

SOUTHERN GEORGIA WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AREA 2016 COMPREHENSIVE 4-YEAR LOCAL PLAN



Prepared by the



Introduction

The Southern Georgia Workforce Development Area (SGWDA) (Workforce Area #18) consists of 18 counties in predominantly rural southern Georgia (Atkinson, Bacon, Ben Hill, Berrien, Brantley, Brooks, Charlton, Clinch, Coffee, Cook, Echols, Irwin, Lanier, Lowndes, Pierce, Tift, Turner, and Ware Counties), coterminous with the 18-county region served by the Southern Georgia Regional Commission. This document serves as the Comprehensive Four-Year Local Plan for the SGWDA, in accordance with WIOA § 108. This plan was developed in partnership with the Southern Georgia Area Chief Local Elected Officials, Southern Georgia Workforce Development Board (SGWDB), and local Georgia Department of Labor, Georgia Department of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and Adult Literacy partners.

Strategic Elements, Governance, and Structure

- 1. Identification of the Fiscal Agent** – Provide an identification of the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in WIOA § 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III) as determined by the chief elected officials.

The Southern Georgia Regional Commission shall serve as the fiscal agent and shall be responsible for the disbursement of grant funds.

- 2. Description of Strategic Planning Elements** – Provide a description of the strategic planning elements listed below. A complete answer will rely on a variety of data sources and employer input. Also describe how the information was gathered and what partners and employers were consulted.
 - a. Regional Economic Conditions** – provide an analysis of the regional economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and the employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations. Include the listing of occupations in demand within the region and describe how the list was developed citing source data.

The 18-county Southern Georgia region is predominantly rural in terms of its land area and approximately half rural and half urban in terms of its population (51.4% of the population resides in rural areas and 48.6 in urban areas and urban clusters according to 2010 Census data). The region's largest urban area is Valdosta, and other major urban clusters include Douglas, Fitzgerald, Tifton, and Waycross. Historically, the region's major industries were agriculture (both crops and livestock) and forestry, including the extraction of turpentine from pine trees. However, in recent decades, in keeping with national trends, the region has shifted from a production economy to a service economy. Although the majority of the region's land area is still used for agriculture and forestry, more jobs are now in service-providing industries than in goods-producing industries.

Information in this section was gathered from the Georgia Department of Labor, Workforce Information and Analysis, and Labor Insight/Burning Glass. Information was also gathered through discussion with Chambers of Commerce, Economic Development professionals, and business representatives from the Workforce Development Board. After data analysis was completed the following in-demand occupation list was established for the SGWDA.

Healthcare and Technical Occupations	Human Services
Cardiovascular Technologists and Technicians	Counseling Psychologists/School Psychologists
Critical Care Nurses	Mental Health Counselors
Dietitians and Nutritionists	Health Educators
Dental Hygienist/Assistants	Social and Community Service Managers
Home Health Aides	Social Workers, All
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	Personal Care Aides
Medical and Health Services Managers	
Medical & Clinical Laboratory Technologists & Technicians	Marketing Managers
Medical Assistants	Marketing Managers
Medical Records and Health Information Technicians	Sales Managers
Medical Secretaries	Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists
Medical Transcriptionists	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers
Nurse Anesthetists	Parts/Retail Salespersons
Nursing Assistants	Sales Representatives
Occupational Therapists/Assistants	
Opticianry	Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics
Pharmacy Technicians	Ambulance Drivers
Phlebotomists	Automotive Master Mechanics, Technicians, & Body Related Repairs
Physical Therapist/Assistants	Automotive Specialty Technicians
Psychiatrists	Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists
Registered Nurses	Commercial Truck Driving
Respiratory Therapists/Technicians	Mobile Heavy Equipment Mechanics, Except Engines
Sonographers/Radiologic Technicians	Logistics Managers
Speech-Language Pathologists	Transportation Managers
Surgical Technologists	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers
	Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers
Building, Grounds, Maintenance Occupations	
Landscaping and Grounds Keeping Workers	Hospitality & Tourism
	First-Line Supervisors of Housekeeping & Janitorial Workers
Government & Public Planning	Chefs and Head Cooks
Urban & Regional Planners	First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation/Serving Workers
Occupational Health & Safety Specialists	Food Service Managers

Business Management	Education, Training, & Library Occupations
Administrative Service Managers Business Operators/Administration Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks Customer Service Representatives/Specialist First-Line Supervisors of Office/Administration Support Workers Office and Administrative Support Workers, All Other Patient Representatives Computer and Information Systems Managers General and Operations Managers Managers, All Other	Administrators, Elementary/Secondary/Post-Secondary Educational, Guidance, School, & Vocational Counselors Teachers, Preschool – Post-Secondary, GED Teachers, Vocational Education Teacher Assistants/Substitutes Librarians, Technicians, & Assistants Coaches and Scouts Nursing Instructors and Teachers, Post-Secondary
Manufacturing	Law, Public Safety, & Corrections
Electrical/Electronics Installers & Repairers First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, & Repairers Heating & Air Conditioning Mechanics/Installers Lineman Maintenance and Repair Workers, General Medical Equipment Repairers First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers Production Workers, All Other Solders & Brazers Welders, Cutters, and Welder Fitters	Correctional Officers and Jailers Criminal Justice Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics First-Line Supervisors of Police and Detectives Municipal Firefighters Police Patrol Officers Probation Officers/Correctional Treatment Specialists Private Detectives/Private Investigators/Criminal Investigators Sheriffs and Deputy Sheriffs Transit and Railroad Police
Finance	Information Technology
Accountants Loan Officers Tellers Financial Managers, Branch of Department Tax Preparers Insurance Sales Agents Personal Financial Advisors Risk Management Specialists	Computer Systems Engineers/Architects Computer User Support Specialists Database Administrators Information Security Analysts Network and Computer Systems Administrators Computer Systems Analysts Software Developers, Applications
STEM	Architecture & Construction
Architectural and Engineering Managers Chemical/Electrical/Industrial Engineers Industrial Safety and Health Engineers Industrial Systems Technology Locomotive Engineers Manufacturing Engineers Mechanical Engineers	Construction Supervisors Carpenters Painters Pipefitters & Steamfitters Plumbers Millwrights Electricians

From 2012 to 2022 (the most current projections available), the five industries that are projected to see the greatest absolute growth (highest number of jobs added) are:

- Health Care and Social Assistance (5,300 jobs added)
- Educational Services (4,040 jobs added)
- Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services (2,830 jobs added)
- Construction (1,470 jobs added)
- Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (1,120 jobs added)

During the same time period, the five industries projected to see the greatest relative growth (percent increase in total number of jobs) are:

- Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services (45%)
- Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (39%)
- Construction (31%)
- Health Care and Social Assistance (28%)
- Real Estate and Rental and Leasing (27%)

A significant decrease (1,070 jobs) is projected in the Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting sector. An overview of industry projections for 2012 to 2022 is provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Industry Projections for Multiple Industries in Southern Georgia Workforce Investment Area in 2012-2022

Industry	Industry Code	2012 Estimated Employment	2022 Projected Employment	Total 2012-2022 Employment Change	Annual Avg. Percent Change	Total Percent Change
Total, All Industries	000000	146,010	164,850	18,840	1.22%	12.90%
Accommodation and Food Services	72	13,210	13,880	670	0.50%	5.08%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	56	6,230	9,060	2,830	3.81%	45.36%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	11	5,140	4,070	-1,070	-2.31%	-20.85%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	71	1,180	1,450	270	2.08%	22.85%
Construction	23	4,720	6,190	1,470	2.75%	31.20%
Educational Services	61	14,920	18,960	4,040	2.43%	27.10%
Finance and Insurance	52	3,050	3,420	370	1.15%	12.09%
Health Care and Social Assistance	62	18,960	24,260	5,300	2.50%	27.95%
Information	51	1,970	2,010	40	0.20%	2.03%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	55	830	870	40	0.50%	5.07%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	21	50	40	-10	-2.11%	-19.23%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	81	4,560	5,080	520	1.09%	11.46%

Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	54	2,850	3,970	1,120	3.37%	39.29%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	53	1,260	1,610	350	2.43%	27.14%
Utilities	22	580	600	20	0.36%	3.62%
Wholesale Trade	42	4,620	5,710	1,090	2.14%	23.57%

Source: Georgia Dept. of Labor, Workforce Statistics & Economic Research, Projections Unit

The five occupations that are projected to see the greatest absolute growth are:

- Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food (640 jobs added)
- Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand (600 jobs added)
- Customer Service Representatives (580 jobs added)
- Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education (560 jobs added)
- Team Assemblers (450 jobs added)

An overview of occupations by projected growth is provided in Table 2. The seven occupation categories projected to be in highest demand in the region (those with the highest number of estimated annual openings) are:

- Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food (250 annual openings)
- Retail Salespersons (220 annual openings)
- Cashiers (200 annual openings)
- Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand (150 annual openings)
- Customer Service Representatives (110 annual openings)
- Office Clerks, General (110 annual openings)
- Waiters and Waitresses (110 annual openings)

Table 2. Occupations by Projected Growth

The table below shows the occupations with the highest estimated annual openings in Southern Georgia Workforce Investment Area, Georgia for the 2012 - 2022 time period.

Occupation	2012 Estimated Employment	2022 Projected Employment	2012-2022 Annual Percent Change	Estimated Annual Openings	Total 2012-2022 Employment Change
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	5,030	5,670	1.2	250	640
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	3,030	3,630	1.8	150	600
Customer Service Representatives	1,980	2,560	2.6	110	580
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	1,810	2,370	2.7	100	560
Team Assemblers	2,500	2,950	1.7	90	450
Registered Nurses	2,740	3,170	1.5	90	430
Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	1,260	1,660	2.8	70	400
Nursing Assistants	2,210	2,590	1.6	80	380
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	2,610	2,980	1.3	80	370

Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	1,550	1,910	2.1	70	360
Office Clerks, General	3,120	3,470	1.1	110	350
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	1,490	1,840	2.1	70	350
General and Operations Managers	1,960	2,300	1.6	70	340
Construction Laborers	1,420	1,760	2.2	70	340
Childcare Workers	1,310	1,640	2.3	70	330
Retail Salespersons	5,510	5,830	0.6	220	320
Receptionists and Information Clerks	1,260	1,580	2.3	60	320
Teacher Assistants	1,190	1,470	2.1	60	280
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	1,590	1,870	1.6	60	280
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	1,790	2,050	1.4	60	260
Correctional Officers and Jailers	2,010	2,230	1.0	80	220
Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	2,070	2,140	0.3	70	70
Cashiers	4,470	4,520	0.1	200	50
Waiters and Waitresses	2,250	2,280	0.1	110	30
Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, Nursery, and Greenhouse	2,040	1,590	-2.5	60	-450

Source: Georgia Dept. of Labor, Workforce Statistics & Economic Research, Projections Unit

- b. Knowledge and Skills Needed** – Provide an analysis of knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

For many of the occupations projected to show the greatest growth in the coming years, advanced degrees and specialized training are not required. For example, fast food workers, laborers, customer service representatives, and cashiers typically require only a brief training period and do not require higher-level qualifications. However, some of the occupations that are expected to experience growth in the region in the near future do require advanced degrees and/or special training, for example: elementary school teachers (100 projected annual openings), registered nurses (90 projected annual openings), and middle school teachers (70 projected annual openings).

Occupations with the highest number of annual openings in the region during 2012-2022 are listed in

Table 3, along with the level of education typically required for these occupations. The five occupations projected to have the most annual openings do not typically require a high school diploma.

Table 3. Occupations With Most Annual Openings, Southern Georgia Region, 2012-2022

Occupations	Education Code	2012 Base Employment	2022 Projected Employment	Total Change in Employment	Annual Openings
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	8	5,030	5,670	640	250
Retail Salespersons	8	5,510	5,830	320	220
Cashiers	8	4,470	4,520	50	200
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	8	3,030	3,630	600	150
Waiters and Waitresses	8	2,250	2,280	30	110
Customer Service Representatives	7	1,980	2,560	580	110
Office Clerks, General	7	3,120	3,470	350	110
Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education	3	1,810	2,370	560	100
Registered Nurses	4	2,740	3,170	430	90
Team Assemblers	7	2,500	2,950	450	90
Nursing Assistants	5	2,210	2,590	380	80
Correctional Officers and Jailers	7	2,010	2,230	220	80
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	5	2,610	2,980	370	80
General and Operations Managers	3	1,960	2,300	340	70
Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	3	1,260	1,660	400	70
Education Codes					
1 Doctoral or professional degree		5 Postsecondary non-degree award			
2 Master's degree		6 Some college, no degree			
3 Bachelor's degree		7 High school diploma or equivalent			
4 Associate's degree		8 Less than high school			

Source: Georgia Department of Labor, Workforce Statistics and Economic Research

Several of the occupations projected to have the highest level of relative growth (percent change) during the same timeframe require a higher level of education (see Table 4). However, the total number of openings in these occupations is projected to be low.

Table 4. Fastest Growing Occupations, Southern Georgia Region, 2012-2022

Occupations	Education Code	2012 Base Employment	2022 Projected Employment	Total Change in Employment	Annual Openings
Nursing Instructors and Teachers, Postsecondary	2	100	160	60	10
Physical Therapists	1	300	480	180	30
Health Specialties Teachers, Postsecondary	1	70	110	40	0

Personal Care Aides	8	520	810	290	30
Insulation Workers, Mechanical	7	20	30	10	0
Interpreters and Translators	3	30	40	10	0
Ambulance Drivers and Attendants, Except Emergency Medical Technicians	7	60	90	30	0
Physician Assistants	2	110	160	50	10
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	4	50	70	20	0
Helpers--Electricians	7	250	360	110	10
Dental Hygienists	4	120	180	60	10
Home Health Aides	8	690	1,000	310	40
Nurse Practitioners	2	140	200	60	10
Medical Secretaries	7	600	850	250	40
Speech-Language Pathologists	2	330	470	140	20
Education Codes					
1 Doctoral or professional degree	5 Postsecondary non-degree award				
2 Master's degree	6 Some college, no degree				
3 Bachelor's degree	7 High school diploma or equivalent				
4 Associate's degree	8 Less than high school				

Source: Georgia Department of Labor, Workforce Statistics and Economic Research

- c. Workforce Analysis** – Provide an analysis of the workforce in the region, including current labor force employment, unemployment data, information on labor market trends and the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment. List all data sources used to gather this information.

As of April 2016 (the most recent date for which data are currently available), the labor force in the Southern Georgia region numbers 172,649, with 163,613 employed and 9,036 unemployed, meaning that the unemployment rate is 5.2% (Source: [GA Dept. of Labor, Workforce Statistics & Economic Research, Local Area Unemployment Statistics Unit](#)). The unemployment rate has declined steadily since it peaked at 12.3% in January 2010 (see Figure 1). However, the labor force has also decreased in number, from a peak of 189,491 in August 2008 to 172,649 in April 2016 (see Figure 2), while the population of the region has grown (by 5.6% from 2009 to 2015; see Figure 3). This means that the percentage of the total population participating in the labor force (those either employed or seeking employment) has decreased. This may be due in part to some individuals ceasing to seek employment after suffering from long-term unemployment (“discouraged workers”). The labor market in the region is not necessarily improving as rapidly as the declining unemployment rate might suggest.

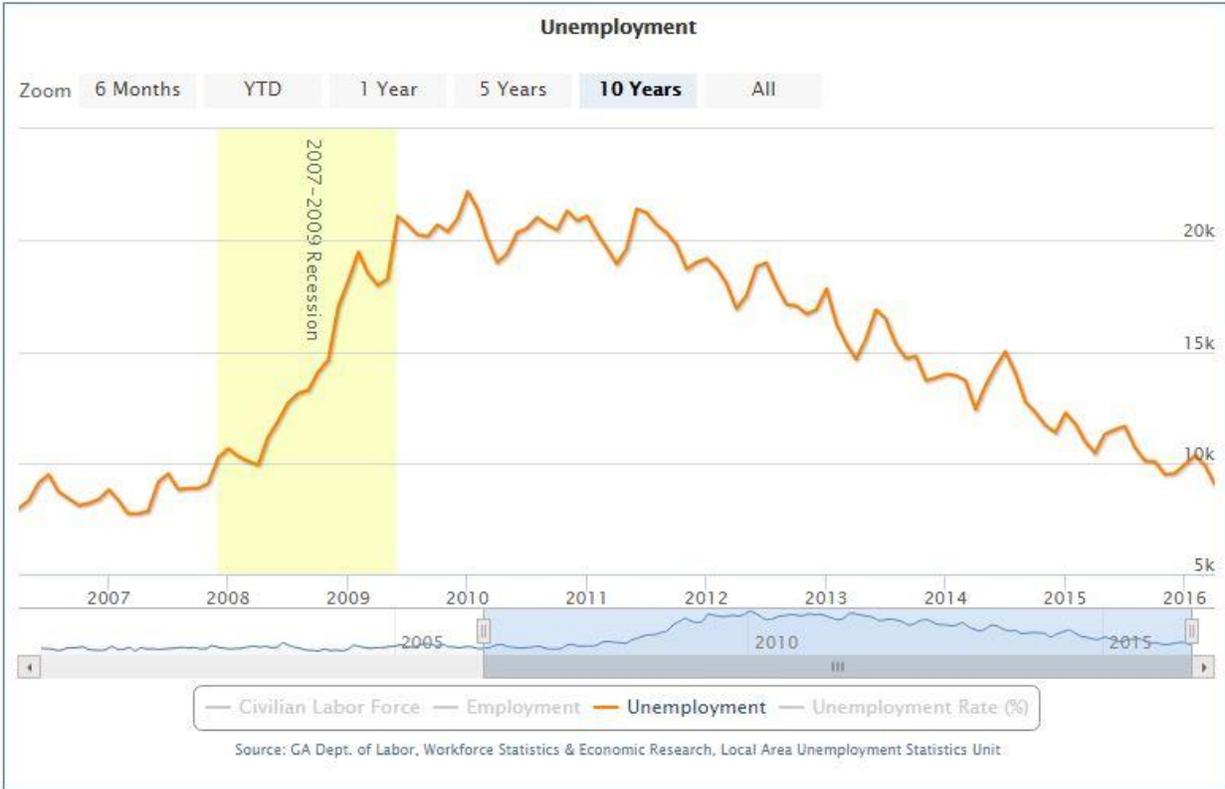


Figure 1. Unemployment Rate, Southern Georgia Region, 2007 – 2016
 Source: GA Dept. of Labor, Workforce Statistics & Economic Research, Local Area Unemployment Statistics Unit

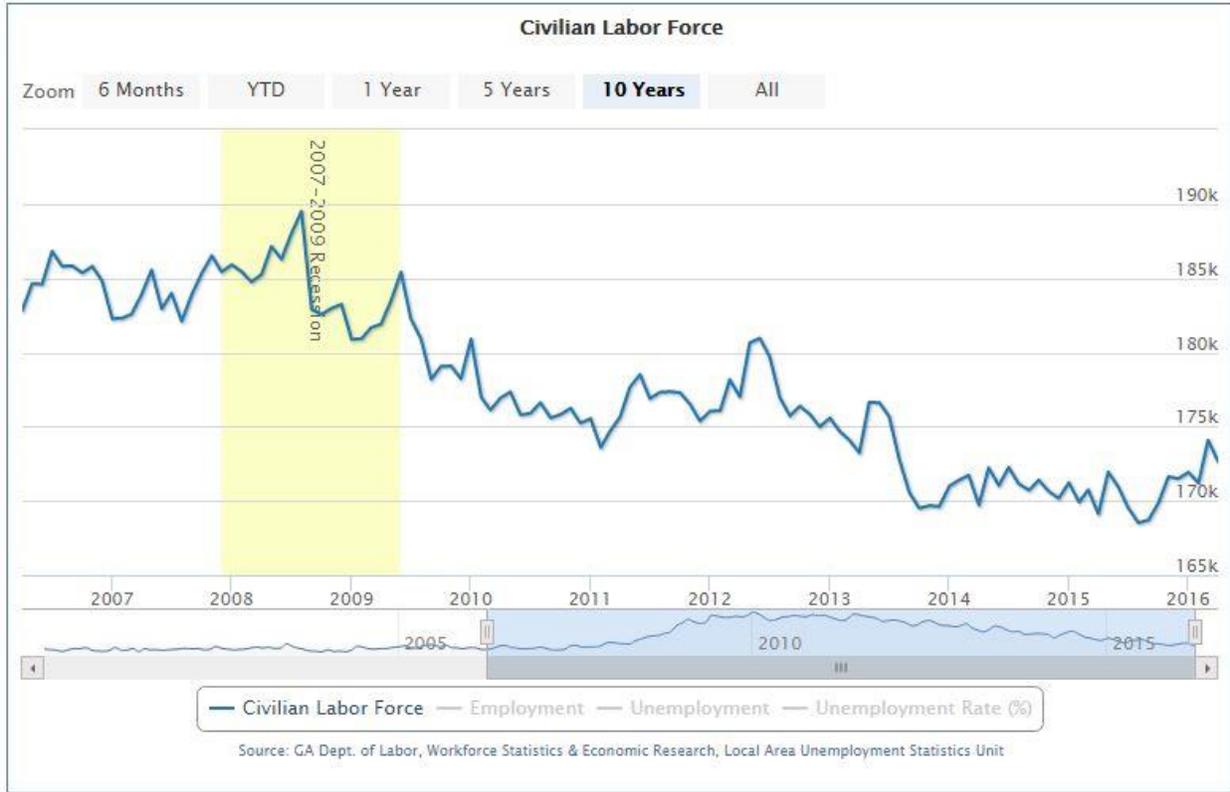


Figure 2. Civilian Labor Force, Southern Georgia Region, 2007 – 2016
 Source: GA Dept. of Labor, Workforce Statistics & Economic Research, Local Area Unemployment Statistics Unit

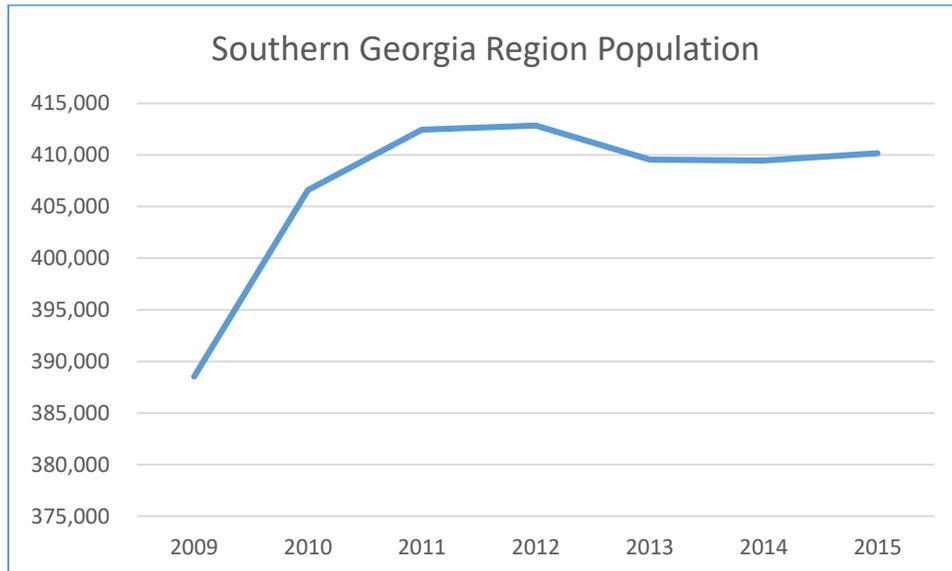


Figure 3. Population of the Southern Georgia Region, 2009 – 2015
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Among adults aged 25 or older in the region, 20.9% do not have a high school diploma, while 8.9% hold a bachelor’s degree and 6% hold a graduate or professional degree. Educational attainment levels for adults aged 25 or older in the region are shown in Figure 4. Educational attainment levels among adults aged 25 and older are fairly similar for men and women; however, notably, among adults aged 18 – 24, women’s educational attainment levels are considerably higher, while at the same time there are more men who have not completed high school (see Figure 5). This suggests a new trend for the younger generation, in which more women are pursuing higher education.

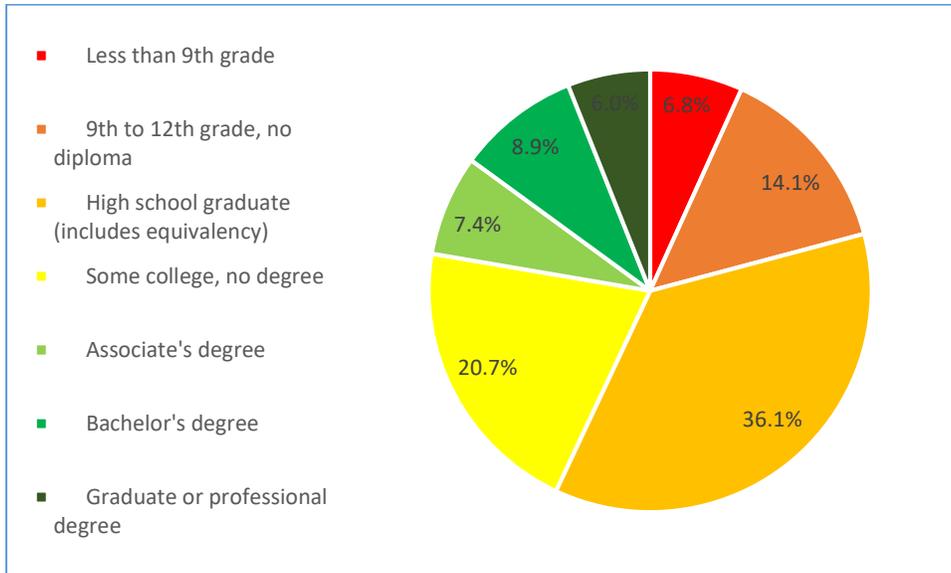


Figure 4. Educational Attainment, Adults Aged 25+, Southern Georgia Region, 2014
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau

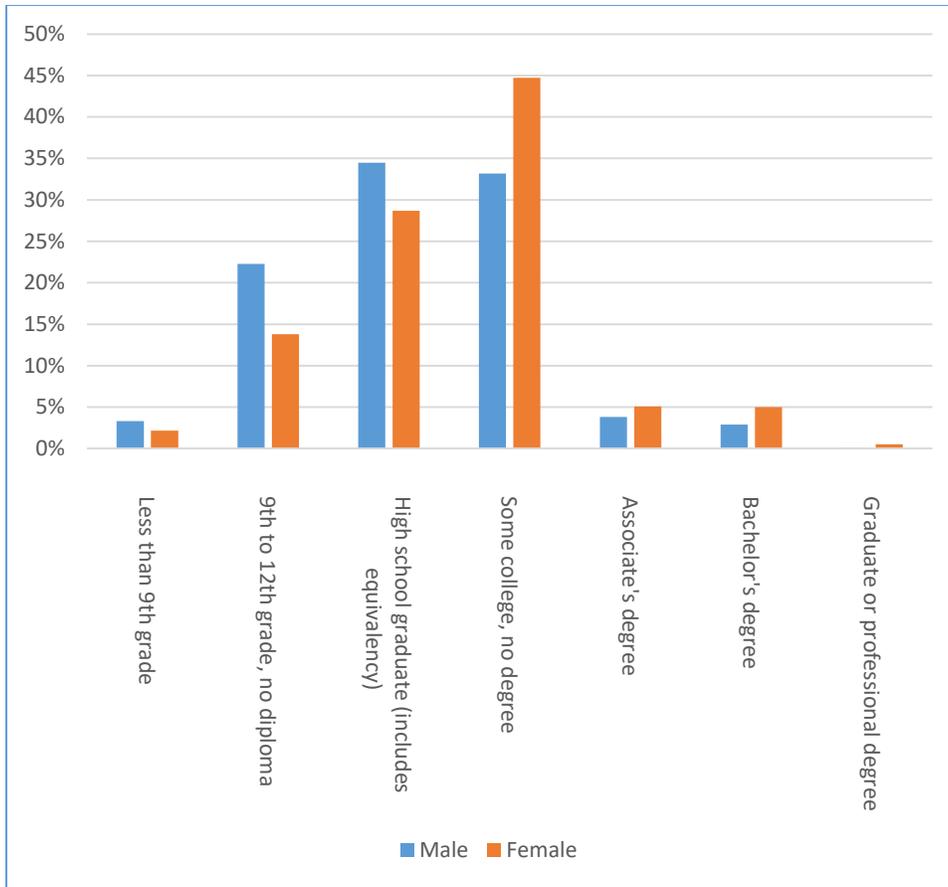


Figure 5. Educational Attainment, Ages 18 - 24, Southern Georgia Region
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau

There are many individuals in the region who face barriers to employment. Aside from low educational attainment (see above), lack of transportation, lack of childcare, and disability are major barriers in the region.

According to Census data, as of 2014 estimates, 15.3% of the population aged 18 to 64 years in the region has a disability, including 2.9% with a hearing difficulty, 4.5% with a vision difficulty, 6.1% with a cognitive difficulty, and 8.3% with an ambulatory difficulty. More information is given in Table 5.

Table 5. Population With Disabilities, 2014 Estimate

County	Total Population 18 to 64 years	Percent with a disability	Percent with a hearing difficulty	Percent with a vision difficulty	Percent with a cognitive difficulty	Percent with an ambulatory difficulty	Percent with a self-care difficulty	Percent with an independent living difficulty
Atkinson	5,005	13.8%	2.8%	3.6%	3.5%	8.4%	2.4%	4%
Bacon	6,399	15.9%	2.9%	4.7%	7.8%	9%	2.3%	5.8%
Ben Hill	10,268	22.9%	3.4%	8.8%	7.6%	11.8%	4.4%	8.5%
Berrien	11,288	16.1%	3.8%	5.5%	4.5%	8.2%	2.1%	4.4%
Brantley	11,328	22.9%	5.5%	6.5%	10.8%	15.1%	5.5%	9.7%
Brooks	9,391	19%	3.5%	4.4%	7.2%	12.7%	6.3%	7.8%
Charlton	7,534	11.2%	2%	0.8%	6.1%	4.8%	1.1%	2.8%
Clinch	3,858	21.7%	3.3%	7.2%	9.7%	10.4%	3.5%	7.9%
Coffee	24,072	15%	2.1%	5.3%	4.7%	9.1%	3.9%	6.3%
Cook	10,061	13.8%	1.8%	2.6%	5.9%	7.3%	1.8%	4.6%
Echols	2,477	11.7%	3%	2.6%	4.6%	6.2%	2.9%	4.6%
Irwin	5,283	15.4%	5.5%	4.5%	6.2%	8%	2.1%	3.2%
Lanier	5,958	19.1%	5.1%	5%	6.5%	12.1%	3.5%	4.8%
Lowndes	68,766	11.5%	1.8%	2.7%	4.9%	6%	1.7%	3.8%
Pierce	11,197	17.6%	3.4%	4.9%	9.3%	10.8%	3.5%	7.2%
Tift	24,718	14.8%	3.3%	7.2%	3.9%	4.6%	1.5%	3.4%
Turner	4,634	20.1%	3.2%	3.3%	8.2%	9.2%	3.7%	6%
Ware	19,876	17.2%	3.3%	5%	8.7%	10.7%	4%	6.7%
Region	242,113	15.3%	2.9%	4.5%	6.1%	8.3%	2.8%	5.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American FactFinder, 2014 Estimates

Lack of transportation can be a barrier to employment, as can the distance required to travel to work. According to 2014 Census estimates, 3.6% of workers in the region have no vehicle available for commuting. According to the same source, 5.3% of workers have a commute time of more than 60 minutes each way. While these statistics are for currently employed workers, they can also be interpreted to suggest that barriers exist for those who are not currently working, such as lack of transportation and distance to potential places of employment.

Lack of childcare can be a major barrier to employment. According to 2014 U.S. Census Bureau estimates, 40.4% of families that have children under 6 years old are families with a single parent and no spouse present. 39.1% of all families with children under 18 are single-parent families.

County	Families with children under 18	Families with children under 6	Percent of families with children under 18 that are single-parent families	Percent of families with children under 6 that are single-parent families
Atkinson	973	428	34.8%	35.3%
Bacon	1,122	377	29.8%	38.2%
Ben Hill	1,898	651	56.1%	55.6%
Berrien	2,111	805	33.6%	34.0%
Brantley	2,073	801	31.8%	33.3%
Brooks	1,443	508	36.5%	22.0%
Charlton	1,068	403	31.6%	32.8%
Clinch	679	357	52.3%	72.3%
Coffee	4,214	1,663	38.5%	33.5%
Cook	1,879	800	31.0%	25.0%
Echols	470	151	34.0%	37.7%
Irwin	914	362	32.6%	29.8%
Lanier	1,202	702	41.9%	45.2%
Lowndes	12,096	6,173	41.3%	44.1%
Pierce	2,197	879	32.1%	27.5%
Tift	4,124	1,592	43.1%	41.2%
Turner	797	386	58.7%	61.1%
Ware	4,019	1,571	36.3%	45.6%
Region	43,279	18,609	39.1%	40.4%

A criminal record can be a major barrier to employment. Although county-level and regional data are not available, as of 2007, 1.42% of Georgia’s population was incarcerated and 6.5% were on probation and parole (Pew Center on the States report, [“One in 31: The Long Reach of American Corrections,”](#) March 2009). As of 2009, an estimated 14% of adults in Georgia had a felony conviction (Sarah Shannon et al., Population Association of America white paper, [“Growth in the U.S. Ex-Felon and Ex-Prisoner Population, 1948 to 2010”](#)). Although [recent executive action](#) has prohibited the use of a criminal record as an automatic bar to employment by the State of Georgia, a criminal record is still a barrier to employment in the private sector.

- d. Workforce Development Activities** – Provide an analysis of the workforce development activities (including education and training) in the region, including an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses and capacity of such services to address the identified education and skill needs of the workforce, and the employment needs of employers in the region.

Workforce Development Activities

Region 11 has a growing labor workforce and strong partnerships with educational institutions that work to meet the needs of the region. The region benefits from having three (3) technical colleges and three (3) universities strategically placed to ensure individuals have access to a variety of in-demand training programs. One of the major partnerships in Region 11 is with the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG), which is the state’s primary mechanism for creating a job-driven education. TCSG in the region include Coastal Pines Technical College, Southern Regional Technical College and Wiregrass Georgia Technical College. The technical schools in the region are actively engaged in providing both jobs and workers to fill them, workers who face academic

and employment barriers. Other partners are the University System of Georgia (USG), including Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College (ABAC), South Georgia State College (SGSC) and Valdosta State University (VSU). These training institutions have long-term working relationships with the SGWDB. In addition, our new Business Services Coordinator will engage these entities to identify and develop training programs based on employer input and needs. SGWDB staff and service providers recruit qualified candidates for programs at the schools. Upon successful completion of the training program, those candidates are then given first consideration for employment opportunities.

The SGWDB works closely with the TCSG and USG, as well as for-profit and non-profit education providers. This partnership enables all local workforce development agencies to provide customers with various educational programs that satisfy the USDOL mandate of customer choice.

In Region 11 the Georgia Department of Labor has Employer Committees (Douglas and Waycross) which provide information on workforce needs. Staff of the SGWDB attend these meetings in order to stay informed regarding employer needs. The public school's systems have employers engaged in the development of their course offerings, particularly in the area of occupational specific course offerings. Great Promise Partnership working with at-risk" youth is active in one (1) of our counties and is actively working to establish other programs in the region.

Strengths

The biggest strength in Region 11 is the partnerships and collaboration that takes place between the various workforce development and partner agencies. Although no one main system is available, the partners in the region work very hard to share information so that customers have knowledge and access to programs available to them.

Challenges

The Southern Georgia area covers eighteen (18) counties. The area is largely rural and public transportation is non-existent. Many participants in our rural counties are unable to travel to comprehensive one-stop center. Transportation supportive services are available; however, the amount may not cover enough to pay for the costs associated with owning or borrowing a vehicle.

The region has a high drop-out rate. Re-engaging this population is very difficult. The region has programs in place to assist Adults as well as Out-of-School Youth who are interested in obtaining their GED. Even with these programs, the percentage of the population without a secondary school diploma is very high. Many employers in the region require a high-school diploma or GED which makes this population very difficult to assist with job placement.

Lack of childcare can be a major barrier to employment. According to 2014 U.S. Census Bureau estimates, 40.4% of families that have children under 6 years old are families with a single parent and no spouse present. 39.1% of all families with children under 18 are single-parent families. The region does have supportive services available for child care; however, the amount available does not cover the full cost of child care.

The Southern Georgia region will continue to expand coordination and service integration with local employers, core partners and other entities that provide needed services in an on-going effort to increase the capacity of our services to meet the needs of both employers and customers.

- e. **Strategic Vision and Goals** – Provide a description of the local board’s strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment), including goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance in order to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency.

The Southern Georgia Area WDB envisions the local one-stop/workforce development system as the mechanism to promote, encourage, and coordinate the development of a well-trained labor force with skills to not only meet the needs of the area’s current employers, but also to attract new business and industry to the area.

To meet the challenge of bringing the vision to fruition in an 18-county, 8,000 square mile area which includes some metropolitan and mostly rural counties, the area set the following goals:

- Ensure prompt reentry of dislocated workers into the local workforce at salaries comparable to or exceeding the pre-layoff wages;
- Expand the vision and develop the full potential of those whose frame of reference may ordinarily include only menial and/or part-time jobs – specifically those with barriers to employment (i.e., economically disadvantaged youth, the long-term unemployed, seasonal workers, TANF recipients, the disabled, the area’s growing Hispanic population, etc.);
- Work closely with business and industry to ensure that the system is not only producing workers to meet its immediate needs, but making adjustments in anticipation of future needs and technological changes;
- Work closely with core partner and other agencies to move individuals from the labor market to further education and training in order to advance in their careers and upgrade their contributions to the workplace;
- Work closely with core partners and other agencies serving youth to reconnect youth to career pathways of education and training to enable them to earn a high school diploma and/or enter postsecondary education;
- Provide support services to adults, youth and dislocated workers during the pursuit of education and training so that they may be successful.

The region seeks to provide abovementioned services by implementing programs designed to measure incremental gain during training, and therefore increase credential attainment. Incorporation of career pathways and work based learning activities will increase employment and retention for all WIOA customers.

The local workforce area has a history of meeting and exceeding the performance accountability measures under both the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). These measures are clearly specified in all contracts with agencies that make up the Southern Georgia service delivery system. The local area is able to achieve these performance measures due to the intensive case management and follow-up services provided by our contracted service providers. The local area believes that a continued focus on these strategies will allow performance levels to stay at or above the agreed upon performance measures.

- f. **Coordination Strategy** – Taking into account the analyses described in sections “2 a-e” (above), provide a strategy to coordinate core programs to align resources available to the local area to achieve the strategic vision and goals.

The region will meet with and consult with all core partners, board members, local employers and other regional stakeholders on a regular and as-needed basis in order to ensure all issues are addressed in a timely manner and to ensure continuous improvement and accessibility. These meetings will be held at least quarterly and on an as-needed basis.

3. Description of Strategies and Services – Provide a description of the strategies and services that will be used in the local area in order to accomplish the items listed below.

- a. **Employer Engagement** – How will the area engage employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations?

Employer services will continue to be provided in, or through, the designated One-Stops and include pre-screening of potential employees, interview rooms for employers, testing, specialized recruitment (for unique hiring situations), assistance with filing unemployment insurance claims (on-site upon request), and job fairs. Implementation of on-the-job training later in PY2016 or in PY2017 will further increase employer engagement.

- b. Local Workforce Development System/Business Services** – How will the area support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area? Discuss the area’s workforce services to businesses and how business and organized labor representatives on the WDB contributed to the development of these strategies. Provide a listing of business services available through the area(s) such as employer workshops and assessment and screening of potential employees.

The business and labor organization WDB members are consulted on a regular basis to ensure these services are always updated and relevant.

Additionally, area 18 applied for and received a grant to study the need for on-the-job training in the area and the best way to implement this training for the benefit of local employers and WIOA customers.

Business services available to area employers include:

- Employer Recruitment
- Job Analysis/Job Description Assistance
- Testing Facilities
- Pre-screening
- Work Experience for Youth and Older Workers
- Quick Start
- Lay-off Assistance
- UI Filing Assistance
- Tax Credit and Incentives
- Federal Bonding Program
- Labor Market Information
- Labor Laws Information and Referral
- Disabled Accessibility Assessments
- Disability Job Accommodation Consultations

- c. Coordination with Economic Development** – How will the area better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development? Additionally, identify economic development partners and describe the involvement of the economic development community in developing strategies.

The WIOA partners coordinate with economic development organizations, including local industrial authorities, chambers of commerce, private sector WDB members, organized labor, and Georgia Department of Economic Development (all also represented on the WDB), as well as the local DOL Career Centers and their Employer Committees.

The WDB has an on-going commitment to develop and expand services with business and Economic Development partners.

Services for the economic development community include working as part of area teams in industrial recruitment, providing information on workforce development resources in a written format and directly to business prospects. Our system works closely with economic developers, chambers of commerce, and industrial development authorities.

d. Linkages with Unemployment Insurance Programs – How will the area strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs?

The local area will continue co-location with unemployment insurance programs-they will continue to be part of our one-stop system. The One-Stop delivery system provides assistance with filing unemployment insurance claims on-site upon request. This linkage will continue and be strengthened through partner meetings, improved referrals, etc.

4. Regional Service Delivery – (Only applies to regions that encompass two or more local areas). Describe how the region will address these items listed below.

a. N/A

b. N/A

5. Sector Strategy Development – Provide a description of the current regional sector strategy development for in-demand industry sectors.

The Southern Georgia board and partners selected Healthcare and Social Assistance as the sector with the most job openings, best wages, and greatest local employer need for skilled workers. A newly formed committee-the “Sector Strategy/One-Stop Committee” will help guide the region’s sector strategy implementation. Committee membership includes board members (public and private sector), core partners, and non-WDB members with relevant expertise.

a. Partners – Describe the partners that are participating in the sector strategy development.

Southern Georgia area sector strategy participating partners include:

- Southern Georgia Area 18 Workforce Development Board
- Georgia Department of Labor (Local offices)
- Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (Local offices)
- Department of Human Services (Local offices)
- Adult Literacy (Area technical colleges)
- McKinney Medical Center (Industry leader)

- b. Meetings** – Describe the meetings that have taken place and the strategy by which partners will continue to be engaged.

The initial sector strategy meeting was held March 24-25, 2016 at the state sponsored training session held at Little Ocmulgee State Park.

The next meeting is planned for June 29, 2016. The Sector Strategy/One-Stop Committee will meet to discuss initial implementation for PY2016. Additional meetings will be held quarterly and as-needed to ensure continuous improvement.

- c. Research and Data** – Describe the research and the data that was used to identify the sector that was chosen for the sectors strategies training.

The local region employed partner input, labor market data, and local experiential data to determine the health field was the best sector to concentrate on in PY2016. Health occupations have long been in demand in this area and provide both multiple job opportunities and excellent wages.

- d. Sector Strategy Outline** – Provide a completed outline of the sector strategy for the previously identified sector that includes the following details:

- i. Participating employers include local hospitals, medical clinics, nursing homes, home health agencies, pharmacies, healthcare supplies outlets.
- ii. Target occupations include nursing, medical technology, radiology, emergency medicine and dental hygiene.
- iii. Training programs include registered nurse, practical nurse, radiologist, pharmacy tech, surgical tech, HIT management technology, medical assisting, paramedicine, and dental hygienist.
- iv. Target populations include all local WIOA eligible adult, youth and dislocated workers seeking training in the health field. Applicants who successfully meet school requirements for the specific training and who are otherwise WIOA eligible and in need of WIOA services will be targeted.

- e. Plans for Future Strategy Development** – Describe the plans for future strategy development for future sectors. If applicable, discuss the next sectors to be targeted.

The local area will concentrate on the health field in PY2016. However, we plan to choose other additional sector(s) in PY 2017. These sectors will be based on WDB input and approval, Sector Strategy/One-Stop Committee input, and labor market and local experiential data sources. Implementation will occur per future funding availability.

6. Description of One-Stop Delivery System – Provide a description of the one-stop delivery system in the local area that includes the items detailed below.

The Southern Georgia Area WDB envisions the local one-stop/workforce development system as the mechanism to promote, encourage, and coordinate the development of a well-trained labor force with skills to not only meet the needs of the area’s current employers, but also to attract new business and industry to the area.

To meet the challenge of bringing the vision to fruition in an 18-county, 8,000 square mile area which includes some metropolitan and mostly rural counties, the area set the following goals:

- Ensure prompt reentry of dislocated workers into the local workforce at salaries comparable to or exceeding the pre-layoff wages
 - Expand the vision and develop the full potential of those whose frame of reference may ordinarily include only menial and/or part-time jobs (i.e., economically disadvantaged youth, the long-term unemployed, seasonal workers, TANF recipients, the disabled, the area’s growing Hispanic population, etc.)
 - Work closely with business and industry to ensure that the system is not only producing workers to meet its immediate needs, but making adjustments in anticipation of future needs and technological changes
 - Work closely with partner agencies to move individuals between the labor market to further education and training in order to advance in their careers and upgrade their contributions to the workplace
 - Work closely to reconnect youth to career pathways of education and training to enable them to earn a high school diploma and/or enter postsecondary education
 - Provide support services to adults, youth and dislocated workers during the pursuit of education and training so that they may be successful.
- a. Improvement of Providers** – Provide a description of how the local board will ensure the continuous improvements of eligible providers of services through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, workers and jobseekers.

Southern Georgia Regional Commission, through a competitive procurement process, secured the services of contractors to provide service coordination for adults, dislocated workers, and youth. These providers created a system for verification of WIOA-covered expenses. Further, spreadsheets are utilized by the service providers to track obligations and expenditures for these training activities. A report of this information is provided to WIOA staff monthly along with the provider’s monthly invoice. This report is reviewed and cross-referenced with the online Georgia Virtual One Stop System (VOS) database for accuracy.

- b. Access to Services** – Provide a description of how the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including remote areas, through the use of technology and through other means.

Local media, the internet, word of mouth (most towns in the area are small) and referrals from partner agencies are the main recruitment methods. Services are available at the One-Stop system for all populations, including veterans, migrant and seasonal farm workers, individuals with disabilities, older workers, public assistance recipients, offenders and customers with limited English proficiency. Staff of Experience Works, who provide employment services to older workers, is also co-located at the One-Stop Center. Staff of the local Area Agency on Aging (AAA) refers individuals to providers of WIOA services.

- c. WIOA § 188 Compliance** – Provide a description of how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA § 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology and materials for individuals with disabilities. This should include the provision of staff training and support and addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.

All one-stop operators and service deliverers will be required to comply with WIOA § 188. WIOA § 188 compliance will be required and certified in all procurement cycles, will be included in all provider contracts, and WIOA § 188 compliance will be required and monitored on at least an annual basis by the local area. Staff training will be provided as needed to ensure the needs of individuals with disabilities are addressed.

- d. Roles and Contributions of Partners** – Provide a comprehensive description of the roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners.

The current one-stop system operates via two non-financial agreements signed by all partners. The Partner Memorandum of Understanding and the Resource Sharing Agreement lists all partners, their roles and responsibilities and resource contributions (see Attachment #5). Note: Area 18 One-Stop Certification/Monitoring Procedures are also included in Attachment #5.

- e. One-Stop Operator Procurement** – Identify the current One-Stop Operator in the local area(s) and describe how the region/local area is preparing for the competitive process for operator selection. Describe how market research, requests for information and conducting a cost and price analysis are being conducted as part of that preparation.

The current one-stop operates through a Memorandum of Understanding and a Resource Sharing Agreement which includes a consortium of all One-Stop partners. These partners have been designated by the Southern Georgia Workforce Development Board and are responsible for coordination of one stop services. These agreements are

non-financial under the former WIA law. The local area will develop/conduct WIOA specific surveys, agreements, etc. when rules have been finalized.

Customers enter the One-Stop at a common location-the front desk. Staff at the front desk (can be manned by all partner agencies but usually Wagner-Peyser staff) determines who the customer needs to see and refers the customer to the applicable partner (s) co-located at the One-Stop. The Southern Georgia area has developed two umbrella agreements (Partner Memorandum of Understanding and Resource Sharing Agreement) which guides and governs the services provided at the One-Stop Centers. Customers arriving at the front desk of the One-Stop Center will be referred to the partner agencies who will if applicable provide services to these individuals. Customers sign in to use the One-Stop Resource Center.

All customers will not of course access all services available, but they do have information/access if these services are needed. These services are mostly located in the same building and partner staff works with each other on a daily basis to ensure customers receive services in a timely manner. Partners meet periodically to update each other on current activities, and develop coordination mechanisms. Training sessions are held as needed to provide partners with more in-depth information to educate all partners and enhance the customer flow/referral process.

Customers are referred to applicable partner services at the common entry point for each one-stop. Customers are referred to other partners on an as-needed basis. The timeframe for referral is very short (the partner is very likely to be across the aisle). Upon referral, services are delivered immediately or an appointment is made if the needed service cannot be provided immediately. Most services (especially Wagner-Peyser services) can be provided on-site. Most training services are provided off-site.

The local area continues to encourage customer enrollment (and co-enrollment) in partner programs, i.e., WIOA/TAA, Telamon, Rehabilitation Services, etc. The local area plans to increase enrollment of WIOA-eligible youth in Go Build Georgia, Job Corps, etc. Collaborating with these partners increases services available to mutual customers and leverages funds/resources.

7. Awarding Sub-grants and Contractors – Provide a description of the competitive process to be used to award the sub-grants and contracts in the local area for activities carried out under this Title I.

Competitive procurement is the preferred method for purchasing goods and services. The request for proposal (RFP) is most commonly utilized to procure training activities.

Southern Georgia Area 18 Procurement Procedures are included as [Attachment #6](#).

8. EEO and Grievance Procedures – Briefly describe local procedures and staffing to address grievances and complain resolution.

The Southern Georgia Regional Commission WIOA Complaint & Grievance Policy & Procedure is attached (Attachment #10).

9. Local Boards and Plan Development – Provide a description of the local board that includes the components listed below.

a. Identification and Appointment of Local Board Members – Describe how the local board members are identified and appointed. Include a description of how the nomination process occurs for adult education and labor representatives. (Proposed § 679.320(g)).

Local board membership is solicited from area chambers of commerce, industrial authorities, and other business organizations. The slate of board nominees is presented to the Local Chief Elected Official (LCEO) Executive Committee for consideration. Individuals approved by the LCEO Executive Committee are appointed to the board. Adult Education representatives are appointed/selected from nominations/input from local technical colleges providing adult education. Input is solicited from local business/labor organizations for labor representative nominations.

b. Orientation Process – Describe the area’s new member orientation process for board members.

New board members are given orientation information upon appointment to the board. One-on-one sessions or group orientation sessions are conducted as needed. All new members are given information on board responsibilities, voting requirements, etc. in addition to general WIOA information.

c. Coordination with Regional Economic Development Activities – Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with regional economic development activities carried out in the region (in which the local area is located or planning region).

The SG WDB works closely with and solicits input from economic development entities on a regular basis. Economic development entities are represented on the board and on board committees. Services include working as part of area teams in industrial recruitment, providing information on workforce development resources in a written format and directly to business prospects.

Engagement of Board Members – Describe how local board members are kept engaged and informed.

Board members receive regular updates on the workforce system’s activities. Member input and engagement is solicited at board meetings (at least quarterly), through board committee membership activities, and whenever appropriate on an as-needed basis. Members also receive quarterly monitoring reports and are invited to attend local WIOA provider functions (participant graduation ceremonies, etc).

10. Local Board Committees – Provide a description of board committees and their functions.

The Southern Georgia Workforce Development Board (WDB) has four standing committees.

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee membership includes the Chair, Vice Chair, Parliamentarian, and the immediate past chair (if available). The board will elect, by majority vote, the other two (or three, if immediate past chair is not available to serve) members of this committee. The Executive Committee may act on behalf of the full Board when a quorum is not present at a meeting and/or a decision is needed quickly and time does not permit a meeting of the entire WDB membership. A simple majority of the current members of the Executive Committee constitutes a quorum.

Budget Proposal and Review Committee

The Budget Proposal and Review Committee (BPRC) is composed of eight (8) members. The Chair and Vice Chair serve on this committee. The other six (6) members shall be appointed by the Chair and will serve for a term of one year. The Vice Chair of the WDB will serve as the Chair of the BPRC. This committee will review the budget and proposals submitted for funding and make recommendations to the full Board. A simple majority of the current members of the committee constitutes a quorum.

Sector Strategy / One-Stop Committee

New Committee which will help guide the region’s ongoing efforts to continuously improve and enhance sector strategy and one-stop development and implementation. Committee responsibilities are listed in Coordination with Core Partners Section #1.

Youth Committee

The Youth Committee is composed of eight (8) members. The WDB Chair appoints members, who serve for a term of one year. The Youth Committee reviews youth programming, budgets, and proposals submitted for funding and makes recommendations to the full Board. A simple majority of the current members of the committee constitutes a quorum.

11. Plan Development – Provide a description of the process by which the plan was developed including the participation of core partners, providers, board members and other community entities. Also describe the process used by the local board to provide a 30-day comment period prior to the submission of the plan including an opportunity for public comment, including comment by representatives of businesses and comment by representatives of labor organizations, representatives of education and input into the development of the local plan.

The plan is a continually evolving, living document that changes as the system proceeds in its development. The WDB, core partners, providers and other stakeholders were involved in the development of the plan through meetings and consultations. Labor market data and information from core partners (who are also included in this plan) and board members was gathered to help inform the plan.

Copies of the plan, and subsequent updates are available through the Southern Georgia Regional Commission's website www.sgrc.us. The plan is also sent to regional stakeholders, including business and labor representatives, and education representatives. Public comments on the plan are solicited for at least 30 days.

Service Delivery and Training

12. Expanding Service to Eligible Individuals – Provide a description of how the local board, working with the entities carrying out core programs, will expand access to employment, training, education and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment. Include how the local board will facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs, and how it will improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential, academic or industry recognized.

The board will work closely with our core partners and others to expand access to services for eligible individuals. Quarterly and as-needed meetings will be held with all core partners to ensure all of our services can be easily accessed and are available to the region's eligible population. A viable, easy to access referral system will be one goal of all the core partners, another goal will be cross-training core partner staff, in order to streamline access to all services for the eligible population.

Cross-referrals and staff cross-training will be utilized to facilitate access to program activities which will enhance the development of career pathways and if appropriate encourage co-enrollment in other programs, specifically training that will lead to a credential, which will of course enhance the employment and employment retention of the area's eligible population.

13. Description of Service to Adults and Dislocated Workers – Provide a description of and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area.

The WDB and our partners in the local area continue to work toward the common goal of providing the most effective service delivery possible to the area's adult and dislocated worker population.

Adult and Dislocated Worker services are provided in, or through, the Waycross and Valdosta Career Centers (One-Stops) and include, but are not limited to, the following: job search and job placement assistance, testing, filing of UI claims, Rapid Response activities, WIOA funded Individualized Training Accounts, service coordination, career guidance and counseling, referrals to partner agencies, various workshops (i. e., resume training, financial planning, and others), federal bonding, and Work Opportunity Tax Credits.

Proposals to provide adult and dislocated worker services are solicited through a competitive request for proposal process. Review scores, a cost comparison of proposals, and a summary of each proposal are presented to the Workforce Development Board Budget and Proposal Review Committee. This committee makes funding recommendations to the WDB. The WDB makes the final decision on which proposals to fund and authorizes the SGRC staff to negotiate contracts.

Career Services

There is no sequence requirement for these services. These services can be provided in any order to provide flexibility in targeting services to the needs of the customer.

Career services must be made available and, at a minimum, must include the following services:

- Determination of eligibility to receive assistance
- Outreach, intake, and orientation to the information and other services
- Initial assessment of skill levels, aptitudes, abilities, and support service needs
- Job search and placement assistance, and where appropriate, career counseling
- Provision of employment statistics information, including the provision of accurate information relating to local, regional, and national labor market areas including job vacancy listings in such labor market areas, information on job skills necessary to obtain the jobs, and information relating to local occupations in demand and the earnings and skill requirements for such occupations
- Provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of training services provided by programs and eligible providers of adult education, providers of post-secondary occupational training education activities and occupational training activities available to school dropouts under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act and providers of vocational rehabilitation program activities.

- Provision of information with respect to the Career Resource Center delivery system in the local area
- Provision of accurate information relating to the availability of supportive services, including child care and transportation, available in the local area, and referral to such services as appropriate
- Provision of information regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation
- Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs that are not funded under WIOA and are available in the local area.
- Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, which may include interviewing, evaluating, diagnostic testing, and use of other assessment tools to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals
- Development of an individual employment plan to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve the employment goals
- Group counseling
- Individual counseling and career planning
- Case management for participants seeking training services
- Financial literacy services
- Short-term prevocational services including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training.

Career services may be provided in coordination with core partners or other agencies in the area, or through contracts with service providers, which may include contracts with public, private-for-profit and private-non-profit service providers approved by the Southern Georgia WDB.

Training Services

Training services are for individuals:

- Who have met the eligibility requirements for WIOA and who have been unable to obtain or retain employment;
- Who, after an interview, evaluation, or assessment, and case management, have been determined to be in need of training services and have the skills and qualifications to successfully participate in the selected program of training services;
- Who select programs of training services that are directly linked to the employment opportunities in the local area;
- Who meet the qualification requirements; and
- Who are determined to be eligible in accordance with the priority system established by the Southern Georgia WDB.

Qualification requirements include:

Through an interview, evaluation, assessment, or case management process, customers may be determined to be in need of training services and having the skills and qualifications to successfully participate in the selected program of training services. However, provisions of WIOA funding for training shall be limited to individuals who are unable to obtain other grant assistance for such services, including Federal Pell Grants, HOPE scholarships or who require assistance beyond the assistance made available under other grant assistance programs.

The list of approved eligible training providers (EPL) is made available through the Career Centers and via the Internet to individuals seeking training information. The EPL includes eligible program descriptions and information identifying training providers.

Training Services may include:

- Occupational skills training, including training for nontraditional employment
- Training programs operated by the private sector

Training services shall be provided in a manner that maximizes customer choice in the selection of an eligible provider of such services.

Training services shall be provided to eligible adults and dislocated workers through the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), through which a customer chooses among qualified training providers. The services will be provided in accordance with state and local procedures.

The Southern Georgia region will continue to expand coordination and service integration with local employers, core partners and other entities that provide needed services in an on-going effort to increase the capacity of our services to meet the needs of both employers and customers.

14. Description of Rapid Response Services – Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities.

Upon receipt of a WARN notice from the Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDED), the local area will coordinate with the employer and the local Career Center to set up employer meetings. The employer meetings will serve to provide a schedule of available times to meet with workers, any special needs, concerns, skill levels of the workers, etc.

The array of WIOA services, Wagner-Peyser services and local technical college and other educational services will be provided to the workers at these meetings. The workers may

apply for UI benefits or the WIOA program at these meetings or future appointments will be made/discussed.

The local area will inform GDED of the dates of employer meetings and dates for worker information meetings. The local area will also inform GDED of an impending layoff if the layoff is not on the WARN list.

In Area 18, staff members in the One-Stops coordinate with the state and state/local Trade Act provisions (when applicable). One-Stop partner staff (whose salaries may or may not be funded with WIOA dislocated worker funds) attend business closures as part of the Rapid Response effort. Front line staff, including staff members who attend business closures, are familiar with available options for dislocated employees and the WIOA registration process. In the work-first environment, career services and training services are offered as-needed, there is no required sequence of services.

WIOA provider staff attend employer meetings to obtain information about the reason for the layoff, potential of layoff aversion, impact of imports or shifts in production to Canada or Mexico, number to be laid off, hourly/salaried layoffs, layoff schedule/timetable, demographic characteristics of workforce (including average age, years of service, education level, primary occupations and any other special characteristics), other employers in the general area that might be impacted by the layoff (secondary firms), involvement of a private out-placement firm, company sponsored education/training grants/tuition assistance programs, and availability of severance or other types of separation pay.

Reemployment activities and services available to employees include on-site workshops, such as: job search, money management, stress management, resume preparation, interviewing skills, and salary negotiations. Other customized workshops, e.g., starting your own business, unemployment insurance claims filing, job fairs and training fairs are also offered. Additionally, GDOL acts as a clearinghouse for other employers in the community interested in hiring laid off workers. WIOA staff participates in meetings with the employees to provide information and answer questions concerning the variety of reemployment services and assistance available to expedite a return to work. Every effort is made to schedule these meetings at times convenient for the employer, employees and the partners.

WIOA service provider staff provides intake, assessment and case management duties associated with the Trade Act program (Trade Adjustment Assistance) services. For those trade-eligible individuals interested in retraining, WIOA staff conducts a standard dislocated worker intake and assessment. The customer and WIOA case manager agree on a reemployment plan, and the customer applies to the training provider of choice. The customer then returns to WIOA with his/her letter of acceptance and a financial aid award letter from the training provider. WIOA staff then completes the Trade Act Application for Training form and forwards it to the state Trade Act Coordinator. WIOA staff is in contact with State Trade staff as necessary to coordinate services and process applicable forms for

those individuals who are co-enrolled in WIOA and Trade and for those who are Trade-eligible only.

The Southern Georgia Area works closely with both Rapid Response and the local DOL Career Centers to recruit UI claimants and ensure they have information, and expedited access to WIOA services. The area strives to coordinate WIOA training concurrently with UI benefits.

15. Description of Youth Services – Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce development activities in the local area, including activities for youth with disabilities. This description and assessment shall include an identification of successful models of such youth workforce development activities.

The Southern Georgia region uses a variety of strategies to identify and meet the needs of youth in the area. The common goal is to create a comprehensive and seamless system for youth services delivery without duplication of services.

One important strategy for serving youth is participation in local groups in multiple counties that facilitate collaboration between individuals and agencies that are involved with youth, such as local collaborative, school systems, county extension offices, housing authorities, and Family Connection.

As the administrative entity for the Southern Georgia Workforce Development Board, the SGRC will continue to use competitive procurement to solicit new and innovative approaches to serve youth. Program designs that will help establish career pathways for youth will be emphasized. These approaches will attempt to pinpoint gaps in service and to address those needs. The wisdom and insightful input of the Southern Georgia Youth Council will continue to be a valuable resource and advisory tool. Contracts will focus on establishing a program design which sets a career pathway for youth and includes work based learning activities, in support of the state's goal to set up seamless career pathways for youth. This goal will be accomplished by assisting youth in obtaining education and training, increasing basic skills, teaching work readiness and occupational skills, striving to assist youth in overcoming barriers to achieving self-sufficiency, providing work experience and other work based learning activities, and providing or partnering to provide all of the fourteen WIOA youth program elements.

Southern Georgia's workforce system contains many partners and separate initiatives that address the fourteen WIOA youth program elements, either directly or indirectly, in serving youth. Also, these organizations deliver services that address one, several, or all, of the WIOA youth program elements.

Out-of-school and other youth receive occupational skills training through ITA's at technical and community colleges and also GED classroom training is provided to basic skills deficient youth. Youth with disabilities are recruited through our core partner Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency and other agencies.

The area's out-of-school youth programs are contracted with service providers who work in conjunction with the local technical colleges. The WIOA contract includes services the local technical college cannot provide including case management, payment of the GED testing fee, and incentives for completion. The technical school provides free access to facilities, utilities, equipment, curriculum, instruction, etc. which reduces the program costs and allows the local area to serve more out-of-school youth.

The Southern Georgia Workforce Development Board utilizes the Request for Proposal process to competitively procure contracts for youth services. During the most recent RFP program designs that will establish career pathways for youth were requested.

The area's service strategy for out-of-school youth includes above linkages to local school systems in addition to basic skills/GED training, work readiness training, and both subsidized and unsubsidized work experience opportunities.

The area also coordinates with, and whenever possible, integrates services provided through School-to-Work, Jobs for Georgia Graduates, Job Corps, and High School/High Tech. WIOA funds can be used to provide competency-based pre-employment/work maturity skills and other services which can be incorporated into the school-to-work partnership. The WDB will refer customers to the nearest Job Corps Center, or the local Career Centers, where there is a Job Corps recruiter once a week. All of the career services listed in Section 2 are also available to youth applicants.

Services to in-school youth are limited to maximum 25 per cent of youth funding. However, some limited service to in-school youth may be provided as funds are available, or to continue services to carryover in-school youth.

16. Implementation of Work-Based Learning Initiatives – Provide a description of how the area will implement initiatives such as incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, utilization of effective business intermediaries and other business services and strategies designed to meet the needs of employers in the corresponding region in support of the business service strategy.

The SGWDA currently has limited programming for business services. Primarily the local area works with businesses to develop job placements for its program participants. With the passage of WIOA and its focus on improving services to employers and promoting work-based training the SGWDA realized it was essential to begin the process of developing more extensive business services. With these things in mind, SGWDA applied for a strategic programming grant for "Delivering Business Services in Rural LWDA's". The area was successful and received the grant.

Utilizing grant funding the local area will hire a Business Services Coordinator who will work directly with local business as well as partners to determine the needs of businesses in the area. Once the needs have been identified, the local area will set up comprehensive

programs such as On-the-Job Training, Incumbent Worker Training and/or Customized Training. The ultimate goal is to develop long-lasting relationships with business, so that they view the WDB as a partner in meeting recruitment, hiring and training needs.

The Business Services Coordinator will work with the SGWDB, GDEcD WFD, and other local areas in creating policies and procedures for Business Services.

17.Provision of ITAs – Provide a description of how training services in WIOA § 134 will be provided through the use of ITAs. If contracts for the training services will be used, describe how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of ITAs and how the local board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided.

Training services are provided to eligible adults, dislocated workers, and youth through the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), through which a customer chooses among qualified training providers. The services will be provided in accordance with state and local procedures.

WIOA funds will be used for costs incurred during the pursuit of occupationally specific programs of study that lead to a diploma or certificate for WIOA eligible adults, dislocated workers and youth. In addition to the WIOA eligibility requirements, youth must be: a) 18 years old and no older than 24; b) not be actively pursuing a secondary school diploma or its equivalent on the date of participation.

Training must be in occupations identified in the local WIOA Plan as growth and/or demand occupations or documentation of employment prospects must be provided. Training must result in an employment wage sufficient to attain self-sufficiency without the aid of public assistance.

WIOA funds will be utilized in the form of a voucher for ITAs. ITAs will be used to purchase tuition, essential books/supplies that are instructor-required purchases for *all* students taking any given course, and for graduation and training-related purchases including, but not limited to, medical exams, vaccinations, uniforms, graduation fees, testing fees, etc. The maximum amount of an ITA voucher is \$6,000 per customer. NOTE: WIOA funds will only be used for costs not covered by HOPE/PELL or other scholarship funding.

ITAs have a 2.5-year time limit, regardless of the length of the customer’s training program. Hence, customers must select programs that will be finished in 2.5 years or less.

18.Entrepreneurial Skills Training and Microenterprise Services – Provide a description of how the area will coordinate and promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.

SGWDA 18/Region 11 has identified several resources in the region to assist individuals interested in entrepreneurial skills training and/or microenterprise services.

- The University of Georgia’s Small Business Development Center (SBDC) provides tools, training, and resources to help small businesses grow and succeed. With seventeen (17) offices in Georgia, the SBDC provides access to capital, legal/compliance guidance, marketing classes, and business planning. In Region 11 these services are available at Valdosta State University.
- U.S. Small Business Administration offers no-/low-cost business development seminars and webinars.
- Local TCSG locations who offer certificate courses in entrepreneurship.

In addition, partner agencies will be utilized to assist those in need of assistance. Those agencies include:

- GDEcD Entrepreneur & Small Business Development.
- Local Chambers of Commerce
- Local Development Authorities

19. Coordination with Education Programs – Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate with education and workforce development activities carried out in the local area with relevant secondary and post-secondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance service and avoid duplication of services.

Coordination of Adult Services with Educational Institutions

The WDB’s primary mechanism for creating a job-driven education and training system is through the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG). TCSG’s Office of Adult Education (OAE) will fund local providers of adult education services who will in turn work collaboratively with other core programs and partner agencies to coordinate comprehensive, wraparound services for program participants.

Local providers of adult education services will actively participate in the One-Stop program. One-Stop centers provide a place for connecting individuals with local adult education programs through intake/orientation/assessment for adult education services, transition resources, referral processes, and other joint mechanisms developed through agency partnerships.

OAE is responsible for administering funds to eligible local providers, and providing program/performance oversight to grantees. OAE will provide funding to eligible local entities for the provision of adult education services through a competitive Request for Application (RFA) process. The RFA is the mechanism through which OAE will identify, assess, and award multi- year grants to eligible providers (an organization that has demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education activities to eligible individuals). Local adult education programs are driven by performance measures that are monitored by OAE.

Eligible local providers will have direct and equitable access to apply and compete for grants. OAE will award funds to local providers for the delivery of adult education services,

which are academic instruction and education services below the postsecondary level that increase an individual's ability to:

- Read, write and speak English and perform mathematics or other activities necessary for the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent;
- Transition to postsecondary education and training; and
- Obtain employment.

Coordination of WIOA Services with Educational Institutions

The SGWDB works closely with TCSG, University System of Georgia (USG), as well as for-profit and non-profit education providers. This partnership enables the local area to provide customers with a large amount of educational offerings, satisfying the USDOL mandate of customer choice. WIOA offers tuition assistance, supportive services and comprehensive case management as part of the individual services. All education providers are listed on the State's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). The ETPL can be found on the Georgia Work Ready Online Participant Portal (GWROPP) that all potential customers as well as local staff are able to view. The state actively maintains the ETPL.

As the unified provider of technical education, adult education, and customized business and industry training, TCSG is the largest provider of ITAs to our workforce system participants. WIOA funding supports a growing number of participants within these training institutions. TCSG also has a 100 percent employer guarantee, meaning that if a TCSG graduate was educated under a standard program and his/her employer finds that the graduate is deficient in one or more competencies as defined in the standards, the technical college will re-train the employee at no instructional cost to the employee or the employer.

Coordination of Vocational Rehabilitation Services with Educational Institutions

In line with the State's use of the technical college system, the SGWDB will continue to build relationships with educational institutions by enhancing Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services in schools. Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (GVRA) is working closely with GaDOE to develop a collaborative plan to enhance transition services regionwide for individuals with disabilities. The two agencies established a formal Interagency Cooperative Agreement to assure that cooperation and collaboration exist in implementing and maintaining a system of vocational rehabilitation service delivery to eligible individuals with disabilities. The main objective of this Agreement is to improve and expand the VR services that support secondary and postsecondary schools. Consultation and technical assistance services are essential components of this Agreement and enable educational agencies to utilize current and developing VR program practices.

Additional Financial Resources

Many grant/scholarship programs in the local area can be used in conjunction with WIOA funding to make post-secondary degree attainment a reality for students with financial needs. A few additional financial resources available are:

- Georgia's HOPE Grant/Scholarship is available to Georgia residents who have demonstrated high academic achievement. The grant/scholarship provides money to assist students with the educational costs of attending a HOPE eligible college in Georgia.
- Georgia's Zell Miller Scholarship is available to Georgia residents who have demonstrated academic achievement. The scholarship provides money to assist students with their educational costs of attending a Zell Miller-eligible college located in Georgia.
- The Strategic Industries Workforce Development Grant (SIWDG) is a financial award for Technical College System of Georgia students and was first presented by the Governor's Office in fall 2013. It awards funds to students meeting certain criteria who are enrolled in certain programs.
- The Federal Pell Grant Program provides need-based grants to low-income undergraduate and certain post-baccalaureate students to promote access to postsecondary education. Students may use their grants at any one of approximately 5,400 participating postsecondary institutions. Grant amounts are dependent on: the student's expected family contribution (EFC); the cost of attendance (as determined by the institution); the student's enrollment status (full-time or part-time); and whether the student attends for a full academic year or less.

The SGWDB works closely with education providers to ensure participant access to postsecondary credentials in for-credit diplomas, certificates, and degrees. However, both TCSG and USG also have continuing education programs which provide access to noncredit industry credentials. In some cases, diploma, certificate and degree-earning programs also incorporate industry credentials. For example, a technical college welding diploma may incorporate industry certifications as students' progress in the program. These types of stackable credentials enable participants to learn the specific skills needed to gain employment in demand occupations. Stackable credentials also enable participants to continue earning additional credentials at a later point. The area's two-year and four-year institutions have done extensive work to ensure that credits seamlessly transfer between institutions. This work enables the region to better create career pathways for participants.

20. Description of Supportive Services – Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out under this title in the local area with the provision of transportation and other supportive services regionally, if applicable. Please include the region/local area Supportive Service Policies.

Supportive Service benefits may be available to assist WIOA eligible participants with costs associated with participating in WIOA funded training activities. Supportive services means services such as transportation, child care, and/or dependent care that are necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. The support payments are in no way intended to support the entire expense.

WIOA funds will be used to pay support payments for customers who are physically attending training classes as verified by the instructor's signature on a timesheet. There is no minimum duration of attendance required to earn support payments.

A transportation support payment of \$15-19 per day, based on attendance and mileage, will be paid. An additional \$10 per day will be paid for children under the age of thirteen who are in the customer's legal and physical custody. Support payments are NOT included in the ITA voucher amount of \$6,000.

The Southern Georgia Area Supportive Services Policy is included as Attachment #7.

Coordination with Core Partners

21. Description of the Workforce System – Provide a description of the workforce development system in the local area that identifies all relevant programs and how the local board will work with the entities to carry out both core and other workforce development programs to deliver well aligned services in support of the strategies identified in the state plan. This should include programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. et seq.).

The Southern Georgia region's Council of Chief Local Elected officials and Workforce Development Board works closely with all of the area's core partners to provide services to enable all of our area's eligible population the opportunity to reach their full potential.

The workforce system is governed to ensure that it is comprehensive, fiscally responsible, participant and employer-focused. All of the core partners work together toward our common goal of enhancing service integration and implementing a workforce system that provides streamlined and effective service delivery and aligns these services in support of the state's strategies.

WIOA services are provided through a one-stop system (two comprehensive sites in Valdosta and Waycross). Core partners are co-located at the one-stops. Partners include: WIOA, Department of Labor, Vocational Rehabilitation, Senior Community Service Employment Program (Experience Works), Adult Education and Literacy Programs and Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Programs.

A non-financial Memorandum of Understanding(MOU) and Resource Sharing Agreement (RSA) (see Attachment # 5) includes the core partners' common vision and goals (MOU)and the services provided by each partner(RSA).

Center Partner	Major Services Provided
<p>Southern Georgia Regional Commission</p> <p><i>SGRC is a co-located partner in the comprehensive one-stop system.</i></p>	<p>Access to career and training services under WIOA.</p> <p>Eligibility determination and enrollment in WIOA Title I programs for adults, dislocated workers, and youth.</p>
<p>Organizations receiving WIOA Title II Grant funds from the Technical College System of Georgia.</p> <p><i>TCSG is a co-located partner in the comprehensive one-stop system.</i></p>	<p>Adult Education Programs</p> <p>Literacy and English Language Learner (ELL) programs.</p>
<p>Georgia Department of Labor</p>	<p>WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Employment Services</p> <p>Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) re-employment services for TAA-eligible customers.</p> <p>Access to veterans' employment and training services for eligible veterans.</p> <p>Employer services including: information and assistance with available tax credits for hiring, customized recruitment, access to Federal Bonding Program, information on state employment laws, and dissemination of required information to employees.</p>
<p>Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency</p> <p><i>GVRA is a co-located partner in the comprehensive one-stop system</i></p>	<p>WIOA Title IV Rehabilitation Services for individuals with disabilities.</p>
<p>Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP)</p> <p><i>SCSEP is a co-located partner in the comprehensive one-stop system.</i></p>	<p>Access to Senior Community Services Employment Programs for older workers.</p>

<p>Coastal Pines Technical College, Southern Regional Technical College and Wiregrass Georgia Technical College.</p> <p>*Organizations receiving WIOA Title II grant funds from TCSG.</p> <p><i>TCSG is a co-located partner in the comprehensive one-stop system</i></p>	<p>Adult Education Programs</p> <p>Literacy and English Language Learner (ELL) Programs</p> <p>Access to Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs at post-secondary level under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301).</p>
---	---

SGWDA has also formed a new committee to help guide the region’s on-going efforts to continuously improve and enhance service integration in support of the state’s identified strategies in the state plan. The Sector Strategy/One-Stop Committee will be the “workhorse” of the new and improved workforce system. Committee membership includes board members (public and private sector), core partners, and non-WDB members with relevant expertise. The Committee’s responsibilities include but will not be limited to:

- Guiding implementation of the region’s new service sector strategy (see Strategic Elements, Governance and Structure section #5);
- One-Stop Competitive Procurement issues;
- Review of local applications for adult education (Section 232 WIOA and subparagraphs (A) and (B)(i) of Section 107(d)(11));
- Increase and improve customer flow between core partners’ resources and training services
- Strengthen partnerships, bring new partners and new resources to the table;
- Increase alignment with economic development (also represented on the WDB) and business services;
- Develop cross-training among varied agencies;
- Develop creative uses of technology to overcome barriers of geography and distance;
- Develop referral and coordination process to align Human Services, Migrant Services (co-located at one-stop), veteran’s programs (co-located at one-stop), criminal justice system;
- Develop data sharing between partners, i.e., where appropriate customer testing and assessment, etc, and customer demographic data.

22.Coordination with Wagner-Peyser – Provide a description of plans and strategies for, and assurances concerning, maximizing coordination of services provided by the state employment service under the Wagner Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) and services provided in the local area through the one-stop delivery system, to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services.

WIOA and Wagner-Peyser partners in the local area continue to work toward the common goal of providing the most effective service delivery possible to the area's population.

The Career Centers are already partners in the local one-stop system (See Attachment # 5), and are also represented on the newly formed Sector Strategy/One-Stop Committee (see Coordination with Core Partners #1). The Career Centers have been and will continue to be strong partners in our efforts to maximize and streamline services and prevent duplication of services. These assurances are enhanced through our current one-stop MOU and RSA (see Attachment #5).

WIOA services continue to be provided in, or through, the Waycross and Valdosta Career Center (One-Stops) and include, but are not limited to, the following: job search and job placement assistance, testing, filing of UI claims, Rapid Response activities, WIOA funded Individualized Training Accounts and service coordination, career guidance and counseling, referrals to partner agencies, various workshops (i.e., resume training, financial planning, and others), federal bonding, and Work Opportunity Tax Credits.

Since local WIOA staff is housed in the DOL Waycross and Valdosta Career Centers, customers have complete access to the WIOA and Wagner-Peyser services provided in one location. The co-location of these services increases and enhances staff ability to continually work on integration of WIOA and Wagner-Peyser services. Local staff members travel to other Career Centers in the region to work with customers served by that center.

23. **Coordination with Adult Education** – Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with the provision of adult education and literacy activities under Title II in the local area, including a description of how the local board will carry out, consistent with subparagraphs (A) and (B)(i) of section 107(d)(11) and section 232 of the WIOA law, the review of local applications submitted under title II.

Adult Education has always been and will continue to be a strong partner in the region's workforce system (see MOU and RSA Attachment #5) . Adult education is already provided at the one-stop. Adult education programs were funded during the Recovery act. Also, the region has recently funded an adult education pilot program.

Adult Education and Literacy are represented on our Sector Strategy/One-Stop Committee (see Coordination with Core Partners #1), and as a partner on that committee will help shape and develop the adult education and literacy program design and services in the region.

For example, in PY2016, the Southern Georgia WDB has funded an adult education program targeting eligible youth. The Program is jointly implemented by the local TSCG Adult Education and Literacy provider and a private sector WIOA youth provider. The Adult Education and Literacy program provides basic skills/GED services and the private sector provider will enroll, case manage participants in addition to providing pre-employment skills

and work experience activities. The region is planning to establish career pathways for the youth with this combination of academic and work based learning activities.

The abovementioned Sector Strategy/One-Stop Committee will be charged with the responsibility of reviewing local applications to provide adult education submitted under Title II and making recommendations to the local WDB. The local WDB will review these applications per Section 107(d)(11) subparagraphs(A)and (B)(i) and Section 232 of the WIOA Law.

24.Coordination with Vocational Rehabilitation – Provide a description of the cooperative agreement between the local Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation office and the local board which describes efforts made to enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, cross-train staff, provide technical assistance, share information, cooperate in communicating with employers and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration and coordination.

Vocational Rehabilitation is a strong partner of long standing in our workforce system. Per the Memorandum of Understanding and the Resource Sharing Agreement between the Southern Georgia Workforce Development Board and partner agencies, (see Attachment #5 MOU and RSA), the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency agrees to contribute to the delivery of the following shared services in the local One-Stop Center:

- Outreach/Recruitment
- Initial Assessment/Intake/Referral
- Orientation/Informational Services
- Job Search/Job Placement
- Follow-up Services for WIOA
- Comprehensive Assessments
- Career Counseling/Planning
- Case Management/Service Coordination
- Prevocational Services
- Business Services – Job Fairs, Employer Seminars, Labor Market Information, GED Test Preparation

The local Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation (GVR) agency is represented on the region’s new Sector Strategy/One-Stop Committee. The GVR has been and will be active participants as we develop sector strategies and programs designed to enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities. The Committee is charged with developing a cross-referral and staff cross-training process which will increase and improve collaboration, communication and coordination between all core partners.

Performance, ETPL and Use of Technology

25. Description of Performance Measures – Provide a description of the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official pursuant to WIOA § 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the local board for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under subtitle B and the one-stop delivery system, in the local area.

See Attachment 2

26. One-Stop System Performance and Assessment – Provide a listing of locally/regionally developed one-stop performance standards and describe the criteria used to develop the performance standards. Describe how the one-stop system and regional service delivery is assessed by the local board.

The LWDB has established a new committee to help the region’s sector strategy and one-stop efforts. The “Sector Strategy/One-Stop Committee” (See Coordination with Core Partners #1) will meet for the first time on June 29, 2016. At that time the committee will start working on Year One Requirements for the One-Stop-addressing the issues of viable one-stop locations, competitive procurement issues, the current MOU and RSA, etc. This committee will also address One-Stop performance and assessment as information and regulations become available at the federal level. The region’s current one-stop system agreements are included as Attachment #5.

27. ETPL System – Describe the regional Eligible Training Provider System, including the elements listed below.

Southern Georgia WDB secures contractor services through a competitive bid process. (See Attachment #6). Also, the area’s Eligible Provider Policy is included as Attachment #8, and the Area’s ITA Policy is included as Attachment #9. The area’s Equal Opportunity, Complaint and Grievance Policy is included as Attachment #10.

- a. The public notification policy is included in Attachment #6.
- b. Provider evaluation is included in Attachment #6 and Attachment #7.
- c. Local appeals procedures can be found in Attachment #8. Training providers will first file disputes with the LWDA staff. A hearing will be set up to allow the training provider to informally dispute the matter. A written solution will be mandatory for all disputes and will be filed within 30 days of the filing date of the appeal. Every attempt is made for an informal resolution. All training providers will be notified of their right to file a Second Level Appeal with the GDEcD, WFD.
- d. The LWDA staff has access to the Georgia Work Ready Online Participant Portal. The provider’s ETPL information is assessed, as well as participant performance data, to determine if updates are needed to the ETPL. For programs to remain eligible, they must supply updated information regarding their programs. Any data that needs to

- be updated on the list is sent to LWDA staff, who sends a change request to the ETP staff at the GDECD, WFD, for changes. Significant changes to a program, such as a price increase, will be submitted to the WDB for approval.
- e. The Southern Georgia Area's Individual Training Account Policy (see Attachment #9) is included.
 - f. ITA activity is tracked and managed through the Geographic Solutions Georgia Work Ready Online Participant Portal. Data is entered by the participants' case managers and is monitored by LWDA monitoring staff. Reports from the portal are used to monitor performance and participant activity. Additionally, supportive service and training expenditures are reported and tracked for each participant in the portal.
 - g. See Attachment #8.
 - h. The RA program application and instructions can be found on the SGRC website. RA programs are not subject to the same application and performance information requirements. Please see Attachment #8 for details.

28. Implementation of Technology – Provide a description of the technology used to enhance customer (participant and business) experience and any additional data analytics used to enhance planning and measure outcomes beyond mandated performance measures.

Increasing access to technology is a particularly important goal for the Southern Georgia area, which is a multi-county area with little or no public transportation, great rural distances, and many communities too small to have major agencies and facilities.

Customer access to computers is enhanced through the one-stops, which contain computer labs for access to the GWS, job search and other employment related resources. There is also a GED computer lab located at the one-stop.

The Regional Commission also has video conferencing capability, which enhances communication with board members, providers and other area stakeholders. GWS and other labor market data is used to inform planning and program design.

State Initiatives and Vision

29. State Branding – Provide a description for how the area will adopt and utilize the state brand.

The area will begin the process of adopting and utilizing the state brand in PY2016, as we process through setting up one-stop centers and services to meet WIOA guidelines. The area's new workforce system identity will be WorkSource Southern Georgia per consultation with the state. The branding process will be a responsibility of the new Sector Strategy/One-Stop Committee. All core partners will utilize the new name.

30.State Initiatives – Describe how the area will coordinate with WFD state initiatives, including: Go Build Georgia, Operation: Workforce, WorkSmart Georgia and the High Demand Career Initiative.

The local area will coordinate with all WFD state initiatives as they relate to the local area. The state’s initiatives will be included in all core partner “Array of Services” information and core partner staff will make applicants aware of these services and refer individuals as appropriate.

Go Build Georgia

As Go Build Georgia efforts are identified in the region, the local area will coordinate with any events taking place and can even be present (as scheduling permits) to share information on training resources available to persons who choose to pursue training in these career fields. The SGWDB will make every effort to work with skilled-trades apprenticeship and training programs. Members of the WDB who represent organized labor will be asked to provide guidance on establishing programs related to this.

Operation: Workforce

Operation Workforce is an online portal providing resources and services to Georgia’s veterans. As veterans are the number one priority in the workforce system, the SGWDB will offer services geared to their unique skills and needs. The Business Services Coordinator will begin building relationships with Moody Air Force Base and will promote the website with their transition specialist. Service Provider staff will utilize this website when assisting Veterans who are transitioning from military to civilian occupations.

WorkSmart Georgia

Georgia WorkSmart is a work-based learning initiative operated by the Georgia Department of Economic Development. The initiative promotes work-based learning programs (apprenticeships, internships, on-the-job training, etc.) as a workforce development tool; it also assists Georgia companies in developing and implementing customized programs to meet their specific hiring and training needs. The SGWDA Business Services Coordinator will look for ways to connect interested employers to the wide variety of value added services that WorkSmart offers.

High Demand Career Initiative (HDCI)

The HDCI “provides consistent, trained, reliable workers to private sector businesses.” As such, it and the SGWDB share the same goal—to identify a range of in-demand and difficult-to-fill positions, as well as essential workforce skills that are difficult to find in potential employees. The SGWD will continue to work with the Department of Economic Development, the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG), the University System of Georgia (USG), local chambers, and developmental authorities so as to continuously improve avenues enabling employers to express their workforce needs and solve their workforce issues.

31.Special Populations – Describe how the area will provide services to the special populations specified in the state plan, to include ex-offenders, veterans, at-risk youth, long-term unemployed, adult learners and individuals with disabilities. If the region has identified additional target groups, please list.

Individuals in special populations benefit through the extensive collaboration and partnerships within the Southern Georgia One-Stop system. The consortium that operates the one-stop referral and service delivery system represent agencies and organizations that work with these populations. Resources are available universally with dedicated representatives and funding for the special populations. Both one-stop sites in the system are accessible to people with disabilities. The One-Stop also provides materials in Spanish.

The local DOL Career Centers have staff who work with veterans and farm workers. The local area has a Priority of Service to Veterans and Eligible Spouses policy (see Attachment #11). The career center staff working with farm workers are bi-lingual. Staff provides outreach and employment services to these groups. Staff serving veterans are out-stationed in the area, including Moody Air Force Base in Valdosta. Career Center staff also work with probation officers and prisons in order to facilitate services to offenders. In addition, the local area has recently funded an ITA program for offenders held on-site in the county prison.

The long term unemployed are recruited and served through access to UI partners co-located at the one-stop. Adult learners are recruited through the adult education program co-located at the one-stop and at local technical colleges, also through outreach to other local agencies serving this population.

At-risk youth are recruited through outreach with local school systems, the career centers, and other local agencies serving this population.

The one-stop computers at the career centers have served to increase the access of special populations to WIOA. These computers help facilitate access to WIOA of farm workers, individuals with disabilities, SNAP recipients and older workers, in addition to ex-offenders, the long-term unemployed, and at-risk youth. Other strategies to serve these special populations include cross-training staff for each agency representing special populations. The one-stop is already co-located with Experience Works and Migrant programs. Also, organizations serving these special populations are represented on the board and/or are members of the area's one-stop consortium. We will continue to work closely with all partner agencies to ensure special populations can access WIOA.

32.Priority of Service – Describe how the region will identify and administer the state's priority of service policy. Identify if the region will target populations in addition to one's specified by state and federal policy.

The local area's Adult and Dislocated Worker Priority of Service Policy and Priority of Service Policy for Veterans and Eligible Spouses (see Attachment #11) incorporates the state's priorities and will enable the local area to identify and serve these populations.