

## **Two Year Local Plan Modifications PY 2021-24**

### **Workforce Development Board of Contra Costa County**

#### **WIOA Core and Required Partner Coordination**

##### **Coordination with AJCC MOU Partners**

*How Local Boards and AJCC partners will coordinate the services and resources identified in their MOU, as outlined in WIOA Memorandums of Understanding (WSD18-12).*

The WDBCCC relies on its AJCC partners to foster a service delivery system that is integrated, comprehensive, customer-focused, and performance-based. This collaboration offers universal access to employment, training, and educational services. The AJCC MOU partners meet regularly to ensure that all partners are engaged and that the MOU is revisited and honored. While only a handful of the AJCC Partners are co-located at the comprehensive AJCC, there are established referral processes for all partners and mandated programs, including:

- WIOA Title I (Adults/Dislocated Workers/Youth)
- WIOA Title II (Wagner-Peyser / Veterans / Trade Adjustment Act; all three of Workforce Services Branch of Employment Development Department)
- WIOA Title III (Adult Education/Literacy)
- WIOA Title IV (Dept. of Rehabilitation)
- WIOA Title V (Senior Community Service Employment Program)
- Unemployment Insurance (Employment Development Department)
- Contra Costa County Office of Education
- Career/Technical Education (Contra Costa Community College District)
- Job Corps (locally, Treasure Island Job Corps)
- Native American (Northern California Indian Development Council, Inc. and Scotts Valley Tribal TANF)
- Migrant/Seasonal Farm Workers (California Human Development)
- Community Action (Community Services Bureau, Employment and Human Services Department, Contra Costa County)
- Housing Authority (Contra Costa County Housing)
- Second Chance Act (Reentry; Contra Costa County Probation Department)
- TANF / CalWORKs (Workforce Services Bureau, Employment and Human Services Department, Contra Costa County)

Through its service providers, the WDBCCC convenes the Workforce Integration Network (WIN), a forum for information sharing, cross-training, and referrals. The WIN is comprised of all AJCC MOU Partners and an extensive list of additional community-based organizations and public agencies. Meetings are held quarterly. The WIN ensures that staff of member agencies are knowledgeable about resources throughout the County, understand eligibility requirements for programs outside their own, and

know how to refer using a warm hand-off that respects each agency's process.

An innovation the WDBCCC is particularly proud of is the Homeless-Workforce Partnership. In 2020, the WDBCCC was the recipient of a WAF 8.0 grant to integrate homeless and workforce services at the system level using Human Centered Design. The Design Team brought together WDBCCC staff; Health, Housing & Homeless Services (H3 – a division of County Health); and other stakeholders who had an interest in both workforce development and homeless services. The team also included two paid Lived Experience Consultants who informed our work with their insights and kept our solutions practical. One of the consultants now works with the CORE Outreach Team of H3; the other works with RCF Connects (formerly Richmond Community Foundation) on a project focused on alleviating poverty in East Contra Costa County. We published a white paper, [Integrating Workforce and Homeless Services: An Experiment in Human Centered Design](#), describing our work and the results.

It was clear that the work needed to continue beyond the life of the grant, so the Design Team established the Homeless-Workforce Integration Network (H-WIN) on the WIN model. This new network, launched at the end of 2021, has been highly successful and enjoys a high level of participation. Collaboration has strengthened between these two once-siloed areas as partners work together to assist people to become permanently housed and self-sustaining.

The WDBCCC continues to collaborate closely with its education partners, both regionally and locally, to a pipeline of talent for high demand sectors which include advanced manufacturing, health care and life sciences, information technology, and energy.

A successful regional collaboration is the [Bay Area Health Workforce Partnership](#) (BAHWP). Begun in 2016 with a grant from the California Endowment, the Partnership brought together UC Berkeley School of Public Health and the Public Health Institute in a “demand model” where trainings are driven by the needs of health care providers. The current director of BAHWP is the principal of Redlo Health Solutions, Inc. and the chair is the CEO of La Clinica. The collaboration has grown to over 30 partner agencies.

With BAHWP's participation and support, the WDBCCC has launched its Health Initiative, which will pursue the following five priorities:

- Increase and diversify the pool of qualified health workers and secure jobs to meet regional demands.
- Increase the alignment of health care education and training with employer needs.
- Systematically increase work-based learning and earn and learn opportunities
- Build a data-driven rationale for changing current systems, infrastructure development and sustaining health care workforce initiatives

- Develop and advocate for policy solutions that eliminate barriers to increase workforce and education capacity, investment and sustainability.

### **Implementing Co-enrollment and/or Common Case Management**

*How the Local Board and AJCC partners will work towards co-enrollment and/or common case management as a service delivery strategy, as outlined in Strategic Co-Enrollment – Unified Plan Partners (WSD19-09).*

The WDBCCC utilizes an array of strategies to support co-enrollment and/or common case management. These include co-enrollment between WIOA Adult/Dislocated Worker Services and WIOA Youth Services to allow for continued supportive services and case management for youth exhibiting any of the 14 youth program elements identified in sec. 129(c)(2) of WIOA or who also meet the criteria of a WIOA Adult or Dislocated Worker. Co-enrollment is also provided for participants who are formerly incarcerated (through the Prison to Employment Grant (P2E)) and WIOA to assist with continued case management and supportive services to reduce barriers to training and employment. Currently, we co-enroll Adult Education and Community College students in our EMT 4 Equity grant into WIOA. (This grant is discussed in more detail in the Supportive Services section below.) CCWORKS, the subsidized employment component of CalWORKS, is integrated into WDBCCC programming, making referral and co-enrollment into WIOA easy and streamlined. Both the WDBCCC and the AJCC have served as host sites for CCWORKS work experience (WEX) trainees. WDBCCC, EDD and AJCC serve as host sites for Senior Employment WEX trainees.

The WDBCCC identifies Wagner-Peyser Act career services to provide universal access of labor exchange services to job seekers who are enrolled in WIOA Adult and Dislocated Services. It continues to utilize the CalJOBS data system across all case management platforms to share data and information from client intake interviews. AJCC Staff are cross-trained to access resources across all partner programs in the AJCC such as CalJOBS and Metrix Learning (online self-paced training) and on how to serve the public with expertise and efficiency. Metrix Learning is also used as a tool to achieve digital equity across multiple platforms.

Input from the public listening sessions indicated an interest in ensuring that the point of contact list is regularly updated, so that people know who to contact regarding co-enrollment. Rubicon Programs, the lead agency of the Contra Costa Workforce Collaborative, maintains current contact information on the EASTBAY Works site on the Locations page and on the Calendar page (for items that require appointments). Participants also expressed a desire for expanded outreach, clarification of the referral process, and in-service trainings for potential partner organizations to increase co-enrollment opportunities.

The Workforce Integration Network (WIN) and Homeless-Workforce Integration Network (H-WIN) work to promote services and programs of all members, define eligibility requirements and referral processes for each program and offer presentations and trainings on programs of interest to members and their clients. In addition, Health, Housing and Homeless Services (H3) conducts bimonthly in-service trainings for their providers, which are open to all agencies. Many of the topics are of interest to workforce partners – for instance, a training last year included presentations on all the public benefits programs and were attended by a variety of agencies. This year, the H-WIN hosted a panel on serving the reentry population; it drew 100 registrants. Participants also recommended the development of a standardized form for use across all agencies that would simplify the process of co-enrollment/common case management. In the past, the WIN has developed a standardized *referral* form. A common intake or co-enrollment form is a possibility if agencies can agree on the questions/items. The WIN would be a natural place for a task force to develop such a form.

### **Facilitating Access to One-Stop Services**

*How the Local Board and AJCC partners will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and other means.*

In the current system overseen by WDBCCC, access to one-stop services is made easy through satellite offices across Contra Costa County operated by the Contra Costa Workforce Collaborative in ten locations from Brentwood to Richmond. Regional and local access to services is available through our EASTBAYWorks website, partner websites such as Employment and Development Department (EDD), Rubicon Programs and our WDBCCC website. Services are available by phone, internet or walk-in Monday through Friday from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm. Easy and comprehensive access to services are available through referral processes as well. The WDBCCC also provides access to online training services through the Metrix Learning portal, which offers certificates of completion for thousands of short courses in ten career pathways leading to high-demand occupations within the WDBCCC's priority sectors. For many job seekers, this is an un-intimidating "first step" in upgrading their skills and stacking credentials.

Recommendations from the public input sessions suggested the expansion of outreach to increase awareness of the range of services available, including the use of Contra Costa TV (CCTV) and an increased social media presence. The WDBCCC engages a marketing firm to manage its social media, which has resulted in substantial increase of audience and exposure. The WDBCCC has used CCTV to advertise offerings at the career center in the past and will investigate the possibility of resuming this practice. Participants also recommended that the WDBCCC take a more proactive role in addressing barriers to online access by helping clients obtain electronic devices and

broadband service in order to take advantage of online services. In the past, WDBCCC has collaborated with the State of California's Emerging Technology Fund (CETF), EHSD, and Oakland's Technology Xchange to bring over 100 low-cost refurbished desktop and laptop computers, as well as low-cost broadband services, to low-income customers. WDBCCC is once again partnering with the CETF Broadband Partnership and the EHSD — and this time with the County Library and other community based organizations — in an effort to promote broadband access.

The WDBCCC is in talks with leadership from the County library system to see how else the two systems might collaborate to deliver career services and technology more broadly. Participants also asked for the provision of tutorials or instructional videos that help people understand how to use online resources. Workforce GPS, the One-Stop Career Center website, the EDD website and the Dept. of Labor website, as well as YouTube, all have tutorials and instructional videos on how to use online resources and conduct an online job search. We plan to incorporate these instructional sources in the monthly calendar of the career center as part of the redesign.

### **Coordinating Workforce and Education Activities With Provision Of Supportive Services**

*How the Local Board and AJCC partners will coordinate workforce and education activities with the provision of appropriate supportive services.*

The WDBCCC contracts Rubicon Programs, lead agency of the Contra Costa Workforce Collaborative (CCWC) for the delivery of AJCC/One Stop services, which provides a unique and coordinated response to the needs of the community for training and supportive services. Rubicon and the CCWC provide training services and document all training activities related to skills upgrading and retraining, job readiness training and OJT training.

An example of WDBCCC's innovative approach to braiding funding to provide supportive services is *EMT 4 Equity*, a cohort training program that targets marginalized communities and uses Employment Training Panel (ETP) funds for costs associated with the actual training (classroom, equipment, instructors) and draws on WIOA funds (necessitating co-enrollment) for supportive services such as the costs of background checks, drug tests, physical exams and licensing to work on an ambulance team. So far, over 60 individuals have graduated. This program intentionally recruits people of color, out of school youth, housing insecure, immigrants, justice-involved and system-impacted individuals – those for whom the barriers of cost and accessibility have been prohibitive in this lucrative and exciting field.

The WDBCCC oversees the provision of supportive services to the participant through WIOA, enabling an individual to successfully participate in activities authorized under

WIOA sec. 134 (c) for adults and dislocated workers and sec. 129 (c) for youth. The provision of supportive services includes linkages to community services, assistance with but not limited to transportation; childcare and dependent care; educational testing; accommodations for individuals with disabilities; legal aid services, etc. As indicated in WDBCCC Workforce Policy Bulletin #02-20- Supportive Services for WIOA Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth.

In the public input sessions, participants identified the importance of building strong partnerships with CBOs that are currently serving the client, to ensure effective coordination of supportive services delivery. The WIN and H-WIN both draw CBOs engaged in workforce development. Other ways CBOs are engaged are through contracting, collaboration on grants, offering letters of support for grant applications, providing space for forums or events such as the Parole and Community Team (PACT) meetings, and sponsoring (or providing staff to) job fairs and community resource fairs. It was also suggested that service hubs or a kiosk model now being piloted in New York be explored, in order to help clients receive assistance closer to where they live. The WDBCCC awarded the contract to deliver career services and operate the AJCC based on the ability of the winning agency to offer services in many areas of the County. Rubicon Programs was the only provider to propose a collaborative model of 10 access points throughout the County in order to ensure that people are being served close to where they live. In addition, all services are offered remotely, with clients able to take advantage of services without leaving the comfort of their homes. During the height of the pandemic, many training programs became 100% remote as well.

**Physical and Programmatic Accessibility of Facilities, Programs and Services**  
*How the Local Board and AJCC partners will comply with WIOA Section 188 and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, as outlined in Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Procedures (WSD17-01).*

Building on the 2019 installation of new assistive technology, the WDBCCC installed an automatic door opener for the career center. Prior to that the building managers installed automatic door openers in the halls leading to the public restrooms. These upgrades allowed us, for the first time, to host a work experience trainee who uses a wheelchair. The WDBCCC also took advantage of California Workforce Association and other trainings on serving individuals with disabilities, sharing and encouraging service providers to take advantage of these trainings as well. The WDBCCC sent multiple staff to trainings hosted by the DOR on topics physical accessibility and document accessibility. In addition, the WDBCCC website now features the UserWay accessibility widget, which offers nine different accessibility tools to help people with a variety of perceptual conditions and limitations. The WDBCCC will continue to seek out and work

with partner organizations working with individuals with disabilities to ensure that it is providing the most up-to-date resources/equipment, regularly monitoring its facilities to ensure optimal accessibility, and making training available to service providers on best practices for serving this population.

Participants in the public input sessions suggested that the WDBCCC make use of the Human Centered Design approach to identify and address the most significant barriers to access, which may not always be visible to non-disabled users. The recommendation was also made to continue to strengthen the partnership with the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), in order to benefit from DOR expertise on how to make facilities, programs and services accessible. A district administrator with DOR is the WDBCCC's latest addition to the Board. He will bring perspective that comes from many years of managing programs and direct experience serving people with disabilities. The WDBCCC strongly endorses Human Centered Design (and listening to the "Voice of the Customer") in all it does. The WDBCCC maintains a close collaboration with the Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) and is open to hearing any suggestion it makes on how to make programs and services more accessible.

### **State Strategic Partner Coordination**

#### **Coordination with Partners Serving CalFresh E&T Beneficiaries**

*How the Local Board will coordinate with County Health and Human Services Agencies and other local partners who serve individuals who access CalFresh Employment and Training services.*

The WDBCCC has a long history of partnering with the County's Health Services Dept. Current efforts include collaboration with homeless services; training people to become emergency medical staff (students will experience rotations in local ERs); and serving as Health Ambassadors. Run as a pilot program using transitional job classifications, 36 Ambassadors went into their communities to encourage healthy practices. Created during the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic, Ambassadors encouraged vaccinations, testing and use of protective equipment – replacing doubt with confidence by serving as a trustworthy source of information. The pilot assisted the WDBCCC (and the County) to reach underserved and traditionally marginalized communities, who were the most impacted by COVID-19.

The Foundation for California Community Colleges runs Fresh Success, which contracts with local training providers to enroll CalFresh Employment and Training (E&T) clients interested in attending college and provides them with all the supports they need to be successful, including case management and supportive services. In Contra Costa County, Fresh Success partners (contracts) with Opportunity Junction (OJ).

The WDB has impacted Fresh Success clients in the following ways:

- The Concord site of America's Job Center of California (AJCC) is an externship site for OJ's Administrative Careers Training Program. The extern receives paid work experience as they learn how to work on a team, give customer service and put their computer skills into practice.
- OJ also partners with the WDB in the National Dislocated Workers Grant (NDWG), providing services to dislocated workers impacted by COVID. Of OJ's 54 enrollees into this grant, 12 (22%) are Fresh Success clients.
- The WDB is both a partner and funder of SparkPoint Contra Costa. OJ provides career services at SparkPoint East (Bay Point). All eligible SparkPoint clients are co-enrolled in Fresh Success. This year, five clients were co-enrolled.

WDB will continue its long history of hosting the CalWORKS CCWORKS program which provides paid work experience to individuals receiving TANF. CalFresh E&T providers are also part of the Contra Costa Workforce Collaborative (WIOA Career Services providers). The WDB is housed within the same county department as Workforce Services thus maximizing the opportunity for aligning policies, strategic co-enrollment of participants, and cross-training of staff.

In 2021, CCWORKS launched its first Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) for 16- and 17-year-olds whose families receive CalWORKS. This aligns nicely with WIOA's focus on work-experience for young people. Efforts are underway to connect these youth with the WIOA Youth program as appropriate.

Public input session participants expressed a desire for the expansion of outreach and marketing for CalFresh E&T programs, which are underutilized by people who are eligible to participate in them. It was recommended that clients be made aware of workshops that support CalFresh E&T applications provided by EDD Workforce Services Branch (WSB) which are also available online. The pilot CalFresh E&T program at Diablo Valley College was mentioned as an opportunity for partnership on this program. The WDBCCC will follow up on these excellent suggestions.

### **Coordination with Local Child Support Agencies Serving Non-Custodial Parents**

*How the Local Board will coordinate with Local Child Support Agencies and other local partners who serve individuals who are non-custodial parents.*

Past customer encounters with the Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) may have felt punitive and discouraged non-custodial parents from job seeking behavior. In recent years, DCSS has shifted from an adversarial to a collaborative relationship with non-custodial parents. This includes addressing barriers to employment (such as restoring driver's licenses) and working out new payment arrangements (in an office



instead of a courthouse) when circumstances change. A **Resource Center** is in development so case managers can assess needs and refer clients to supportive services with warm hand-offs.

**Other services DCSS offers:** Free genetic testing, document service (avoiding court), debt reduction, family reunification, Virtual Information Center (VIC) and Virtual Chat (no appointment needed) – either with their own case worker or another team member.

DCSS and the Workforce Development Board have collaborated for years, cross-referring clients and cross-promoting programs. Since then, DCSS has provided presentations and trainings at:

- WDB's Semi-Annual Partner-Provider meetings
- Workforce Integration Network (WIN) meetings
- Homeless-Workforce Integration Network (H-WIN) meetings

Input from the public input sessions suggested a focus on the kinds of supportive services that address barriers to employment that non-custodial parents experience, such as the need for work boots, or the provision of alcohol or drug treatment. Financial literacy counseling and planning were also mentioned as valuable services for non-custodial parents. Public input participants also mentioned the value of strengthening partnerships with CBOs and businesses that understand the challenges faced by non-custodial parents and can offer support. Items such as work boots and uniforms can be paid for by WIOA supportive services on a needs-basis. The WDBCCC has recently established a relationship with Alcohol and Other Drug Services (AODS) in order to make referrals to those in need of such services. SparkPoint, which the WDBCCC partially funds, provides financial literacy counseling and planning. The WDBCCC has connected SparkPoint to the Department of Child Support Services in order to reach non-custodial parents (and even custodial parents) in need of their services.

### **Coordinating** with LPA Partners Serving Individuals with Disabilities

*How the Local Board will coordinate with Local Partnership Agreement partners, established in alignment with the Competitive Integrated Employment Blueprint, and other local partners who serve individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities.*

The WDB continues to coordinate with the Dept. of Rehabilitation (DOR) and the East Bay Regional Center (EBRC). Due to promotions and attrition during COVID, there have been staffing changes at DOR. WDB Leadership is planning “meet and greets” with the new leadership of DOR/RC and staff tours of the Regional Center and AJCC are being scheduled.

WDB continues to be active in the Local Partnership Agreement (LPA) consortium to

support implementation of the Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE) Blueprint. The WDB is putting an agreement in place to become a work experience host site. In the meantime, it is engaged with CBOs who serve people with disabilities – for instance, the WDB Business Services Manager sits on the Business Advisory Committee of HireAble.

In the public input sessions, participants identified the importance of advocating for the CIE model, which emphasizes competitive employment and pay for persons with disabilities, versus positions that are “set aside” for this population. Participants also emphasized the value of earn and learn and apprenticeship opportunities for giving people with disabilities the opportunity to demonstrate their skills to potential employers. Employability skills, with a focus on independence, was identified as an important element of successful training. The WDBCCC agrees and commits to supporting any effort aligned with this approach. Past efforts have included implementing grants that paid for work experience for people with disabilities to enhance their employability.

A new effort is the STEPS grant (Summer Training and Employment Program for Students). Funded by DOR and ETP, and in partnership with Diablo Valley College, STEPS provided job preparation training, including job exploration, workplace readiness skills training, and work-based learning experiences, as well as summer work experience, to students with disabilities. Twenty students received services.

### **Coordinating with Local Partners Serving ELLs, Foreign-Born and Refugees**

*How the Local Board will coordinate with community-based organizations and other local partners who serve individuals who are English language learners, foreign-born, and/or refugees.*

Staff to the Board participate with local partners to attend workgroups to address workforce services for Refugees and Immigrants, English Language Learners and Foreign Born. Local partner coordination includes but is not limited to WDBCCC, Contra Costa Workforce Collaborative and EDD, to ensure we are following WDBCCC commitment to working strategically with local organizations to expand its impact for services for all ELL, foreign born and refugees. Identified strategies include collaboration with the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) and our local county refugee resettlement agencies.

Another important activity for WDBCCC is the Identification of populations eligible for benefits and services per ORR guidance. The WDBCCC also works to Identify populations that have special immigrant visas or special immigrant parolees and humanitarian parolees and “Right to Work” status. There is also a focus on ensuring and pursuing co-enrollment of ORR employment services with WIOA to access training

funds, occupational skills and individual employment coaching and supportive services.

The public input sessions identified an array of local partners to work with in serving these populations, including: Upwardly Global, Lao Family Community Development, Contra Costa Asian Pacific Islander Coalition, Adult Education ESL programs, International Rescue Committee, New America and Opportunity Junction. A number of participants mentioned the value of building WDBCCC and training partner capacity to serve populations in their native languages, either through internal or external resources. The WDBCCC takes advantage of Language Line, a service subscribed to by the Employment and Human Services Department (EHSD) to serve people in their native languages – when onsite staff are not available to do so.

### **WIOA Title I Coordination**

#### **Training for Staff in Digital Fluency and Distance Learning**

*Training and/or professional development that will be provided to frontline staff to gain and expand proficiency in digital fluency and distance learning.*

Training and professional development for WDBCCC staff and CCWC to gain and expand proficiency in digital fluency and distance learning includes but is not limited to the following: MS365 Suite training, Security Awareness training, Multi-Factor Authentication training and Metrix Learning to achieve digital equity and to improve distance learning. The WDBCCC has also placed a priority on training staff in expanded use and proficiency in Zoom, MS Teams and GoToWebinar for trainings, meetings and collaborations. Regional trainings in multiple areas are also being developed through the East Bay Regional Planning Unit.

Public input session participants suggested that the WDBCCC increase funding available to staff to attend outside trainings. Additional training opportunities in specific systems and tools included the following: electronic signature systems such as Docusign, social media platforms that can facilitate client outreach and communication, online survey tools, the use of participatory tools within Zoom (such as Jamboard), using and interpreting online assessments, and online translation tools. Participants also mentioned building staff capacity to make use of digital tools on phones as well as computers. The WDBCCC agrees that these are all excellent tools to increase engagement and will utilize such tools in the future. The WDBCCC and EHSD currently use Docusign, Zoom, Jamboard, and online assessments. Online translation is available on many browsers.

#### **Staff Training in Cultural Competencies and Trauma Responsive Services**

*Training and/or professional development that will be provided to frontline staff to ensure cultural competencies and an understanding of the experiences of trauma-*

*exposed populations.*

Training and professional development for WDB staff to ensure cultural competencies and an understanding of the experiences of trauma-exposed population includes but is not limited to mandatory trainings: National Voter Registration Act; Confidentiality; Civil Rights; Labor Relations; Anti-Harassment; Injury and Illness Prevention and Implicit Bias Awareness & Addressing Biases. Training for Rubicon staff includes but is not limited to: Anti-racism; Breaking Cycles of Poverty and Working with the Justice Involved/Formerly Incarcerated. Frontline staff will be participating in trauma-related training to be offered by CBO partners in the spring of 2023.

Input from public session participants suggested a range of specific trainings that the WDBCCC should consider making available to staff. These included: Motivational Interviewing (a method for building upon a client's internal motivations to make a change or complete a task), Implicit Bias training, DEI training focused on intergenerational trauma, training related to the specific experiences of veterans, conflict resolution training, and training in working effectively with persons with substance use disorders. Several of these trainings are already on the "wish list" of trainings to be conducted regionally for staff and partners during 2023.

### **Coordination with Statewide Rapid Response Activities**

*How the Local Board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the Local Area with statewide rapid response activities, as outlined in Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion Activities (WSD16-04).*

The WDBCCC works with local and regional partners to implement its Rapid Response strategy. The Bay Area Rapid Response Round Table (BARRR) is the main forum for the regional Rapid Response team. The WDBCCC participates in quarterly meetings and communicates frequently to stay updated on policies and best ways to serve displaced workers. The WDBCCC also works closely with Labor representatives to support related activities. The WDBCCC has pivoted Rapid Response services to virtual platforms in collaboration with the California Employment Development Department (EDD) in response to the COVID-19 shutdown. The WDBCCC provides Laid-Off worker webinars two times a month and partners that provide American Job Center Career Services on behalf of WDB, Department of Labor, and others are invited to participate. Employer outreach was also offered virtually during the statewide Shelter in Place order. Once businesses open to the public, the WDBCCC will keep a combination of in person and virtual services for both Rapid Response and Lay Off Aversion.

The goal of the WDBCCC's Rapid Response Team is to work proactively with cities and other entities in the region in advance of any anticipated business downsizing or closure events to leverage the resources of local governments for layoff prevention. If this is not possible, the WDBCCC will coordinate activities to achieve rapid reemployment for the impacted workforce. To achieve these goals, the WDBCCC will take the steps detailed below to coordinate Rapid Response activities in the local area.

The WDBCCC will continue to leverage its partnerships with the business community to facilitate the swift re-employment of laid-off workers in positions requiring similar skills at other local or regional employers. Following the receipt of a Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN), the WDBCCC will work with businesses to profile the skill sets of employees at risk of being laid off in order to identify opportunities to transfer these skills into similar positions in priority industry sectors. In 2022, the WDBCCC responded to the Hello Fresh layoff.

To facilitate this type of response, the WDBCCC utilizes all resources and connections available to respond to closures. This includes the coordination of rapid response activities with EDD, Rubicon Programs, Covered California, and other AJCC and workforce system partners. Upon receipt of a WARN notice, Business Service Representatives contact the businesses to discuss the services available and to schedule a transition orientation for the impacted workers. Business Services Representatives, EDD partners, and service provider Rubicon meet regularly to coordinate these services. They deliver the orientation, which includes a panel of representatives that provide information on workforce services, unemployment insurance, and other resources available to dislocated workers.

### **Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Activities**

*A description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the Local Area. This includes how the Local Board will ensure that priority for adult career and training services will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient, as outlined in WIOA Adult Program Priority of Service (WSD15-14).*

The WDBCCC provides access to a wide range of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the Local Area. These include but are not limited to:

- Basic Career Services that includes assistance to individuals seeking WIOA services to register in the CalJOBS system
- Services at the comprehensive AJCC and access points for job recruitments, outreach and orientations services through the AJCC system

- WIOA A/DW eligibility determination and initial assessment of skill levels (including ELL proficiency), aptitudes, abilities, skill gaps and supportive service needs
- Unemployment Insurance (UI) information and claim filing assistance
- Performance and cost information of eligible providers of training services, etc.
- Completion of a comprehensive assessment of each participant's skill levels, employment barriers, service needs, occupational skills, prior work experience and employability
- Creation of an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) that identifies a participant's employment goal, achievement objectives and planned services

The WDBCCC meets the Priority of Service Requirement as stated in WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(E) with respect to individualized career services and training services funded by WIOA adult funds, providing priority of service to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals or individuals who are basic skills deficient by 1) maintaining different access points across our county for easy accessibility to services and 2) screening at intake to identify those who need extra supports and who meet the criteria for priority of service:

- Low income (receiving SNAP, TANF or at 70% of the Lower Living Standard Income level, homeless or disabled)
- Basic skills deficient (lacks high school diploma or equivalent, enrolled in Adult Education/Literacy program)
- Limited English skills proficient
- Unable to compute or solve problems at an 8th grade level or below
- English, reading, writing or computing skills at an 8.9 or below grade level
- Other objective criteria determined to be appropriate by the Local Area and documented in its required policy

Currently, we have ten different access points in East, Central and West Contra Costa. During orientations, we highlight WIOA services and universal services through our AJCC as well as individualized career training services through WIOA. Training dollars are set aside each program year for individuals who can document any of the deprivations listed above; they receive access to the training funding first.

In program year 2022-2023 and thereafter, Local Areas are required to meet a minimum of 75% priority of service rate of individuals in an individualized career or training service. (Previously, the target was 51% of those enrolled in the Adult category.) Priority percentages are tracked monthly for individuals who meet at least one of the categories, with proper documentation.

Participants in the public input sessions identified the importance of training approaches such as earn and learn and apprenticeships to support those for whom lack of income is

a barrier to gaining new skills. This plan has described several training programs with earn and learn components that the WDBCCC administers, partners with, supports or promotes: EMT 4 Equity, STEPS, Health Ambassadors, CCWORKS, SYEP, SCSEP, WIOA OJT. Others include FutureBuild (construction and solar apprenticeship), BitWise (IT apprenticeship), Boatworks 101 (maritime apprenticeship) – and more are in development. The need for more short-term training opportunities was also identified as a challenge for low income individuals who don't have the resources to support themselves during a longer period without employment. The Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) lists programs that last just a few weeks (such as Class A and Class B truck/bus driver). At its discretion, the WDBCCC can approve programs not on the ETPL and these may be even shorter, such as Certified Safety Assistant. The training lasts about a week and readies one for an entry-level contract job at a refinery.

Other participants named transportation as a key supportive service need, particularly in the eastern region of Contra Costa County. Transportation is a frequent supportive service provided to ensure success of enrolled clients. The strength of the collaborative model is that training programs and credential attainment is within reach without traveling very far. There is ample training found in Far East Contra Costa County at Liberty Adult Education and the Los Medanos Brentwood campus. Training options expand even more in Antioch and Pittsburg through the college, adult schools and non-profit training partners.

### **Type and Availability of Youth Workforce Investment Activities**

*A description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the Local Area, as outlined in WIOA Youth Program Requirements(WSD17-07). This includes any strategies the Local Board has regarding how to increase the digital literacy and fluency of youth participants, including youth with disabilities.*

The full range of WIOA Youth Services/14 Youth Elements are available to Contra Costa Youth including youth with disabilities:

- Tutoring, study skills training, and instruction leading to secondary school completion, including dropout prevention strategies;
- Alternative secondary school offerings;
- Education Concurrent with Workforce Preparation;
- Labor Market and Employment Information for Local Area;
- Paid and unpaid work experiences, including internships and job shadowing;
- Occupational skill training;
- Financial Literacy;
- Leadership development opportunities, which may include community service and peer centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social behaviors during non-school hours;

- Entrepreneurial Skills;
- Adult mentoring for the period of participation and a subsequent period, for a total of not less than 12 months;
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol counseling and referral;
- Supportive services;
- Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after completing participation; and
- Activities that prepare Youth to Transition to post-secondary education and training.

Some of the strategies adopted as a response to the pandemic have since been permanently incorporated into Youth Programs.

Virtual meetings continue to be an option for WIOA Orientations, work-readiness and job-search workshops and regular check-ins. Supportive service guidelines have been updated to address the purchase of technology (laptops, hotspots, internet access, etc.) to enable a student to participate in WIOA-funded occupational trainings. With access to technology and training in its appropriate use, virtual instruction can be used as a strategy to help address equity issues. In partnership with the other local boards within the East Bay region, Contra Costa helped launch a coding and web development pre-apprenticeship aligned with the information and communications technology (ICT) industry. The project provides a laptop to each participant and a weekly stipend of \$200. Most of the instruction is provided virtually. The WDBCC will continue to identify ways to support and enhance virtual internships in occupations that lend themselves to remote work.

Paid work-experience/internships aligned with a youth's interests continues to be a central component of the WIOA Youth Program. The WDBCCC firmly believes in the effectiveness of Earn and Learn models and has encouraged providers to extend the duration and hours of the paid work experience component. Providers have increased internship hours up to 500 and all work-experience interns are paid. The WDBCCC has secured over \$2.6 million of non-WIOA funding for paid work-experience/internships/transitional jobs that address some of our world's most pressing issues: food insecurity, community health issues, climate change and equitable access for students with disabilities. WDBCC will continue to maximize the funding available for earn and learn strategies.

While many Youth Committees and Local Boards have reserved 100% of their WIOA Youth funds for out-of-school youth, Contra Costa will continue to use a portion of its WIOA funds to support bridge programming, wrap-around services, and other strategies that support the connection of in-school youth/young adults to a career pathway.



The WDBCCC recognizes the significant barriers that system-involved youth and young adults experience in connecting to workforce services and career pathways, and eventual entry and advancement in gainful employment. These populations include current and former foster youth, those involved with the justice system, and young adults experiencing homelessness. The WDBCCC applied and was approved for the WIOA Waiver of Out-of-School Youth (OSY) expenditures which reduces the OSY expenditure requirement from 75 percent to 50 percent in order to serve more In-School Youth (ISY) who are systems-involved. The WDBCCC has seen a significant increase in the number of foster, homeless and justice-involved youth served compared to pre-waiver enrollments. The WDBCCC will seek to increase the engagement of and provide meaningful opportunities to these populations in WIOA and other program services through the application of emerging and innovative strategies and approaches, the adoption and replication of quality practices from across the state and country, and active participation in regional efforts to address challenges faced by these populations.

Feedback from the public input sessions mentioned the importance of work experience and apprenticeship opportunities as particularly effective ways for youth to develop new job skills. Sectors suggested for emphasis for youth training included advanced manufacturing and green technology. Participants also suggested that the WDBCCC support career education and information for youth to enable them to identify their career interests at an early stage. The WDBCCC agrees.

### **The Entity Responsible for the Disbursal of Grant Funds**

*The entity responsible for the disbursal of grant funds as determined by the Chief Elected Official (CEO) or the Governor and the competitive process that will be used to award the sub-grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities.*

The Employment and Human Services Department (EHSD) of Contra Costa County continues to be the designated fiscal agent for the WDBCCC, and as such is responsible for the dispersal and reporting of all grant funds. The Workforce WDBCCC follows the *Manual of Fiscal Policies and Procedures* issued by EHSD unless they are in direct conflict with the WIOA and/or Title V rules. The more stringent of the two policies are then followed. The WDBCCC uses two competitive processes:

- **Request for Information (RFI):** A document that asks a series of questions to elicit broad information about products and services, market details and solution ideas for planning purposes.
- **Request for Proposal (RFP):** A document that invites offers from service providers for the delivery of a specific type of service. It includes a description of the service(s) desired which enable a potential contractor to submit a proposal. The RFP will include information necessary for an objective evaluation and

comparison to similar proposals. The RFP is the specific term applied to a solicitation where negotiation is used.

All procurement for the WDBCCC will be conducted in a manner that ensures that the most effective service provider is selected. Procurements will be conducted in a fair and impartial manner and in accordance with all applicable federal and state laws. Generally all procurement activities will be conducted in a confidential manner. All proposals will be due in a timely manner as published, and must be free of any conflict of interest.

**How the AJCC Operator and/or the Career Services Provider Roles are Fulfilled**

*A description of how the AJCC Operator and/or the Career Services Provider roles are fulfilled within the Local Area as outlined in Selection of AJCC Operators and Career Services Providers (WSD19-13). This should include the name(s) and role(s) of all entities.*

The roles of the AJCC Operator and/or the Career Services provider are fulfilled by conducting an open and competitive process to select the AJCC Operator. The Local Board issues a Request for Proposals (RFP) to obtain competitive proposals from community based organizations to run and operate the AJCC and to select A/DW Career Services Providers.

Rubicon Programs, Inc. currently serves in the role of the AJCC Operator and coordinates the service delivery by required AJCC partners and service providers. It also ensures the implementation of the partner responsibilities agreed upon in the AJCC MOU. Rubicon has robust partnerships with CBOs, education, and training providers to ensure the delivery of services throughout the expanse of Contra Costa County, providing multiple onramps to the workforce system. As the Adult and Dislocated Worker Career Services Provider, Rubicon Programs inc. and its partner organizations in the Contra Costa Workforce Collaborative provide basic career services, including but not limited to participant intake, orientations, initial assessments, employment services and referrals to other partners and services. Partners in the Contra Costa Workforce Collaborative include: Rubicon Programs; Lao Family Community Development; Opportunity Junction; San Pablo Economic Development Corporation; Liberty Adult Ed; Mt. Diablo Adult Ed; Martinez Adult Ed; Pittsburg Adult Ed and the Contra Costa Community College District.