique needs of workers
- * The Rapid Response team conducts business site orientations to services for employers/employees
- * Coordinate with labor and economic development organizations to prevent layoffs.
- * Coordinate activities with the statewide rapid response program utilizing the services of the State Dislocated Worker Unit.
- * Conduct Rapid Response Services in accordance with Washington's Statewide Rapid Response Policy.
- * The South Central Workforce area will meet the intent of the Trade Reform Act by providing Rapid Response activities to Trade impacted workers. WIA core and intensive services will also be provided and, where applicable, the individual will be co-enrolled in WIA and Trade Act.

Persons with Disabilities

Every effort is made to accommodate all individuals within WorkSource Centers regardless of disability or need. Accessible technology and Disability Placement Specialists are available at the primary access points to the WorkSource system. Persons with disabilities will receive the same set of core, intensive, and training services under WIA as other adult workers. Based on individual needs and where

capacity within the center exist, special populations will receive intensive services, such as, one-on-one employment counseling, job development, referral, or training assistance and partner or community offered services.

The South Central Workforce Council, WorkSource, and partner agencies will provide universal access to all programs and services to customers with disabilities by written policy that complies with the American's with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 188 and the Methods of Administration of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and Washington State laws and policies. This policy is written to establish local procedures and is not intended to supersede any other applicable laws, regulations, or organizationally specific requirements. Any particular policies that local contractors or partner agencies may implement must, at a minimum, contain these same mandates but may, as appropriate; provide additional protections to customers with disabilities.

Services to Veterans and Related Eligible Persons

Veteran staff will provide and coordinate with partners the delivery of all veterans' services to special disabled veterans, veterans of the Vietnam Era, disabled veterans other than the special disabled veterans, and all other veterans and eligible persons. Special assistance and focus will be provided to those Veterans traditionally disadvantaged, homeless, and economically disadvantaged Veterans; and those recently discharged veterans (including National Guard), especially those with service connected disabilities, who have participated in Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom and the Global War on Terrorism.

Veteran staff will conduct outreach activities to employers, veterans, and eligible persons not currently accessing the system. Case management services will be provided to all Title 38 referrals needing such services. The needs of multiple barrier veterans and recently separated veterans with military occupational specialties that do not readily transfer to the civilian workforce are case managed on a case-by-case basis. Specific preferences are provided to these customer groups in the areas of applicant registration, and selection and referral to job openings and other core services.

Services may include a combination of self-service, facilitated self-service, group services and/or referral to supportive services. Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program will case manage those Veterans with severe barriers to employment and are in need of intensive one-on-one services. This is done regardless of the agency or program affiliation. In addition, Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Programs will act as liaisons to ensure that other WorkSource staff are aware of the peculiar needs and priorities of Veterans.

Programs serving veterans will comply with the changes to the Jobs for Veterans Act by making changes to the definition for veterans and changes to focus or direction of Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) and Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER) responsibilities, based upon Federal and State policy.

Local Adult Priority of Service

The South Central Workforce Council has set local policies to establish a priority of service and establish minimum service levels in the four county areas. When funding limitations exist, the Council will prioritize services as follows:

- * First priority to recipients of public assistance and other low income individuals
- * Second priority to veterans and spouses of certain veterans as described by the Jobs for Veterans Act.
- * Third priority to individuals who are under 175% of income guidelines.
- * Fourth priority to individuals who meet one of the following conditions
 - Their family is not yet self-sufficient, or
 - Unemployed or underemployed and are pursuing training in local high demand occupational clusters as approved by the Workforce Council.

The South Central workforce area has defined self-sufficiency as a family of a given composition living in a given community shall be deemed "self-sufficient" when its earned income is adequate to meet its basic needs without public or private assistance. The Self-Sufficiency Standard for Washington State shall be used as a guideline in determining adequate income. The Self-Sufficiency Calculator will be a tool used in determining self-sufficiency. The Self-Sufficiency Calculator is located at www.southcentralwdc.com. For purposes of the South Central workforce area, determination of "self-sufficiency" may also include mastery of basic skills by the family wage earners.

Setting these program priorities will take the form of Administrative Bulletins that will outline the Council's policy for priority service. Administrative Bulletins will be posted on the Council's website and also disseminated to eligible providers of WIA I-B Services and WorkSource Operators. All Administrative Bulletins shall be consistent with state policy.

Each local operator of a Title I-B Adult-funded program must demonstrate an eligibility determination process that supports these priority services. The Council will also ensure that services are provided efficiently and effectively in a timely manner without undue delays. For eligibility determination, such factors as funding availability, target group goals, other available resources in the local community, and participant and business needs are used to form the basis of the local policy.

5. Adult and Dislocated Worker Intensive and Training Services

A. Intensive Services

Through many years of providing workforce programs to adults and dislocated workers, the South Central Workforce Council has established a broad range of intensive services and activities necessary to address the needs of the local population. Services are offered consistently throughout Workforce Area IX and may be delivered individually and/or in groups. Regardless of the delivery mechanism, services are tailored to address individual needs in order to optimize the success of the job seeker. The following menu of services is available across the entire service area to each and every customer of WIA I-B Adult and Dislocated Worker programs.

Comprehensive Assessment

This specialized assessment is an in-depth evaluation of a customer's skill levels and service needs. The assessment process includes a review of basic educational skills (English reading and math skills), occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests, aptitudes, and occupational goals (including interests and aptitudes for nontraditional jobs). When conducting assessments, case management staff work directly with clients to identify support service needs such as the need for emergency assistance, childcare, transportation and other necessities that, if lacking, could prevent successful participation.

Individual Counseling

Individual counseling is provided to all participants entering WIA I-B Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. Counseling services are intended to assist each participant in achieving success through the program by overcoming barriers to employment, making good career/vocational decisions and developing a plan for success. Programs employ skilled professionals to provide guidance and support throughout the training and employment process. Where special needs are identified, referrals are made to other services such as mental health, substance abuse, financial assistance and other community support programs.

Individualized Career Planning

Individualized Career Planning is a process whereby dislocated and adult workers receive one on one assistance and guidance in choosing an occupational goal (including exploration of nontraditional employment opportunities) and mapping out an appropriate and attainable route for reaching their objectives. As part of the process, Case Managers work one on one with participants to help them understand labor market information, occupational surveys, testing results and other information necessary in developing a plan of action to achieve full time employment at a livable wage. For individuals in need of training, the process

includes the exploration of training options and the requirements and demands of the various training programs they are considering, to ensure that they make a sound decision when choosing a training program and provider.

Individual Employment Planning

An Individual Employment Plan is the culmination of the assessment and career planning process. For each participant, the plan serves as a road map to navigate the training and employment system from beginning to end. Developed mutually between staff and client, the plan clearly articulates issues identified in the assessment process and identifies an effective combination of service strategies to effectively deal with these issues and overcome any barriers to training and/or employment that may have surfaced. Within each plan, defined goals and achievable objectives are clearly mapped to serve as benchmarks in measuring the progress and success of the individual.

Group Counseling/Orientations

Providing services in a group environment is often effective for participants with common needs. Orientations may be given at the start of services to help unemployed or underemployed workers understand the full array of services offered through the one-stop system; in the middle of participation to provide peer support groups; or at the end of participation to form peer networks in the job search process. Topics which may be addressed include general orientations, vocational exploration, job search, relocation information, or other employment and training related information.

Short-term Prevocational Services

Prevocational services are those basic skills needed in the job finding process. They include such basic skills as effective communication, interviewing, literacy, and basic key boarding/computer. Prevocational services also focus on behavioral requirements of the workplace such as effective interpersonal communication, customer service, team building, conflict resolution, and understanding the importance of punctuality and attendance.

Supportive Services

Support services are available to adult and dislocated workers to address special needs identified in the assessment process or that arise during participation that threaten successful completion. Such services include, but are not limited to, transportation, child/dependent care, temporary shelter, health care, substance abuse counseling and referral, individual and family counseling and special services and materials for individuals with disabilities. These services are determined on an individual basis and provided, when funds and budgets allow, for those who lack the ability to pay for such services themselves.

Job Retention and Wage Progression Services

To achieve maximum job retention and wage progression for program participants, follow-up services are provided for up to one year after successful program completion. Follow-up services may include counseling, referral to other services in the community, and supportive services when deemed appropriate and necessary.

Work Experience

Short-term work assignments in the public sector are available for individuals in need of job exploration or developing basic work habits and/or occupational skills. A training agreement is developed between the worker, agency, and case manager that identify the duration of the work experience, the skills to be taught, and the WEX wages to be earned. Case managers continually monitor work experience sites and activities to ensure compliance by all parties, to confirm that benchmarks are being achieved and to intervene should issues arise.

B. Assessment Policies to Determine Eligibility and Suitability for Intensive Services

Initial Assessment

The initial assessment for program suitability is provided when the job seeker first utilizes the WorkSource. The WIA Adult and Dislocated worker case managers review the information and will provide an additional screening, if necessary, to clarify the job seeker's needs and objectives and to assist the job seeker in determining whether or not they are able to participate and benefit from services. Assessment tools may be used to determine eligibility and serviceability, and may include CASAS, TABE, and GED testing results. Above all, a commitment between participant and case manager provides the framework for ongoing support and coordination. Individuals whose personal goals are in line with program goals (training credential, employment, and retention) are considered suitable for the WIA program.

The South Central Workforce Council has set local policies to establish a priority of service and established minimum service levels in the local area. When funding limitations exist, individuals are screened according to the criteria established by the South Central Workforce Council described below.

- * First priority to recipients of public assistance and other low income individuals
- * Second priority to veterans and spouses of certain veterans as described by the Jobs for Veterans Act
- * Third priority to individuals who are under 175% of income guidelines

- * Fourth priority to individuals who meet one of the following conditions
 - * Their family is not yet self-sufficient, or
 - * Unemployed or underemployed and are pursuing training in local high demand occupational clusters as approved by the Workforce Council.

Setting these program priorities will take the form of Administrative Bulletins that will outline the Council's policy for priority service. Administrative Bulletins will be posted on the Council's website and also disseminated to eligible providers of WIA I-B Services and WorkSource Operators. All Administrative Bulletins shall be consistent with state policy.

Each local operator of a Title I-B Adult-funded program must demonstrate an eligibility determination process that supports these priority services. The Council will also ensure that services are provided efficiently and effectively in a timely manner without undue delays. For eligibility determination, such factors as funding availability, target group goals, other available resources in the local community, and participant and business needs are used to form the basis of the local policy.

For Dislocated Workers, the South Central Workforce Council will develop eligibility criteria that is consistent and in compliance with state provisions, federal regulations and the WIA. The criteria shall include an individual who:

1. has been terminated or laid off, or has received a notice of termination or layoff, from employment;
2. is eligible or has exhausted entitlement to unemployment compensation; or
3. has been employed for a duration sufficient to demonstrate, to the appropriate entity at a one-stop center attachment to the workforce, but is not eligible for unemployment compensation due to insufficient earnings or having performed services for an employer that were not covered under a State unemployment compensation law; and
4. is unlikely to return to a previous industry or occupation; has been terminated or laid off, or has received a notice of termination or layoff, from employment as a result of any permanent closure of, or any substantial layoff at, a plant, facility, or enterprise;
5. is employed at a facility at which the employer has made a general announcement that such facility will close within 180 days; or
6. for purposes of eligibility to receive services other than training services described in section 134(d)(4), intensive services described in section 134(d)(3), or supportive services, is employed at a facility at which the employer has made a general announcement that such facility will close;
7. was self-employed (including employment as a farmer, a rancher, or a fisherman) but is unemployed as a result of general economic conditions in

the community in which the individual resides or because of natural disasters; or

8. Is a displaced homemaker.

Comprehensive Assessment

Once an applicant is determined eligible and the decision is made to register the applicant, a Comprehensive Objective Assessment is initiated. The Objective Assessment is an independent, comprehensive evaluation designed to identify information vital to the development of an effective service strategy and intended to culminate in gainful employment.

The Objective Assessment is a multi-faceted, ongoing process, rather than a one-time event, and includes an evaluation of the participant's basic skills; occupational skills; prior work experience; employability; interests and aptitudes (including interests and aptitudes for nontraditional jobs); supportive service needs; life and family circumstances; and developmental needs.

The process entails a full array of options, including items such as structured interviews, paper and pencil tests, performance tests, behavioral observations, interest inventories, career guidance instruments and aptitude tests. Career assessment tools available to staff include Caps/Cops/Copes, CHOICES, and Workforce Explorer. Comprehensive Assessments are an interactive process that includes discussions around training time, driving time, and how the future job will impact the family. The WDA list of demand and decline occupations is used to guide participants in the selection of career goals, while the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) is used to determine appropriate training providers.

To assess basic skills the local area uses two state recognized tools, the CASAS and the TABE, and GED testing results. Other tools may be used by providers to determine instructional need for basic education and English language speaking ability. For assessment of work readiness skills the local area utilizes Work Keys, which provides a measure of different applied job skills in the areas of communication, problem solving, and interpersonal skills. If training through the local community college system is required, Colleges ASSET assessments are provided to WIA counselors to discuss developmental classes or programs of studies that best fit the participant.

The objective assessment and process will be sensitive to the testing and evaluation environment and the comfort and confidence level of the participant. Assessments conducted by other human service programs or schools, within the previous year, will be viewed as viable options and will be used, when appropriate, rather than requiring the participant to undergo additional assessments and duplication of information already obtained.

C. Provisions of WIA Training Services

Local Demand – Decline Occupation List

The South Central Workforce Council works closely in cooperation with the State of Washington Labor Market and Economic Analysis Division of Employment Security to maintain an up to date list of occupations and skill sets within their local areas for which demand is increasing or declining. These occupations comprise the List of Qualifying Occupations (List of Qualifying Occupations) that becomes the foundation for Strategic planning; eligibility for training benefits under the Workforce Investment Act, Unemployment Insurance, WorkFirst, and Commissioner-Approved training.

The Local Labor Market Specialist, designated by the Executive Director of the South Central Workforce Council, maintains a list of occupations and skill sets (List of Qualifying Occupations) identifying those for which demand is growing, those that are in decline and those for which demand is balanced/neutral (where supply of workers and job openings is predicted to be approximately equal). This list is updated annually or more often, as needed, and shall be approved by the council.

All available labor market information will be used in the development and maintenance of the List of Qualifying Occupations and includes but is not limited to the following:

- * Washington State information from sources at LMEA, UI, and WILMA
- * Skills gap analysis studies, such as those developed under the recent grant programs for Agriculture/Food Processing and for Metals, Woods, and Plastics.
- * Input from the Regional Economist for LMEA in the local area.
- * Input from recognized employment and training organizations that are experienced in placing job seekers in the local labor market.
- * Input from local and state Employment Security offices experienced in the development of job openings and announcements
- * Local offices of national employment service
- * Economic Development Councils and local Chamber's of Commerce in the counties of the region
- * Placement information from local training providers
- * Employment information (placements and projected openings) from local businesses and labor organizations

In addition to an annual review, several kinds of events may prompt a revision to the List of Qualifying Occupations, including:

- * WARN-level or significant layoffs or plant closures
- * Plant re-openings
- * A "User Alert" from LMEA notifying of a significant change in local economy
- * New business openings or significant growth of an existing business.
- * Requests for exceptions to the List of Qualifying Occupations that point to a possible change in demand.

Individuals who are seeking training for specific occupations may request exceptions to the List of Qualifying Occupations. The Local Labor Market Specialist will review such requests on an individual case-by-case basis. The Procedure for Exception Request must come to the Local Labor Market Specialist from the requesting service provider's administrator in writing. Requests must state the occupation in question and be accompanied by supporting documentation. All documentation must be verifiable and meet, at a minimum the following criteria for consideration:

- * Verifiable evidence of a bona fide employment opportunity upon successful completion of training.
- * Documentation of current high placement rates by a training provider
- * Occupations not listed by LMEA for which employment opportunities can be documented to exist.
- * An occupation for which demand is present but too small to be considered for a mid-year update to the List of Qualifying Occupations.
- * The LMEA List of Qualifying Occupations will identify demand by occupational cluster. There may be individual occupations within a declining or neutral cluster that can be established to be in increasing demand.
- * Other evidence to support the employability of the participant after training, such as training plan, labor market information, employer contacts, etc.

The Local Labor Market Specialist will notify the requesting agency in writing of his/her approval/disapproval. Decisions on exceptions to the list by the Local Labor Market Specialist shall be final. All exceptions will be reported to the Council.

The South Central Workforce Council maintains and approves exceptions to the List (www.cw1stop.org), and makes this list available for all interested parties. The list and any updates are sent to LMEA's contact person for posting on their websites and distribution.

Individual Training Accounts

The South Central Workforce Council has adopted a policy consistent with the state policy regarding Individual Training Accounts. Title I adult and dislocated workers will, after consultation with the case manager, be able to purchase training services from eligible providers in accordance with the limitations set out by South Central Workforce Council policy. The South Central Workforce Council has reserved the right to implement authorized exceptions to the use of Individual Training Accounts in accordance with WIA Section 134 and WIA 20-CFR 663-430.

Rather than being dependent upon employment counselors/case managers to prescribe a training regimen, individuals are expected to take an active role in managing their employment future through the use of Individual Training Accounts. Adult and dislocated workers receiving training under this approach will

receive the information they need (e.g., skills assessment, labor market conditions and trends, training vendor performance) to make an informed choice about their employment future and the training to support their decision.

All training services (except for limited exceptions identified by policy) are provided through the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) and eligible participants receive Individual Training Accounts through the one-stop delivery system. Individuals age 18 and above, who are eligible for training services under the adult program, may receive Individual Training Accounts through that program. Individual Training Accounts pay for training services for skills in demand occupations as defined by the local WDC from training providers on the approved list of eligible training providers. Payments may be made in a variety of ways, including the electronic transfer of funds through financial institutions, vouchers, or other appropriate methods. Payments may also be made incrementally, through payment of a portion of the costs at different points in the training course.

Training Related Placements

The process of training related job placements for those who have participated in a skill training activity is a structured process that begins at intake and assessment. It requires that individuals be carefully assessed to ensure that goals for employment are compatible with jobs available in the local community. Further, case managers counsel participants to ensure that wages, benefits, and working conditions of the job are compatible with financial needs and commitments. Such a process includes reviewing local labor market data that identifies demand occupations, fastest growing jobs and wage information. Other tools may be used in the process such as interest inventories and occupational outlook information.

Once participants complete training, case managers work one on one to facilitate training-related job placement. Individuals are guided through the full range of job finding services available through the WorkSource Centers. As part of the job finding process, individuals participate in job search workshops and receive assistance in resume preparation and developing interviewing skills. All sources for finding employment are part of a job search plan that includes targeting local businesses with jobs for which they received training, placement of resumes on public job finding websites, regular review of job orders posted with WorkSource and placement services available through training institutions.

D. Training Related Services

Leveraging Individual Training Accounts with other Resources

Providers of adult and dislocated worker programs make every effort to maximize the use of Individual Training Account resources. As a policy, individuals enrolled in programs are required to make application for Pell Grants, other financial aide programs, and scholarships available within local training institutions. Where

Trade Act and Worker Retraining Programs exist, co-enrollment is mandatory for all individuals participating in local I-B dislocated worker programs. To ensure resources are used to the greatest extent possible, cost sharing arrangements are sought where dual eligibility exists with other programs such as Vocational Rehabilitation and Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker Programs and new sources are continually pursued, such as the Opportunity Grants bill that allow low-income people to move into college, apprenticeships and job skills training programs.

Proposed Individual Training Accounts for Program Year 2007

For Program Year 07, the South Central Workforce Council estimates that for PY07 45% of our dislocated Worker funds and 45% of the Adult funds will be used for allowable training activities. This includes individual training accounts, on-the-job training, and customized training. Because the Adult Program continues to provide services to a disadvantaged population, many of the tuition costs are leveraged with Pell Grants and other tuition assistance with WIA providing the intensive services such as case management and support services which are critical to the success of this population.

Projected Training Related Employment

For the first three quarters of Program Year 2006, the South Central Workforce Council drew a report for the I-B Adult and Dislocated Worker Program training related placement rate. Based on the analysis of those individuals completing training and entering a job, 81% were designated as "Training Related Placements". The South Central Workforce Council projects that this rate will be maintained in subsequent years.

Coordination with Training Providers

WIA programs have developed close relationships with colleges, technical schools, and other frequently used training providers listed on the Eligible Training Provider List. WIA service providers work in collaboration with the training providers to identify demand occupations for future course development and to encourage training providers to list training programs on the Eligible Training Providers List to provide the WIA participants access the training with the support of an ITA. Communication between the training providers and WIA staff is ongoing to provide updates on schedules and grades, and identify issues and work together on barrier resolution and ensure successful completion of training.

On the Job Training and Proposed Plan of Service

The use of On the Job Training (OJT's) for our Dislocated Worker Programs is limited, but used to a larger degree in the adult programs. The top training (career) choices for Dislocated Workers in our region require a license or certification such as Nursing, HVAC, Electrician, Information Technology, and Telecommunications.

Work internships or other work components are a regular part of these training courses.

On-the-Job Training is frequently used in our rural area to meet the occupational skill training needs of the WIA adult participants and the businesses. OJTs are the ideal training component for those individuals who are not appropriate for classroom training, for those adults whose financial circumstances does not allow them to participate in classroom training, for those who acquire skills in occupations that are best learned on jobs and for those who require skill upgrades for career advancement.

Training activities built into the Individual Employment Plan consider transportation and family needs, local availability of the training type, training provider placement rates, and other individual needs. Because of transportation issues in the rural areas, OJTs have proved to be an exceptionally successful training method in which local employers benefit as well as the participants. Many businesses prefer training on their own equipment and have responded positively to overall experiences.

6. Services to Youth

A. Framework for Local Area Youth Programs

Tutoring, study skills training and instruction leading to secondary school completion and dropout prevention strategies

Close to 90% of the youth enrolled in local WIA youth programs are basic skills deficient. In many cases, the in-school registrants are students in need of credit retrieval and tutorial assistance to keep up with the other students of their class. To be successful, these young people need assistance in developing strong academic skills that include sound study habits and effective learning behaviors. The South Central Workforce Youth Program has a successful history of partnering with the K-12 system to deliver effective academic services to at-risk youth and addressing these special needs.

Education is the primary objective when students have not yet achieved appropriate grade level, high school completion or equivalent, or basic skills proficiency. Once needs are identified, Case Managers work closely with educators and the parents to get students on track to graduate. After school tutoring, credit retrieval programs, GED classes, and mentorship are all utilized to meet these objectives. Students enrolled in the program are monitored closely for progress and Case Managers meet with counselors regularly to evaluate the credit status of in school youth, identifying credit deficiencies and low academic performance at the earliest stages to implement intervention strategies as needed. Additionally, Case Managers work in conjunction with area school districts to assist youth in meeting the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) requirements, in

completion of senior projects and in accessing advanced instruction that will enable them to continue on to postsecondary education.

Alternative Secondary School Offerings

Alternative education is important to Workforce Development Area IX as school dropout rates are higher than state averages for the majority of counties in our region. Students who are unsuccessful in the “regular” school system, teen parents, and young people who work to support themselves and their family must have other options for school completion. With the large number of out-of-school youth in the area, alternative education programs are crucial as a second chance system and provide an effective means of dropout prevention and recovery.

Youth providers in the South Central Workforce Development Area work proactively to retrieve school dropouts and reengage them in an educational setting, preferably for high school completion and attainment of a diploma, but also for a GED if the circumstances warrant. Staff take advantage of existing programs in the area that include local alternative secondary schools provided by school districts, community-based programs in collaboration with local school districts, Yakima Valley Community College’s ABE and High School Completion Program, Heritage University’s HEP Program, Job Corp and the Portable Assisted Study Sequence (PASS) Program.

In addition to those above, new programs are being created through innovative use of WIA discretionary funds. Funds from the state Dropout Prevention & Intervention project have resulted in the development of a new alternative school in upper Kittitas County. The project combines WIA funds with basic education funds to provide alternative education programs for youth in a large rural area where educational options are minimal. The project is highly successful and is in its third year of operation.

Summer Employment Opportunities Linked to Academic and Occupational Learning

South Central summer employment opportunities provide an option for youth to engage in an accelerated academic program coupled with expanded occupational skills training. These activities are designed to enhance academic performance, job skill development, career awareness, and self-confidence. Offering basic academic skills that work in concert with specific occupational skills helps young people understand the relationship between sound basic educational skills and future job success. To achieve this connection, summer programs incorporate a number of activities that include:

- * Field trips to businesses in the private and public sectors to observe real- world work settings and stay abreast of current career trends

- * Community and business guest speakers to inform youth about career clusters, training and education requirements, and wage and demand.
- * Construction trades and career fairs that incorporate hands-on activities.
- * Visits to colleges and vocational schools that present real world information to help them connect classroom learning to the world of work.

Helping youth develop and understand the relationship between the classroom and world of work requires more than field trips and structured activities. Case management staff and classroom instructors most actively work directly with young people through exercises and interaction that stimulate them intellectually and invoke the cognitive process. Summer Program design incorporates the values found in the Summer Employment Resource Guide prepared by the “Maryland Institute for Employment and Training Professionals” for the U.S. Department of Labor. This is a study on the value of and effective strategies for linking the working and learning environments. In this study, the Institute cites three ways in which work and learning reinforces education:

- * Work Site experience is a powerful motivator for young people, providing financial incentives to stay in school and to learn outside of school
- * Teaching basic skills in a “functional context” helps ensure that skills are relevant to the workplace and the students will be able to apply skills in work-related situations and
- * Many people learn better and more quickly when basic skills are taught using “real world” problems and opportunity for hands-on practice.

Paid and Unpaid Work Experience Including Internships and Job Shadowing

Work experiences are planned, structured learning experiences that take place on a worksite for a limited period of time and are intended for youth to gain exposure to the working world and its requirements. The activity may take place in the private for profit, non-profit, or public sector, and may be subsidized or unsubsidized. Work experiences will help youth acquire an understanding of the personal attributes, knowledge, and skills needed to obtain and advance in employment and the opportunity for career exploration and skill development and may include the following elements:

- * Instruction in employability skills or generic workplace skills such as the SCANS
- * Exposure to various aspects of an industry
- * Progressively more complex tasks

- * Internships and Job Shadowing
- * The integration of basic academic skills into work activities
- * Supported work, work adjustment, and other transition activities
- * Entrepreneurship; and
- * Other elements designed to achieve the goals of work experience.

The program objective is to develop strategies that will move young people toward a career goal, and at the same time, promote the development of identified worksite-specific occupational skills and general workplace competencies such as punctuality, attendance, positive work attitude, personal appearance, effective and appropriate workplace relationships, and efficient task completion... When developing work experience placements, a number of factors are considered to ensure the experience is relevant and meaningful to the young person and the activity will contribute to the end result of self-sufficiency. This includes age appropriateness of activity, alignment to their goals, career demand, skills needed to advance toward the career and the additional training preparation that will be required.

South Central youth programs utilize employers from the public and private sector to provide training in work ethics, work readiness, and occupational skills. Placement sites are obtained through direct contact with local employers and through special relationships such as an agreement with the Greater Yakima Chamber of Commerce to serve as a clearinghouse to connect area students to businesses that provide job shadows. The customized data base program provides online registration by students and requires choices to be narrowed through the selection of a career cluster. The Chamber program requires that young people receive orientation on a number of issues such as dress, behavior, and responsibility. The Yakima Chamber has a curriculum designed to help the youth determine the proper questions to ask employers and a follow-up process to ensure the job shadow experience was successful for both the youth and the employer. In other, less populated areas, a large bank of employers who are willing to provide training opportunities for youth is maintained.

To ensure the experience is successful for both employer and youth, employers are provided an orientation to the program that explains the requirements and rules necessary to have a youth at their work site. An employer handbook is also available which includes information about WIA, the requirement to comply with the minor work laws, time and attendance procedures, supervision requirements, paperwork needs, the assurance of good work habits for participants and that there will be no supplanting of any employee. Case managers monitor activities closely and conduct regular evaluations and employers are asked to report both progress and concerns regarding the placement.

Occupational Skill Training

Occupational skills are a precise set of skills necessary to carry out the specific functions of a particular job. These skills sets can be acquired in a number of ways, through various means and in diverse settings. To develop occupational skills, South Central Workforce youth programs utilize skill training through local school districts; vocational centers; community and technical colleges; apprenticeship programs; On-the-Job Training with local businesses; Job Corps; and other occupational skill training programs.

Case managers encourage youth to enroll in vocational services at local Skills Centers where they can complete occupational skills credentials. Through special agreements, students can participate in postsecondary training through local community and technical colleges such as Yakima Valley Community College (YVCC) and Perry Technical Institute in the Yakima County area for advanced placement and college credits.

Occupational skill training also occurs through work experience and internships, while some youth benefit from special summer projects that highlight different career clusters. These activities provide hands-on learning experiences in Construction, Civics and Government, Science and Health, and Art and Technology. The programs focus on building valuable skills, connecting educational and occupational learning, leadership, and citizenship development as well as social and life skills.

Leadership Development Opportunities

Leadership activities are a fundamental part of the South Central Workforce Council's service design for in and out-of-school youth. The council recognizes how activities such as decision-making, team work, leadership, exposure to post-secondary educational opportunities, citizenship and life skills training, peer mentoring, and community service will enhance employability skills, develop positive social behavior and build character and a solid foundation for youth as they transition to adulthood and function in today's society.

As part of youth programs, leadership skills are developed through various settings that include school clubs, events, sports, music/band, and elected positions. For low-income youth, other venues are more suitable and can include opportunities for leadership within their work experiences with employers, field trips to post secondary institutions, cultural events, and community activities. Other activities may be facilitated by the Case Manager or the instructor in summer educational activity components in Community Service Learning activities or by doing peer centered projects that give back to and improve their community. To address financial aid preparation, job readiness, citizenship, and life skills, special workshops may be organized. The workshop setting provides planned, structured

activities and includes speakers who educate and provide insight on selected topics. Whenever possible, local employers and community leaders serve as speakers in the classroom or workshop and provide a unique perspective of job expectations and career opportunities.

During the year, special leadership events may be organized by youth staff, such as the Ropes Course Challenge, which is an inspiring outdoor experience, designed to shape and explore three areas of interpersonal relationships: teamwork, self-confidence, and commitment. The course provides progressively challenging situations where youth are able to overcome self-proclaimed barriers with the support of their team. This peer-centered activity encourages personal development, builds trust, and promotes positive social behavior.

Support

Services

Youth programs provide supportive services needed to successfully participate and complete planned training and/or employment activities. Supportive Services may be provided through in-kind or cash assistance to enable an eligible youth to participate in WIA activities. When providing support services, Case Managers work individually with youth to address identified needs. Given the limited resources, staff make every effort to access and enhance services through community partnerships. Support services may include, but are not limited to the following:

- * Assistance with transportation costs
- * Assistance with child care and dependent costs
- * Assistance with housing costs
- * Referral to medical services
- * Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work related tool costs
- * Other services required for the individual to participate in training.

Adult Mentoring

Mentoring can be powerful tool in helping young people overcome obstacles and stay focused on career objectives and goals. Responsible adults who take time to share their knowledge and experience and serve as a role model can form a lasting impression on young people that may influence the rest of their lives. For youth programs of the South Central area, adult mentoring is a critical part of services. When mentors are used, Case Managers work to ensure mentoring services are stable, caring and provide needed and positive guidance. Staff make every effort to

ensure that adult mentors are responsible adults from community service organizations, human service agencies, school district programs, service providers, or other youth mentorship programs operated within the community.

Follow-up services and Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling

Follow-up support and services are provided for one full year after a youth leaves the program. The extent of follow-up is based on individual needs, and Case Managers work closely with youth during and after completion of the program to determine the scope of services required. Follow-up may be less intensive for youth who participate only in summer youth employment opportunities. All youth participants will receive some form of follow-up for a minimum of twelve months, longer if necessary and approved by the Workforce Council. Follow-up support may take the form of continued communication with the youth and their placement site, which may be an employer, school, military or apprenticeship program and/or postsecondary institution to address or avert issues that could cause disruption to training or work. Follow-up services may include, but are not limited to the following:

- * Leadership development and supportive service activities
- * Regular contact with a youth participant's employer, including assistance in addressing work-related problems that arise
- * Assistance in securing better paying jobs, career development, and education
- * Work related peer support group activities
- * Adult mentoring; and
- * Tracking the progress of youth in employment after training
- * Comprehensive guidance and counseling.

Each registrant will be provided comprehensive guidance and counseling throughout their participation in local youth programs. This begins at the enrollment process when youth are assessed on their strengths and needs. Planning and counseling sessions, conducted jointly with the participant, are used to develop strategies, benchmarks, and timelines for achieving the youth's educational, training, and employment goals. The young person is then assigned a Case Manager who will provide ongoing support during participation and guide them toward their planned goals. Case Managers monitor activities closely and are ready to intervene should problems arise.

Because these youth are "most in need," additional support systems may be required that can take the form of school counselors, employer mentoring, and other

services from community support agencies. Information from the assessment process may be shared with partners or other appropriate organizations (with appropriate consents), when special needs are identified, such as specific issues related to drugs/alcohol, mental and physical health of the family, domestic violence, and gang violence. Case Management staff employs a holistic approach that includes participation from the entire family to eliminate barriers and obstacles to self-sufficiency.

B. Approaches that Ensure Eligible Youth, including Youth Most in Need Receive Effective and Comprehensive Services

Federal requirements and local eligibility provide the framework to ensure that youth most-in-need receive services. This is determined by such factors as deficient education levels, low income, low skills, offenders, teen parents, homeless, disabled, foster care, and dropout youth. Historically, Workforce Area IX has experienced larger numbers of youth who are basic skills deficient (about 93%), have no work history, limited skills, and are in need of assistance to stay in school. As a result, more than 50% of program funds are directed to the out-of-school population.

To reach and serve those students most in need, recruitment is targeted to community organizations such as Department of Social and Health Services, Foster Care programs and providers such as Casey Family, the Juvenile Justice Center and Alternative Education programs. Local area school districts play a primary role in identifying potentially eligible students and a connection to eligible Migrant Seasonal Farm worker (MSFW) youth where Title 1 programs exist is helpful.

Eligible youth will be provided assistance to achieve academic and employment success through mentoring, training opportunities, supportive services, and incentives for achievement. Additional opportunities may include leadership, citizenship, social skill development, decision-making, and community service which would lead to increased employability. A strong link with the K-12 education system is instrumental in providing access to education opportunities and in providing these services.

Youth employment and training activities are designed to improve the quality of education through collaboration with business to prepare youth for entry to the workforce. Examples of business connections include internship and job shadowing opportunities provided through the Greater Yakima Chamber of Commerce and youth job fairs. The intent is to strengthen the connection between schools and businesses through the development of programs that help all students, including dropouts and students at-risk, succeed.

C. Approaches to Support the Dropout Prevention or School Dropout Retrieval

Risk Factors
Poor academic performance
Behind in credits
Personal crisis
Learning disabilities
Juvenile justice involvement
Pregnant/parenting youth
Family history of academic failure
Transportation issues
Lack of family support

Dropout prevention is a priority for youth programs in the South Central area as the majority of youth participants exhibit one or more of the risk factors associated with dropping out of school. As a basic practice, case management staff immediately begin efforts to stabilize the academic activities and performance of those youth enrolled in WIA youth programs... The Case Manager work with the student, their family, school counselors and teachers to review the student's academic standing and design a plan of action that allows them to stay in school or return to school. An array of services are used to address the special needs of youth that include financial supportive services, work-based learning experiences, personal development activities, and mentors.

In partnership with area school districts, including alternative settings and other community projects, AYEOP activities, as provided through the ten elements, address dropout prevention and dropout retrieval services by identifying youth who are falling behind and capturing youth when they dropout. Reconnecting youth to secondary education and reinforcing completion of their high school diploma continues to be a priority of AYEOP.

AYEOP provides basic skills testing on all enrolled youth to identify basic skills deficiencies. These deficiencies are then addressed in an individualized plan with the goal being incremental increases until proficiency is attained, as documented through post testing. AYEOP Case Managers follow the guidance provided by the South Central Workforce Council, as documented in the Administrative Bulletins, regarding what constitutes an increase and what constitutes proficiency.

D. Approaches to Literacy and Numeracy Policy

The primary strategy for ensuring attainment of basic skills education literacy and numeracy for out-of-school youth is ongoing assessment and careful tracking of goals. Educational baselines and gains are measured by the TABE (Tests of Adult Basic Education). Case Managers provide tutoring and intervention, to ensure progress toward skill achievements. When a youth appears to be struggling academically, staff immediately draw on available resources to encourage the youth, emphasize the importance of the educational goal, and to provide additional services as needed.

Youth programs utilize the TABE for academic assessment to measure basic skill levels and identify deficiencies. Little change is expected in operations under common measures since all youth are assessed and work on their basic skill deficiencies while they are in program services. A process has been developed locally to track out-of-school youth who are basic skills deficient using a form that indicates the EFL on a pre- and post-test. The program is based on a continuous improvement model where the documentation process ensures youth are credited with the proper academic gains and meet the policy requirement of the literacy/numeracy gains under the common measures.

SECTION III MANAGING PERFORMANCE

1. Common Measures and Reporting

The South Central Workforce Council firmly believes that good performance is a primary cornerstone to a credible system. To ensure the local workforce system is achieving acceptable levels the Council, at a minimum, requires contractors and WorkSource Operators to provide performance reports on a quarterly basis. Reports cover both core indicators required and as made available by the state as well as specific goals and performance outcomes tracked locally by the Council and WIA I-B contractors.

Performance information is utilized for on going review and adjustment of the system, as well as for strategic planning and program design. Current system requirements measure performance through the use of Common Measure standards as defined by TEGL 17-05. Further guidance is provided by the State in the form of a Common Measures policy for implementation of common measures relating to Workforce Investment Act, Wagner-Peyser, Veterans Employment & Training Service, Trade Adjustment Assistance, and WorkFirst programs.

The State Common Measures Policy supplements TEGL 17-05 by addressing state specific interpretations and requirements applicable to our State's programs.

The Services, Knowledge, and Information Exchange System (SKIES) is the primary system for capturing staff-assisted services and participant data used for reporting and calculation of common measures through WorkSource Centers and Affiliates.

The South Central Workforce Council utilizes the WorkSource Management System (WMS) along with the Go2WorkSource to identify and track self-services and information services data. The WorkSource Management System identifies core services used by customers throughout the region in each WorkSource facility. This system will continue to be employed as a means to monitor and track real time core services for the South Central region.

In an effort to avoid misinterpretation and provide consistency across all programs, a Chart of Statewide Services has been developed and defines each services and its applicability to participation and performance measurements. The Council has developed local policy to ensure WIA contractor use the definitions and services as outlined in the Chart of Services when data is entered into the SKIES system.

2. Management Indicators

On going performance reviews include the use of GMAP (Government Management Accountability and Performance), WMS (Washington Management System), and SKIES (Services, Knowledge & Information Exchange System) tools to examine system effectiveness and progress toward goals. The SCWDC, along with the other eleven WDA's in the state, is working to develop real time reporting information to achieve the common measure goals set by the Department of Labor.

To track local performance indicators the Council employs automated tracking systems and reports information that is consistent with federal and state requirements. Services, Knowledge, Information, Exchange System (SKIES) which is a comprehensive database system that interfaces with many other state agency data sources, provides as timely and accurate information as possible about the services and needs of our customers. SKIES supports the delivery of services across multiple programs by providing universal access to employment and training services in a WorkSource location. The WIA programs and other WorkSource partners enter core, intensive, training and follow up services into SKIES according to state and local policy. The primary functions of SKIES are Management Information, Performance Information, Labor Exchange activities, and Case Management (plan and track customer services and needs).

In the delivery of WIA IB services through subcontracts, the Council reviews performance to monitor progress against federal and state core measures as well as those individual measures proposed and negotiated with the bidder. For each contract, the Council sets monthly benchmarks and a range for benchmark performance.

Additional management indicators are currently under discussion with Washington State Department of Employment Security.

3. SKIES

A. Describe how the Administrative entity and/or the one-stop operator(s) plans to improve and ensure service delivery staff will enter data elements and information into SKIES. Include discussion of the items below.

The Contracting agencies subscribe to the use of SKIES for program input, data collection, tracking, and reporting. The Administrative entity monitors contractors for compliance for timeliness, accuracy, and completeness of the data elements including performance information entered into SKIES and to ensure the integrity of the system is whole. Guidance is provided to the service delivery staff on how to enter data into SKIES through desktop aids and technical assistance. Data validation is completed at both the contractor level and by WDC staff. The feedback received from the State regarding the DOL and the State of Washington annual

data validations is used to improve the system by sharing the information with the contracting agencies and making improvements of the system through technical assistance and additional data validation.

B. Discuss how you track that WIA funds support training that leads to employment in targeted industries and high demand occupations in SKIES.

Discretionary funds are matched by the employer and are used to target industries with high demand occupations such as agriculture, manufacturing, healthcare, and construction. WIA registrations are taken for incumbent workers and the trainee data is entered, tracked, and reported on using SKIES.

C. WIA and Wagner Peyser Core Services Data in SKIES.

All staff entering WIA and/or Wagner Peyser core services into SKIES must attend mandatory SKIES training. This training is available from locally available SKIES trainers or from State trainers when available. Additional guidance is provided via desk aids and assistance from co-workers. Weekly, all staff are provided a report which reflects what core services they provided. The report is updated weekly, and contains Year-to-Date, Month-to-Date statistics. Other reports are in the development stage to provide not only the statistical data, but individual customer information which will aid in determining where weaknesses may exist in capturing the appropriate data and entering it into SKIES.

D. Documentation of Core Services and Related Information in SKIES.

The one-stop operator will continue to encourage staff and partners to document all services and related data into the SKIES system. This will occur during bi-monthly staff meetings, and with other on-going meetings with partnering agencies.

Everyone recognizes the importance of documenting core services in SKIES and increasing the usage of case notes to ensure quality information is contained in each registration. As training opportunities arise, this area will be emphasized.

E. Describe how intensive services and activities provided to adults and dislocated workers are documented in SKIES.

Intensive services provided to adults and dislocated workers are determined on a case-by-case basis to meet the individual needs of each participant. Intensive

services may include WIA Sec. 134 (d) (3) (C) The documentation for Intensive Services in SKIES is as follows:

- * By the use of the Initial and Comprehensive Assessment Sections in SKIES and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults which may include diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools; and in-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals.
- * Development of the Service Plan in SKIES, to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve the employment goals.
- * Recording and tracking Intensive Service(s) Activity in the Service Plan Services Screen in SKIES.

F. Data entered in SKIES from initial screening

The Services, Knowledge, & Information Exchange System (SKIES) serves as the data collection system for WIA and WorkSource performance accountability. SKIES records the common data elements that were based on the Performance Management for continuous Improvement (PMCI) common data elements previously adopted for the Workforce board. SKIES collects necessary data on the service record of program participants and any data required on immediate placement activities so that local WorkSource Operators can manage programs and performance on a day-to-day basis. SKIES is the primary tool used for reporting common performance measures across all employment and training programs. The Workforce Council has continued to utilize a modified version of Dataflex for their Management Information System, with the intent to eventually discontinue the dual systems once sufficient program and report information is complete and fully accessible through SKIES. Training needs are constantly identified and responded to by utilizing local and state trainers to meet the training needs of the WorkSource offices. Currently all core and intensive services to WIA eligible adults and dislocated workers are documented in SKIES. Services provided as described in Section II.3 are entered into SKIES by the individual providing the service(s), regardless of whether it is WIA or Wagner Peyser program staff.

G. Comprehensive assessments and referrals documented in SKIES

Comprehensive assessments completed by WIA, WorkFirst and other staff are entered into SKIES. However, it should be noted, that not all elements of the comprehensive assessment are universal. Specific data elements are necessary for SKIES to recognize that a complete comprehensive assessment has been accomplished. These data elements may differ from program to program. While programmatically, comprehensive assessments are acceptable to specific programs,

not all data elements may be included and hence capturing the completed assessment in SKIES may not occur. WIA contractors must have a completed comprehensive assessment to be able to authorize supportive services, or risk disallowed costs. There is assurances in place that the comprehensive assessments have been completed, however, they may not all be reflected in SKIES as certain data elements may not be required for their assessment. We are diligently working with multiple partners to see if a solution is possible. WorkFirst has expanded their comprehensive assessment to ensure that SKIES records their assessment.

A determination of the need for services as established by the initial assessment or the individual's inability to obtain employment through the core services. After an initial assessment has been completed, a WIA comprehensive assessment is done. The documentation for WIA Comprehensive Assessments in SKIES is as follows:

- * The Initial Assessment Section in SKIES is completed
- * The Comprehensive Assessment Section in SKIES is completed.
- * The assessment justification is documented in the Justification box in the Service Plan in SKIES.

H. ITA documentation in SKIES

This system will cover all adult and dislocated worker participants in need of training services funded by WIA Title I-B who have met the following criteria (documentation in SKIES is as follows).

- * Have met either the WIA Title I-B eligibility requirements for intensive services and have been determined eligible per the State and local adult priority system, if applicable; this is recorded in the SKIES Core Service Section, Initial Assessment, and Comprehensive Assessment.
- * have received at least one intensive service, including, but not limited to, development of the Service Plan with an employment counselor/case manager which includes a determination of the need for training, employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives and combination of services, and identification of support services needs and available resources; this is recorded in SKIES in the Justification Box of the Service Plan and Plan Summary, and the Activity Intensive Service is recorded in the Service Section of the Service Plan. The giving of an ITA is recorded by checking the ITA box in the Service Plan's Service Section.

To be awarded an ITA, a customer must develop a Service Plan that provides a rationale for their career-training choices as well as support services necessary to attain their goals. The Service Plan must include the following information:

- * Whether suitable employment is available in the local labor market or the area to which the trainee intends to relocate

- * The financial resources the trainee intends to use to fund the complete training plan
- * Whether the trainee has the qualifications and aptitudes to successfully complete the training
- * Whether the training relates to a high demand occupation, meaning that the number of job openings in the labor market for the occupation or skill set exceeds the supply of the qualified workers;
- * Whether the training is likely to enhance the trainee's marketable skills and earning power, based on an assessment of what the trainee's employment prospects would be if training were not funded.

I. Employment placement information documentation in SKIES

The training related placement is recorded in SKIES in the Job Placement – New Job Form. Once the participant has completed the program and entered unsubsidized employment, the training related box located in the Employment Placement Information section of the form is checked.

Training services provided are determined on a case-by-case basis to meet the individual needs of each participant. Training services may include:

- * Occupational skills training, including training for non-traditional employment
- * On-the-Job Training
- * Programs that combine workplace training with related instruction
- * Training programs operated by the private sector
- * Skill upgrading and retraining
- * Entrepreneurial training
- * Adult education and literacy activities provided in combination with services described in (a) - (g)
- * Customized training conducted with a commitment by an employer or group of employers to employ an individual upon successful completion of the training
- * Institutional Skills Training (IST)

The choice of training services offered to each participant is documented in SKIES by the following:

- * SKIES Service Plan's Justification box and Plan summary will record justification of the train
- * SKIES Service Plan's Goal and the Service Plan Services will reflect that the participant is receiving training for that goal
- * SKIES Program Enrollment section will record how the participant completed and where

- * SKIES Job Placement Section will record the employment information and the Training Related Box will be checked.

SECTION IV OTHER TOPICS

1. Delivery of Workforce Information

As the Council deems necessary, local, or state evaluative data such as employer or participant surveys are used as a supplement to evaluate the local workforce system and carry out strategic planning. To ensure local workforce investment addresses the economic and workforce needs of the local area, state tools such as the ESD Workforce Explorer website and other reports produced by the Labor Market and Economic Analysis division are used. In addition, this information is supplemented by data from local economic development agencies or specialized surveys conducted by the local area (e.g. New Vision's Manufacturing Survey and SCWDC Engineering Survey).

Links with WorkSource services support youth-focused job search activities through a complete assortment of job search tools. WIA youth access the latest in Internet and traditional job search information with assistance from an experienced WorkSource Specialist. Specific tools include CHOICES, Passport to Success, and the Workforce Explorer.

One on one employment counseling offers a personalized overview of job search, labor market information, and career assessment. Staff familiar with the local job market offer leads and referrals specifically related to employment opportunities for young adults. Youth may be directed to other resources such as interest testing, resume development, wage information, career ladder exploration, and local labor market demand list.

In Yakima, students connected with the special education department have access to the local WorkSource Navigator to assist them through the WorkSource system. The Navigator makes contact with the school to provide workshops and job placement assistance to youth.

2. Involvement of Grass Roots and Community Based Organizations

There are multiple opportunities for grass roots and community based organizations, including faith-based organizations, to participate in the workforce development system in the South Central Workforce Area. Community-based organizations have representation on the Workforce Council as well as membership on various subcommittees of the Workforce Council, such as the WorkSource Oversight Committee.

The South Central Workforce Council will continue, through the posting of public notices, to make an open invitation to the community, including the faith-based community, to participate in the bid process for WIA and other funded services. Currently, the majority of the Council's WIA youth, adult and dislocated sub recipients are community-based organizations.

The Council has taken a leadership role in developing partnerships with the faith-based community with two strategies. For the past several years, Council staff has served as chair of the steering committee overseeing the Health and Human Services 1115 Waiver Grant which provides the opportunity for community based organizations, the faith-based community, and other partners to collaborate in coordinating and linking services to support healthy families. The project has identified that workforce development and economic self-sufficiency is a critical component for healthy families. Workforce development service providers, community based organizations, local and state government agencies and the faith-based community meet monthly as coalition members to develop and implement strategies to assist families in achieving self-sufficiency and sustaining healthy relationships.

Through the WorkFirst Local Planning Area partnership, a new relationship with Love, INC. has been initiated. The foundation of Love, INC is to serve as a clearinghouse for service providers and the faith-based community. This cooperative effort between churches and service organizations provides an effective means to address the current and growing levels of need for disadvantaged individuals in our communities. A network of over 160 churches is under development to provide the following services:

Food pantries and shelter
Baby and personal needs and medical equipment
Furniture, clothing, and automotive repairs
Budget counseling and tutoring services

3. Plan Development Process

Describe the processes used in the development of the plan as required in Section 118(c). Include:

- * How partner program representatives participated
- * How you obtained public comments
- * Comments received during the public review

The South Central Workforce Council strongly believes that workforce system partners and local community members must be an active part of the local workforce system if we are to create a local plan both operationally and strategically that will promote a skilled workforce and supports business of the local area. To ensure full participation, the South Central Workforce Council and WorkSource Leads conducted the following activities:

Public forums were conducted in all counties of the WDA IX. Public notifications (noting the time and place) of the forums were placed in the primary newspapers of the counties and flyers/notices were sent to WorkSource partner organizations and other community organizations vested in local workforce programs. Additionally, each WorkSource lead has communicated directly with partners and has provided them direct opportunity for input through email or partner meetings held in each WorkSource Center site. The public forums were held at the following locations and sites listed below:

County	Location	Date and Time
Yakima	WorkSource Sunnyside 1925 Morgan Road Sunnyside, WA	February 15, 2007 2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Yakima	South Central WDC 120 South 3rd Street Yakima, WA 98901	February 15, 2007 4:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m.
Kittitas	WorkSource Ellensburg 412 North Main Street Ellensburg, Washington 98926	February 16, 2007 4:30 p.m.-5:30 p.m.
Klickitat	WorkSource Columbia Gorge 107 West Jewett Blvd. White Salmon, WA	February 20, 2007 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Skamania	WorkSource Stevenson 704 SW Rock Creek Drive Stevenson, Washington	February 20, 2007 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

4. Local Contact

Patrick Baldoz, Director
South Central Workforce Development Council
patrick.baldoz@co.yakima.wa.us
509.574.1950

SECTION V LOCAL OPERATIONS PLAN ASSURANCES AND PLAN SIGNATURES

Signatory officials assure that:

The Local Operations Plan will be consistent with the visions, goals, objectives and strategies of the High Skills, High Wages 2004, Washington’s Strategic Plan for

Workforce Development, and those described in the Local Strategic Plan for Workforce Development.

There is an ongoing role for organizations and providers listed in WIA Section 117(h)(2) in the Youth Council's local strategic and local operations planning activities. (20 CFR 661.340)

The One-Stop operator is designated consistent with Section 121(d)(2)(A)& (B) and Section 118 (d)(2).

The WDC has procurement policies and procedures which meet applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations. In accordance with Section 123 and 664.405 (4), a competitive process will be used to award youth formula funded grants and contracts.

The ten program elements required in Sec. 664.410 will be provided within the framework for youth program design as required in CFR Section 664.400.

There is adherence to the requirements at 29 CFR 95.42 or 29 CFR 97.36(b)(3), as appropriate, which address codes of conduct and conflict of interest issues as well as state and local conflict of interest requirements.

Exceptions to the use of Individual Training Accounts are justified pursuant to 20 CFR 663.430.

Performance measures will be negotiated with the state as required by WIA Section 136(c)(2) and will be incorporated by reference, into this plan.

Continuous improvement of eligible provider services takes place and such providers meet the employment needs of local employers and participants. (WIA Section 118(b)(2)(A))

The veterans services provided with Wagner Peyser funds will be in compliance with 38 USC Chapter 41 and 20 CFR part 1001.

WIA Title-I programs and Wagner Peyser Programs will be in compliance with the Jobs for Veterans Act and applicable DOL regulations and guidance.

Labor exchange activities provided with Wagner-Peyser Act funds will be provided by merit-based public employees in accordance with DOL regulations.

WIA activities required in Sections 129 (c) et al and 134 (b) et al will be available in the local area.

Local activities will be provided in accordance with State Policy and coordinated in conjunction with State Rapid Response activities. (20 CFR 661.350 and State Policy No. 3935 Revision 1)

Funds will be spent in accordance with the Workforce Investment Act and the Wagner-Peyser Act and their regulations, written Department of Labor Guidance implementing these laws, and all other applicable Federal and State laws and regulations.

Plan Signatures

This Local Operations Plan is submitted for the period of July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2009 in accordance with the provisions of the Workforce Investment Act Title-I-B and the Wagner-Peyser Act (as amended by Title-III of WIA).

We certify that the agencies and officials below have been designated to represent the Workforce Development Area and the Employment Security Department in the capacities indicated for the Workforce Investment Act, Title-I, and Wagner-Peyser Act grant programs. Subsequent changes in the designation of these officials will be provided to the WIA Administrative Section of the Employment Security Department when they occur.

We further certify that we will operate our Workforce Investment Act and Wagner-Peyser Act programs in accordance with this Plan, the assurances herein, and applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations, and policies.

Workforce Development Council Chair Chief Elected Official(s)

Signature

Name (printed or typed)

Title (Council Chair)

Date

Signature

Name (printed or typed)

Title (Chief Local Elected Official)

Date

Local Wagner-Peyser Representative Representative

Signature

Name (printed or typed)

WorkSource Area Administrator
Title

Date

State Wagner-Peyser

Signature

Name (printed or typed)

Asst Commissioner
WorkSource Operations Division
Title

Date

Attachment A:	Local Area Profile
Attachment B:	WorkSource Columbia Gorge Partner Matrix
Attachment C:	WorkSource Kittitas County Partner Matrix
Attachment D:	WorkSource Yakima Partner Matrix
Attachment E:	WorkSource Sunnyside Partner Matrix
Attachment F:	WorkSource Toppenish – Affiliate Site Partner Matrix
Attachment G:	Memorandum of Understanding
Attachment H:	Procurement Policy
Attachment I:	WIA Eligibility and Priority for Adults
Attachment J:	Priority of Services for Veterans (and applicable Spouses)
Attachment K:	Individual Training Accounts