



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

NCWorks Career Center Operations
Adult, Dislocated Workers, & Business Services
Youth Services
July 2015



High Country Workforce Development Board

A Proud Partner of North Carolina's NCWorks Network

468 New Market Blvd, Boone, NC 28607 (828) 265-5434

Equal Opportunity Employer and provider of employment and training programs.

Adrian Tait, Workforce Director

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INTRODUCTION

*****Note*** This Request for Proposal (RFP) is a revision of an RFP that was released and then suspended in May 2015. Key revisions include the following:**

- Requirement of multi-county or regional proposals;
- Updated RFP schedule;
- Updated budget amounts based on PY2015 federal allocations, projected carryover amounts and an eight-month contract length;
- Clarified roles of center operators and center managers;
- Added Incumbent Worker Training Grant activities to Business Services scope of work;
- Clarified that PY15 federal performance goals remain unchanged from PY2014;
- Included anticipated local goals as defined by NCWorks Commission;
- Minor revision of questions;
- Inserted Certification of Drug Free Workplace form;
- Updated Career Center Analysis; and
- Updated evaluation document.

Purpose

This RFP seeks proposals from experienced organizations interested in providing Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) services to include center operations, and services to adults, dislocated workers, businesses, and youth within the seven-county region (Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Mitchell, Watauga, Wilkes, and Yancey) served by the High Country Workforce Development Board (HCWDB). The provision of these services is to be funded by WIOA, Title I, Public Law 113-128, which began July 1, 2015 and is authorized as workforce law at the federal level through September 2020.

The successful bidder(s) will be selected based on demonstrated abilities, past performance, a sound proposal, collaboration and partnerships, and cost effective service delivery. The HCWDB expects bidders to propose to provide all of the following services:

1. NCWorks Career Center Operator
2. Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Business Services
3. Youth Services

The HCWDB strongly encourages proposals that serve multiple counties or propose regional service delivery. Single county proposals will not be considered. Proposals must demonstrate the organization's ability to administer a consistent regional strategy including coordination with key partners that support regional efforts and goals.

Disclaimer: This RFP, any bids submitted by proposers to this request, and any final contracts negotiated with the successful bidder(s) as a result of this proposal is subject to final laws and regulations issued by the United States Department of Labor (USDOL), the North Carolina Department of Commerce, Division of Workforce Solutions (NCDOC-DWS) and may be changed at any time in

order to come into compliance with those laws and regulations. Bidders are strongly encouraged to follow the USDOL's WIOA resource page for latest updates: www.doleta.gov/wioa/. Furthermore, as the HCWDB continues to develop and refine its NCWorks system and integrate WIOA regulations, its policies and procedures are likely to change. Bidding organizations may be requested to modify program design or the delivery of services. Should a request for a change in the program design or service occur, HCWDB staff will assist bidding organizations or service providers in the redesign to ensure consistency with policy and regulatory requirements. Any significant changes made to this RFP will be posted to the www.highcountrywdb.com website.

Proposal Due Date

All proposals must be submitted no later than **12:00 Noon, Monday, August 31, 2015** as an emailed PDF to the designated staff:

High Country WDB
Attention: Misty Bishop-Price, NCWorks Operations Manager
misty.bishopprice@highcountrywdb.com
(828) 265-5434, ext. 119

Budget worksheets and other attachments may be submitted separately in other formats, as specified.

Type of Contract

Respondents must propose a cost reimbursement contract. A cost reimbursement contract is one that establishes an estimate of total costs for the purpose of obligating funds and a ceiling that the contractor may not exceed (except at contractor's risk) unless the awarding party agrees to amend the contract to provide additional funds. A line item budget shall be based on all legitimate costs to be incurred by the contractor in carrying out the services. The contractor is reimbursed for actual expenses according to the approved line item budget.

Contract Terms

The initial contract term begins November 1, 2015 and ends June 30, 2016. At the end of June 30, 2016, the HCWDB may approve a one-year extension, for up to a total of three years pending funding availability and contractor performance.

Tentative Schedule of Events

RFP Release Date	July 20, 2015
Proposal Deadline	August 31, 2015 by 12:00 Noon
Formal Review of Proposals	September, 2015
HCWDB Notice of Selection	October 8, 2015
Contract Negotiations	October, 2015
Anticipated Contract Start Date	November 1, 2015

**These dates and times are subject to change.*

RFP Contact

For questions about the proposal process or technical issues contact the designated staff:

High Country WDB
Attention: Misty Bishop-Price, NCWorks Operations Manager
468 New Market Blvd
Boone, NC 28607
misty.bishopprice@highcountrywdb.com
(828)265-5434, ext. 119

All questions and corresponding responses will be compiled and posted online.

Addenda to this Request for Proposal

If it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFP, an addendum will also be posted on the HCWDB website. Respondents are responsible for checking the website frequently to remain informed about the procurement process and other information that may affect this RFP (e.g. WIOA information, changes to performance measures, and revisions to the timeline).

Right to Cancel

The HCWDB reserves the right to cancel all or any part of this RFP at any time without prior notice and reserves the right to modify the RFP process and timeline as is deemed necessary.

Estimated WIOA Funds Available for Contracts 11/1/2015 to 6/30/2016

<i>County</i>	<i>Youth</i>	<i>Adult</i>	<i>Dislocated Worker</i>	<i>Projected Totals by County</i>		<i>JDI NEG (OJT Only) Projected - Not to be included in Budgets</i>
ALLEGHANY	\$50,000	\$27,000	\$21,000	\$98,000		\$20,000
ASHE	\$56,000	\$40,000	\$27,000	\$123,000		\$20,000
AVERY	\$61,000	\$43,500	\$30,000	\$134,500		\$5,000
MITCHELL	\$62,000	\$43,500	\$27,000	\$132,500		\$5,000
WATAUGA	\$78,500	\$60,000	\$27,000	\$165,500		\$10,000
WILKES	\$116,500	\$74,000	\$48,000	\$238,500		\$50,000
YANCEY	\$62,000	\$47,000	\$30,000	\$139,000		\$10,000
<i>Projected Totals By Funding Stream</i>	\$486,000	\$335,000	\$210,000	1,031,000		\$120,000

All amounts are estimates for planning purposes and are subject to change.

JDI NEG funding amounts are informational only and not included in program budgets.

BACKGROUND

Overview of the High Country Workforce Development Board

The mission of the HCWDB and its workforce system is to help employers meet their workforce needs, help individuals build careers, strengthen the local economy, and meet the challenges of global competition.

The HCWDB is a private sector-led board that provides policies, guidance, and oversight for the expiring Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and current WIOA programs in a seven-county region (Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Mitchell, Watauga, Wilkes, and Yancey) along the Blue Ridge Mountains in northwest North Carolina. The HCWDB is led by a Consortium of Chief Elected Officials and a board that oversees a broad range of programs and initiatives. The HCWDB includes representatives from small, medium, and large businesses; labor organizations; education; economic development; community-based organizations; and one-stop partners. Additional information, including the current strategic plan, can be found at www.highcountrywdb.com.

Roles and Responsibilities

The HCWDB is responsible for guiding and overseeing the workforce development system across the High Country region with a goal of serving the needs of employers and jobseekers. The HCWDB also has the responsibility to manage and oversee the administration and implementation of WIOA programs and services.

The High Country Council of Governments (HCCOG) is the grant recipient/fiscal agent and administrative entity for the WIOA Title I(B) funds as designated by the High Country Workforce Development Consortium. Contracts entered into with WIOA service providers in the Local Area will be contracts with the HCCOG. All parties contracting with HCCOG must comply with USDOL regulations and its published interpretations. Administration and operation of this program is subject to compliance with the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, state of North Carolina policies and procedures as issued from the NCDOL-DWS, and local policies and procedures issued by the HCWDB. Funded proposals will be required to meet specific federal, state and local guidelines for participant outcomes and program performance.

Responsibilities of the board include the following:

Federal Connection

- Ensure that federal policies, procedures, and guidelines are correctly implemented;
- Allocate federal workforce development funds within the NCWorks System;
- Provide data and reports as needed to satisfy federal systems; and
- Participate in federal funding opportunities that further the board's vision for the NCWorks System.

State Connection

- Ensure that state policies, procedures, and guidelines are correctly implemented;
- Allocate state workforce development funds;
- Provide data and reports as needed to satisfy state systems; and
- Participate in state funding opportunities that further the board's vision for the NCWorks System.

Local Connection

- Comply with local government policies (the WDB fiscal agent) and regulations;
- Serve as the convener for workforce development in the seven-county area; and
- Partner with local organizations on community needs.

Evaluation

- Development and use of standard policies and procedures throughout the region;
- Certification of the NCWorks Career Centers;
- Meet with NCWorks Operator and service providers regularly to listen to suggestions, discuss issues, and resolve concerns; and
- Monitor and report on quality, performance, and cost effectiveness through on-site visits, records review, evaluations, expenditure review, and other methods as needed.

Outreach

- Approve site location, facilities, and equipment that contribute to a quality center and customer satisfaction;
- Develop or approve outreach materials funded by the board or containing information about the board's programs;
- Provide NCWorks Operator and service provider a common name, logo, and signage to promote the identity of the NCWorks System; and
- Ensure connectivity between the NCWorks Operator and local and regional entities such as service providers, chambers of commerce, public educational institutions, economic development entities, etc.

Performance/Compliance

- Provide technical assistance on all policies, procedures, and rules that impact the operation of centers giving assistance as needed for compliance;
- Develop and provide technical assistance to build capacity to help operator meet quality and consistency standards as well as to meet or exceed performance goals within the NCWorks system;
- Ensure compliance with all rules, regulations, and procedures issued by all funding sources which may be refined and changed;
- Perform fiscal and programmatic monitoring for compliance in accordance with federal, state, and local standards;

- Track the outcome of each performance measure; and
- Approve regional education/training providers for inclusion on the North Carolina Training Provider List

Fiscal

- Ensure that administrative and programmatic cost categories are properly implemented;
- Confirm that costs are correctly allocated to the associated funding stream;
- Verify that NCWorks System costs are allocated according to the Memorandums of Understanding; and
- Provide technical assistance to the fiscal staff of the NCWorks Career Center Operator and service provider.

Current High Country Career Center System

There are seven NCWorks Career Centers throughout the region with a wide variety of involved partners, operational methods, types of location, and traffic flow. The HCWDB, our contractors, and network of partners continue to evaluate and adapt these career centers in each county. For additional details about current NCWorks Career Centers in the High Country area, including costs associated in the operation of the centers, see the [HCWDB Career Center Analysis](#).

Current High Country Labor Market

Labor market information for the High Country area can be found in the [Labor Market section](#) of the HCWDB website.

Transition from WIA to WIOA

The HCWDB anticipates Program Year 2015 will be different from past years, as programs and services are re-designed with the expectation of WIOA that began July 1, 2015. Bidders for this RFP must be willing to creatively and quickly invent and implement new practices and processes, then evaluate and modify them as needed to best serve customers and to comply with new regulations and/or changes to available funds.

Bidders should be cognizant of pending workforce system changes due to the passage of WIOA legislation. Several recently published documents are guiding employment and training system changes that began implementation July 1, 2015. They include the following:

- [WIOA Information](#)
- [Ready to Work: Job Driven Training and American Opportunity](#)
- [What Works in Job Training: A Synthesis of the Evidence](#)
- [Training and Employment \(TEN\) 5-14](#)
- [Training and Employment Guidance Letter \(TEGL\) 3-14](#)
- [January 5, 2015 DOL WIOA Rulemaking Update](#)
- [Training and Employment Guidance Letter \(TEGL\) 19-14](#)

Note: To avoid possible confusion over language, at the national level, the former One-Stop public employment and training system is now being referred to as the American Job Centers (AJC). North Carolina's AJCs are called NCWorks Career Centers upon certification by the state. Any references in this document to career centers, workforce centers, or one-stop centers are references to our local NCWorks Career Centers.

Career Pathways

Under WIOA, the HCWDB in coordination with service providers and partners, will continue to lead efforts in the area to develop and implement career pathways by aligning the employment, training, education and supportive services that are needed by adults and youth to gain employment. Initiatives will be developed to identify employment needs of employers within identified sectors and occupations. Efforts will include enhancing communication, coordination, and collaboration among employers, educational partners, economic development entities, and service providers to develop and implement strategies for meeting the employment and skill needs of workers and employers.

WIOA Sec. 3 (7) describes Career Pathway – The term “career pathway” means a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services that

- a. Aligns with skill needs of industries in the economy of the state or regional economy involved;
- b. Prepares an individual to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or postsecondary education options, including apprenticeships registered under the act of August 16, 1937 (commonly known as the “National Apprenticeship Act”; 50 Stat. 664, Chapter 663; 29 U.S.C. 60 ET SEQ.) (Referred to individually in this act as an “apprenticeship”, except in Section 171);
- c. Includes counseling to support an individual in achieving the individual’s education and career goals;

- d. Includes, as appropriate, education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
- e. Organizes education, training, and other services to meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates the educational and career advancement of the individual to the extent practicable;
- f. Enables an individual to attain a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and at least one recognized postsecondary credential; and
- g. Helps an individual enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

The High Country area expects to receive funding specifically towards implementation of Certified Career Pathway training programs.

Mandated Partners

Under WIOA, required NCWorks delivery system partners include the following (Section 121 (b)(1):

- WIOA Title I programs (Core partner)
- Wagner-Peyser programs (Core partner)
- Adult Education and Literacy programs (Core partner)
- Rehabilitation Act programs (Core partner)
- Older Americans Act programs
- Perkins postsecondary vocational education activities
- Trade Adjustment Assistance and NAFTA-TAA programs
- Veterans Employment and Training
- Community Service Block Grant employment and training activities
- HUD employment and training activities
- Unemployment compensation programs
- Second Chance Act Programs
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) (unless opted out by the Governor)

Note: Core programs will have to measure effectiveness in serving employers and will report on common performance indicators which includes how many job seekers entered and retained employment, their median wages, whether they attained credentials, and their measurable skill gains.

Additional Partners – with approval of local board and Chief Elected Official:

- Employment and training programs administered by the SSA
- Employment and training programs administered by the Small Business Administration
- SNAP and SNAP E&T programs
- Client assistance programs
- National and Community Service state grants
- Other appropriate federal, state or local employment, education and training programs

Proposers to this RFP will need to adhere to the general expectation that the outreach and recruitment functions associated with delivery of any activities being proposed will need to be coordinated with mandatory partners as outlined in WIOA.

NCWorks Commission Strategic Plan

The NCWorks Commission has adopted the state's 2014-2016 Strategic Plan that sets the direction and priorities for North Carolina's workforce development system. High Country Workforce Development Board will be modifying its strategic plan to align with the Commission's plan. WIOA program service delivery will need to align with the goals of the strategic plan as well.

[NCWorks Commission Strategic Plan](#)

SCOPE OF WORK

For purposes of this RFP the scope of work can be broken into three categories:

1. NCWorks Career Center Operations
2. Adult/Dislocated Worker and Business Services
3. Youth Services

The NCWorks System

The HCWDB is seeking service providers that employ vision, innovation, accountability, and efficient and effective utilization of resources in workforce development programming with customers. In the interest of establishing a seamless delivery of services for all prospective customers and keeping with both the spirit of the WIOA legislation as it pertains to the participation of all mandatory partner agencies and programs, it is essential that all partners operate in the most effective and integrated manner as possible. However, it is not necessary that all partner services are located at all NCWorks Centers.

Contracting organizations will be expected to deliver WIOA services within the context of the NCWorks system and specifically in the local NCWorks Career Centers, which includes consistent use of name, logo, marketing materials, etc. Career centers serve as a hub for workforce efforts within their community, offering services to both job seekers and employers within the NCWorks Integrated Services Framework. Each individual county career center operates in a variety of ways: each having a unique set of partner agency staffing, lease and utility arrangements, and ongoing improvement activities.

WIOA-funded staff will work within an integrated NCWorks team to coordinate and deliver all aspects of career services including greeting customers, intensive career advising, scholarships for training, workshop organization, hiring events, and other center services including WIOA-funded business services and WIOA-funded youth services. All staff should be fully cross-trained to fulfill any "career services" role within a center dependent on need and traffic flow.

Service providers are expected to assist in workforce system building activities with NCWorks partners, the education community and other organizations. Activities should include, but are not limited to, partnerships with schools to provide workforce information and resources, assisting with career fairs, hosting workshops, support of Work Ready Communities, Career Pathways, and the NCWorks system. Proposals should incorporate activities that demonstrate the provider's ability to successfully engage and contribute to the development of the local workforce system.

NCWorks Career Center Operations

WIOA requires workforce boards to procure the operator of one-stop centers. The primary role of the NCWorks System Operator (otherwise known as the Operator) is to ensure that services provided through the centers meet the needs of customers (business and job seeker) in an efficient and effective manner. It is critical that one-stop operations are unified with the delivery of WIOA services, including WIOA-mandated and non-mandated partner organizations, to all interested job seekers and businesses in all career centers. In addition, the Operator provides management and oversight of the partnership of agencies that comprises the NCWorks Career Center system.

The primary goal of the Operator is to create a seamless system of partners among workforce development, economic development, business, and community agencies in order to meet the needs of businesses and job seekers in the High Country region. The Operator will work closely with the HCWDB staff to effectively implement an integrated NCWorks system for businesses and job seekers.

Bidders may choose to propose arrangements as the sole organization operating career centers or as a consortium made up of at least three partners (as described in WIOA Sec 121) to ensure the following:

- The Operator shall ensure that NCWorks Career Centers deliver quality and timely career services on a daily basis;
- The Operator shall ensure that NCWorks Career Centers provide information and access to training services;
- The Operator shall ensure that NCWorks Career Centers provide information and access to programs and activities carried out by NCWorks partners as described in the Memorandum of Understanding between the local HCWDB and the local elected officials;
- The Operator shall provide coordination and access to the labor market data, information, and analysis and all job search, placement, recruitment, and other labor exchange services authorized by Wagner-Peyser which are mandated to co-locate within the NCWorks Career Centers; and
- The Operator shall ensure that all center services and outreach materials are compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and ADA and Equal Opportunity (EO) guidelines.

It is expected that the successful proposer will work in close partnership with the HCWDB staff to provide guidance and leadership to the NCWorks system to achieve the following outcomes:

- Deliver a high-quality, consistent set of services to job seekers and business customers;
- Ensure a mix of services that allow the system to serve a diverse customer base;
- Coordinate services and funding to support customer access to and success in postsecondary education;
- Support job seekers and workers to progress toward economic self-sufficiency;
- Promote business- and industry-sector and employer-driven skilled development strategies;
- Maintain and consistently improve the integration of services and service providers within NCWorks; and

- Ensure high levels of accountability, cost-efficiency, and innovation to maximize resources and customer satisfaction.

The Operator is responsible for implementing and managing the NCWorks system under policies and guidelines established by the HCWDB; the NCWorks Commission; the NCDOC-DWS, and the federal government. Under this component, the Operator is responsible for coordinating with the HCWDB to ensure system-wide standards are achieved, and utilize continuous quality improvement assessment tools to document positive change and to systemize standards and their usage across the system.

The Operator is responsible for promoting and facilitating integration of service delivery in the HCWDB NCWorks system. Examples of services to be provided under this work component include the following:

- Coordination and improvement of career services;
- Coordinating with local rapid response teams and activities;
- Assisting in the marketing of the NCWorks Career Centers;
- Coordinating communication between functional teams and offices;
- Coordination of resource room, staffing schedules, and regular staff meetings;
- Monitoring and addressing customer service needs;
- Coordinating staff competency training; and
- Coordinating and integrating business services among partners.

Clarifying Partner Expectations

The NCWorks Operator selected through this procurement will coordinate the NCWorks services offered by the required and additional NCWorks partners according to the requirements of WIOA.

Operators may or may not also be the employer of record for the individual selected as center manager. In some cases Division of Workforce Solutions managers may provide daily management and leadership of the centers.

Each NCWorks Career Center is expected to hold or participate in partner meetings regularly to encourage communication among partners, leverage resources, discuss effectiveness of the NCWorks Centers, and create strategies to more effectively serve all customers. Some centers already have regularly scheduled partner meetings. It will be expected that the selected service providers and center operator will participate in these meetings.

The NCWorks Operator in conjunction with HCWDB staff will be expected to negotiate with the partners to develop and maintain resource sharing agreements. Each resource sharing agreement will detail the following:

1. Services provided and coordinated through the NCWorks System;
2. Funding of shared services and infrastructure costs; and
3. Referral methods between partners and the NCWorks operator(s).

Partners will make a commitment to support the following:

- A strong coordinated approach designed to serve the customer, simplifying bureaucratic systems;
- Bringing funded or in-kind resources;
- Providing staff to be supervised (functionally) by the managing entity or providing an electronic linkage in lieu of a staff presence;
- Sharing in the cost of NCWorks Career Center operations (as agreed);
- Sharing in the goals and operation of the NCWorks Career Center;
- Actively participating in the governance of the NCWorks Career Center; and
- Supporting the NCWorks Career Center mission, goals, and business plan.

Adult/Dislocated Workers

Until recently, WIA-funded staff in North Carolina primarily focused on enrolling customers into intensive and training services only after receiving core services as prescribed in WIA legislation, regulations, and state/local policies. However, the implementation of integrated service delivery across the NCWorks system and the new WIOA legislation changes to service delivery make the previous sequence of core, intensive, and training services obsolete.

During the first year of integrated service delivery the number of customers receiving a training service dropped by approximately thirty-three percent (33%) while the number of adult customers provided career services and enrolled into WIA adult services increased by more than two hundred percent (200%). It is anticipated the number of customers receiving a training service will begin to increase again, but it is also anticipated that the number of customers enrolled into WIOA career services will continue to increase significantly as well. This significant increase in overall numbers served was a primary goal of North Carolina's move to integrated service delivery.

The HCWDB is looking for service providers to work as a part of a team in providing innovative and relevant career services to all customers, no matter the skill level or path to educational and employment goals. This requires staff to be actively engaged in working with the public on a regular basis. Staff's professional expertise and passion for helping customers is what brings customers back to the center.

Adult Basic Career Services

Career services as identified in the WIOA legislation include the following:

- Eligibility determination for funding and services;
- Outreach, intake, and orientation to the information and other services available through the NCWorks Career Centers;
- Initial assessment of educational attainment and skill levels (including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency), aptitudes, abilities (including skills gaps), and supportive service needs;
- Job search and placement assistance and, in appropriate cases, career counseling, including information on in-demand industry sectors and occupations, and nontraditional employment;
- Appropriate recruitment and other business services on behalf of employers;
- Referrals to and coordination of activities with partner programs and services;
- Workforce and labor market employment statistics information, which includes job vacancy listings; job skills necessary for job openings; and information on local occupations in demand and the earnings, skill requirements, and opportunities for advancement within those career pathways;
- Performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of training;
- Information, in formats that are usable by and understandable to customers, regarding how the High Country Local Area is performing on the local performance accountability measures;
- Information relating to the availability of supportive services or assistance provided by partners;

- Referrals to supportive services or other needed assistance;
- Information and assistance regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation;
- Information and assistance regarding financial aid assistance for training and education programs;
- Other services needed in order for an individual to obtain or retain employment, that consist of comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, which may include diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools and in-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals;
- Development of 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, including providing information on eligible providers of training services and career pathways to attain career objectives;
- Group counseling;
- Individual counseling;
- Career planning;
- Short-term pre-vocational 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;
- Internships and work experiences that are linked to careers;
- Workforce preparation activities;
- Financial literacy services;
- Out-of-area job search assistance and relocation assistance;
- English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs; and
- Follow-up services, including counseling regarding the workplace, for participants in WIOA activities authorized under this subtitle that are placed in unsubsidized employment, for not less than 12 months after the first day of the employment, as appropriate.

Each customer should receive an orientation of available services, including all partner services and any other pertinent resources to ensure successful return to employment. The orientation shall include a complete overview of the processes and procedures for gaining maximum benefits from engagement with the NCWorks Career Center. Orientations can be conducted in individual or group settings, depending on demand and the need for center efficiency. Group orientations (and other center activities) may be center or program specific and shall be included in a master calendar and published on a monthly basis for the public through www.NCWorks.gov.

WIOA consistently emphasizes the need for services targeted to persons with disabilities and individuals with barriers to employment, including individuals who receive public assistance or are otherwise low income and/or basic skills deficient. Outreach, marketing efforts, and services shall include efforts to encourage the use of the NCWorks system to groups that need employment and training services to become more skilled and employable in the path to financial self-sufficiency.

WIOA Sec. 3 (24) defines an “individual with a barrier to employment” means a member of one or more of the following populations:

- a. Displaced Homemakers
- b. Low-Income Individuals

- c. Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians, as such terms are defined in Section 166
- d. Individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities
- e. Older individuals
- f. Ex-Offenders
- g. Homeless Individuals (as defined in Section 41403(6) of the Violence against Women Act of 1994 (42 U.S.C. 14043e-2(6), or homeless children and youths (as defined in section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11434a(2)).
- h. Youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system
- i. Individuals who are English language learners and individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers
- j. Eligible migrant and seasonal farm workers, as defined in Section 167(i)
- k. Individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under Part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.)
- l. Single parents (including single pregnant women)
- m. Long term unemployed individuals
- n. Such other groups as the Governor involved determines to have barriers to employment

Training Services

Upon completion of orientation and assessments, customers may be deemed appropriate for training services if the customer is unlikely to obtain or retain self-sufficient employment. Training programs should focus on in-demand industry sectors or occupations in demand in the area, or an area to where the customer is willing to relocate.

Occupational skills training should be provided through individual training accounts from an approved training provider. All customers interested in receiving WIOA scholarship assistance must apply for a Pell Grant, and if awarded, the Pell Grant funds are to be applied to the cost of training prior to use of WIOA funding.

Training services include the following:

- Occupational skills training, including training for nontraditional employment;
- On-the-Job Training (OJT);
- Incumbent worker training;
- Programs that combine workplace training with related instruction, which may include cooperative education programs and apprenticeship;
- Training programs operated by the private sector;
- Skill upgrading and retraining;
- Entrepreneurial training;
- Transitional jobs; and
- Adult education and literacy activities, including activities of English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs, provided concurrently or in combination with other training services.

All those who receive training services must be determined eligible for WIOA-funded services.

Regional policy will be developed regarding determining eligibility of training services based on priority of service in WIOA.

Selected service providers will be expected to continue services with currently enrolled participants.

Program Requirements

Eligibility Verification/Documentation: Selected service providers are required to use NCWorks for all aspects of documentation and tracking of services. In many cases all NCWorks staff are enrolling customers into WIOA career services. Since WIOA does away with the core, intensive and training sequence, the WIOA service provider will need to insure that each customer is eligible to receive WIOA-funded services prior to obligating or paying any expenses on a customer's behalf. Service providers are responsible for determining, verifying, and certifying WIOA eligibility for each adult or dislocated worker applicant by obtaining acceptable records/ documents to verify each required eligibility item. Verification documents and other necessary paperwork must be maintained to the greatest extent possible in NCWorks.

Documentation of services, referrals, progress, activities, and follow-up will be entered into NCWorks. Documentation should provide information related to successes and barriers related to the completion of the service plan along with potential next steps of services.

Assessments: WIOA expects center staff to conduct an initial assessment of skill levels (including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency), aptitudes, abilities, (including skill gaps) and supportive service needs. Initial assessment will include the following: basic skills, work readiness skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, barriers to employment, family situation, occupational interests and aptitudes, financial resources and needs, supportive service needs, and developmental needs.

This information should be acquired through various means, including, but not limited to, standardized tests, structured interviews, behavioral observations, inventories, career guidance instruments, performance-based or competency-based assessment tools, and where the information is current and reliable, assessment results from another service provider (school or agency).

Individual Employment Plans: Each customer enrolled into WIOA services will have an individualized employment plan (IEP) to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve the employment goals, including providing information on eligible providers of training services, and career pathways to attain career objectives. Employment plans should be flexible and responsive to the individual needs of each customer as they move through needed career services and/or training services, keeping in mind that employment is the ultimate goal for all our customers. The IEP should be reviewed and updated at least every six months. Each plan will identify educational goals, pre-employment steps, selected learning objectives, training and work based learning (when provided) and any other preparation for unsubsidized employment. The plan will set clear and realistic goals for educational advancement,

entry into employment in a targeted industry, and any continued learning and development, as needed. Service Plans should be developed and updated in NCWorks.

Case Management: All NCWorks Career Centers are expected to make available group counseling, individual counseling, and career planning. While not every customer that is served by the NCWorks Career Center will receive comprehensive case management services, this service may be needed for customers that exhibit multiple barriers and/or have longer term educational goals to obtain employment.

Staff is expected to work closely with customers to provide support and guidance, address needs and barriers, assist with problem solving, serve as role models, and assist in the attainment of the objectives and goals agreed upon in their plan. Regular personal contact between staff and the adult/dislocated customer is important. Based on the case management relationship, the customer should be aware that he/she has support and accountability in working to achieve his/her personal goals.

Primary case management functions may include services coordination, advising, career counseling, advocacy, follow-up as appropriate and accurate and timely record keeping. Staff are to be informed of, and adhere to, professional standards of client confidentiality and safeguarding of personal and confidential information.

Employment and Training Services: WIOA legislation speaks to **priority of services** relative to the provision of employment and training services. As referenced in the WIOA legislation “priority shall be given to recipients of public assistance, other low income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient for receipt of career services, described in paragraph (2) (A) (xii) and training services.” HCWDB has had a Priority of Services Policy with WIA services. A revised Priority of Services Policy will most likely be needed to meet expectations of the WIOA legislation. As more is learned, a revised policy will be developed. In the meantime, efforts should be made to adequately serve customers that fall into these priority categories.

Performance Measures: PY 2015 will be a transition year with respect to federal performance measures. All eligible adults/dislocated workers who receive WIOA services and exit services during PY 2015 will be measured against USDOL Common Measures for Adults and Dislocated Workers. WIOA-specific measures are expected to take effect beginning July 1, 2016.

The HCWDB will also request locally tracked outcomes and set local measures. See the chart in Performance Measures section regarding most recent Common Measure goals for PY 2014/15.

Business Services

Serving the needs of business is a principle focus for WIOA and the HCWDB, as business is a primary customer with the continuing need of finding and hiring candidates. Whereas in the past these services have been delivered by an assortment of agencies with little coordination, the future business service delivery system will be highly coordinated to avoid confusion by the business community and improve the quality of every business service. **Business service staff shall take a lead role in understanding the needs of businesses and in communicating those needs to the broader workforce system.**

WIOA emphasizes Sector Partnerships as a key method to engage businesses in the design of workforce services, including education available through public schools, colleges, and universities with the goal that education agencies and career centers understand and deliver training, education, credentials and guidance to provide defined Career Pathways into targeted industry sectors. These sectors must also be aligned with economic and business development efforts to maximize effectiveness. **Business service staff are expected to lead efforts at developing and supporting these Sector Partnership efforts.**

In addition to working strategically to align the workforce system with business needs, staff shall also ensure coordination and quality of a suite of fundamental services. All High Country NCWorks Career Centers shall offer a broad range of integrated services that are provided at no cost to all employers to support economic and workforce development efforts. Staff who provide business services should be fully integrated into the customer flow of businesses and job seekers.

The WIOA service provider will be responsible for coordinating or delivering the following employer services with partner staff:

- Interviewing activities held at the NCWorks Career Center;
- Access to labor market and related information through NCWorks Online System (NCWorks.gov);
- Information regarding workplace accommodations for persons with disabilities;
- Information and referral to business start-up, retention, and expansion services;
- Information and referral to sources for developing customized training programs;
- Information on career preparation activities and career pathways;
- Information on Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) and certification;
- Information, development and coordination of work based learning opportunities including Incumbent Worker grants, Youth Work Experiences, Internships, On-The-Job Training contracts, and apprenticeships.
- Information and development of incumbent worker training;
- State and/or federally generated information on tax credits for new hires;
- State and/or federal program information on federal bonding;
- Access to information and services through the NCWorks Career Center and online;
- Avenues to place job openings as well as access to NCWorks.gov;
- Referrals of well-qualified NCWorks customers;
- Staff-assisted employee pre-screening;
- Basic job matching of résumés and applications;
- Preliminary basic skills and other assessments;
- Industry specific job fairs;

- Positive recruitments;
- Relevant business seminars and information sessions;
- Development and coordination of job orders;
- Coordination of rapid response activities;
- Identification of needs and solutions;
- Coordination with other business-serving organizations;
- Keying of business services in NCWorks system; and
- Other HCWDB approved business services, as applicable.

Certain services may be offered for a fee to businesses. Services that may be offered include the following:

- Employee background checks;
- Applicant pre-interview;
- Screening, drug testing;
- In-depth assessment and testing of potential candidates;
- Locating and procuring sites for the interviewing process;
- Business-specific job fairs; and
- Outreach and marketing services to small businesses and entrepreneurs.

The HCWDB must approve all fee-based services. All revenue generated from fee-based services must be handled in accordance with WIOA regulations and the appropriate federal circulars regarding program income. The service provider may not charge for services already funded by WIOA or Wagner Peysner.

Incumbent Worker Training Services

Incumbent Worker Grants are small amounts for funding targeted to increasing the skills and credentials of existing workers to prevent possible layoffs and increase the competitiveness of regional businesses. These funds are made available on a set schedule typically two to three times each year through the NC Department of Commerce. Funding availability for PY2015 is not known at this time. In PY2014, High Country Incumbent Worker Grants totaled approximately \$20,000. Contractors will be expected to conduct outreach activities, facilitate the development of applications, submit applications to the HCWDB for approval, and record participant information and training expenses in NCWorks.

Rapid Response Services

Rapid Response Services, as mandated by USDOL, are services delivered to businesses and employees of companies that are experiencing downsizing through layoffs or closure and may have also been impacted by a Worker Adjustment & Retraining Notification (WARN) issued by the state of North Carolina. Coordination of the Rapid Response teams and operation of the Trade Adjustment Assistance program across the state is the role of NCDOL-DWS. The selected WIOA service provider will be expected to assist in coordinating in these outreach teams. NCWorks Career Centers shall

provide the following Rapid Response Services to employees of businesses issuing WARN notices or experiencing layoffs or closures, in conjunction with other appropriate partners:

- Reviewing affected workers' assistance needs;
- Coordinating and conducting Rapid Response workshop presentations to assist with career transition, job search tools and skills, résumé preparation, and interviewing techniques;
- Assessing re-employment prospects for workers in the local community;
- Providing information on available resources to meet the short and long-term needs of affected workers;
- Establishing a process of referring affected employees to the NCWorks System;
- Developing recruitment/job development activities including job fairs, positive recruitments, job lead development, and general recruitment notifications; and
- Providing Rapid Response information with appropriate information relating to potential dislocations, available adjustment assistance, services, and when appropriate, information on the TAA program and the North American Free Trade (NAFTA).

Youth Services

The focus of the youth formula-funded program has changed under WIOA to focus more on out-of-school youth, work based learning opportunities, and additional program elements. Key features of the program design are outlined in Section 129 of the Act. The structure of the program is similar to the structure under WIA in that comprehensive youth services are provided by competitively-selected youth service providers where each youth receives an objective assessment and an individual service strategy and the objective is to prepare youth for post-secondary education and employment. However, under WIOA measures and expectations, the proposal should include innovative ideas along with integration and partnerships to carry out the program.

WIOA legislation calls for youth programs that focus on the following:

- Significantly increased services to out-of-school youth ages 16-24;
- High school dropout recovery;
- Achievement of recognized post-secondary credentials;
- Career pathways and work-based learning tied to a systematic approach that offers youth a comprehensive set of service strategies;
- Closer linkages to the local labor markets; and
- Required connections between WIOA-funded youth programs and the one-stop system providing information on the full array of appropriate services that are available to youth.

It is important to note two new requirements with respect to WIOA Youth programs:

1. At least seventy-five percent (75%) of WIOA youth funds must be expended on providing workforce investment activities and services for out-of-school youth.
2. At least twenty percent (20%) of total allocated WIOA youth funds must be expended on paid or unpaid work based learning activities that have as a component academic and occupational education for both in-school and out-of-school youth which may include the following: employment opportunities such as work experiences during the summer and throughout the school year; pre-apprenticeship programs; internships and job shadowing; and on the job training. Note: per state clarification, of the 20% dedicated to work based learning, up to 8% may be charged for staff time associated with work based learning activities.

Eligibility

Service providers may use youth funds to provide services for out-of-school youth between the ages of 16-24 and in-school youth between the ages of 16-21 (on a case-by-case approval basis) that meet the federal WIOA eligibility criteria. Suitability factors should also be considered when making a determination for enrollment.

Funding allocations will be distributed with the goal of at least eighty percent (80%) of youth funding to be expended serving out-of-school youth across the region; therefore, proposals responses should be designed with a focus of meeting the needs of out-of-school youth.

Note: the definition and eligibility guidelines have changed under WIOA. Changes to the out-of-school youth definition removes the low-income requirement for several categories (making them very similar to those of adults). Most often, the target population of 16-24 year old out-of-school individuals define themselves as “young adults.”

Out-of-school youth means an individual who is not attending any school and is between the ages of 16 and 24 and exhibit one or more of the following characteristics:

1. A school dropout;
2. A youth who is within the age of compulsory school attendance, but has not attended school for at least the most recent complete school year calendar quarter;
3. A recipient of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent who is a **low-income** individual *and* is basic skills deficient or an English language learner;
4. An individual who is subject to the juvenile or adult justice system;
5. A homeless individual, a homeless child or youth, a runaway, in foster care or has aged out of the foster care system, a child eligible for assistance under section 447 of the Social Security Act (42 USC 677) or in an out-of-home placement. (*Defined in section 41403(6) of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (42 USC 14043e-(6)); (as defined in section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance (42 USC 1134a (2));*)
6. An individual who is pregnant or parenting;
7. A youth who is an individual with a disability;
8. A **low-income** individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment. **Note: North Carolina has defined what this means under WIA, and it is anticipated new guidance will be released.**

Dropouts attending Adult Basic Skills are considered Out of School youth.

In-School Youth means an individual who is attending school (as defined by state law); between the ages of 16 and 21; who is low income *and* one or more of the following:

1. Basic skills deficient;
2. An English language learner;
3. An offender;
4. A homeless individual ,a homeless child or youth, a runaway, in foster care or has aged out of the foster care system, a child eligible for assistance under section 447 of the Social Security Act (42 USC 677) or in an out-of-home placement. (*Defined in section 41403(6) of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (42 USC 14043e-(6)); (as defined in section 725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance (42 USC 1134a (2));*)
5. Pregnant or parenting;
6. A youth who is an individual with a disability;
7. An individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment. **Note: North Carolina has defined what this means under WIA, and it is anticipated new guidance will be released.**

Students attending post-secondary school (regardless of their basic skills deficient status) are considered In School youth.

Selected service providers will be expected to continue services with currently enrolled youth participants.

Service Delivery

It is the goal of NCWorks youth services to provide activities to enable young adults to be work-ready and prepared for their future. Provided services will help young adults access opportunities for work-based learning, complete industry recognized credentials, and enter employment in demand occupations. NCWorks youth services in the High Country area should be designed in a manner that integrates young adults into the career center in order to receive the full range of services. Integration with other program staff, such as the adult program for referrals and with business services for work-based learning and connections with employers, will be necessary to meet expectations.

With the focus moved to older, out-of-school youth, it is likely this population will be visiting the NCWorks Career Center seeking career services. Appropriately trained staff and customer flow of the center will be important in identifying which customers may be most appropriate for receiving youth-funded services/elements.

WIOA requires the following fourteen (14) elements to support the success of youth. While every youth may not need every element, providers are required to either provide or connect youth to organizations that meet their identified needs. Proposals must identify an initial plan of how the following elements will be addressed.

1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion of a school diploma or its recognized equivalent (including a certificate of attendance for individuals with disabilities) or for a recognized postsecondary credential;
2. Alternative secondary school services or dropout recovery services;
3. Paid and unpaid work experiences that have as a component academic and occupational education which may include the following:
 - a. Summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year;
 - b. Pre-apprenticeship programs;
 - c. Internships and job shadowing; and
 - d. On-the-job training opportunities
4. Occupational skills training, which shall include priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized post-secondary credentials that are aligned with in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area;
5. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster;
6. Leadership development opportunities, which may include community service and peer-centered activities;
7. Supportive services;

8. Adult mentoring for a period of participation and a subsequent period for a total of no less than 12 months;
9. Follow up services for no less than 12 months after the completion of participation, as appropriate;
10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling;
11. Financial literacy education;
12. Entrepreneurial skills training;
13. Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration; and
14. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training.

Note: Youth programs should follow the same list of demand occupational training areas that apply to the adult/dislocated worker program. All customers interested in receiving WIOA scholarship assistance must apply for a Pell Grant, and if awarded, be applied to the cost of training.

Respondents' proposals should reflect "an age continuum of services" and age-appropriate activities based on the expectation that youth may be enrolled in WIOA services for the time period determined to successfully complete their service strategy. Planned services and activities should be designed to meet the needs of out-of-school youth, ages 16-24. The intensity and methods of delivering WIOA services should be flexible to respond to the individual needs of youth as they age and develop. A variety of workforce development activities should be available to help youth identify personal and vocational interests and begin to clarify long-term employment goals. Negotiating the transition from school to the workforce requires more than the acquisition of skills specific to an occupation. It is also necessary for youth to master the developmental tasks associated with cognitive, emotional, and social maturity that are critical to long-term employment success.

Many young adults that are disconnected from education and employment may demonstrate a need for supportive services in order to successfully begin, carry out, or complete their service strategy. Service providers should collaborate with partner agencies on meeting these needs prior to use of WIOA funds. Common types of supportive services include childcare, transportation, and emergency assistance.

Proposals should demonstrate linkages with the public schools, alternative schools, and various training providers to extend and enhance learning opportunities as part of a year-round strategy to improve academic achievement and build connections between work and learning. Respondents are expected to build and strengthen partnerships with community organizations in order to effectively recruit, engage, and sustain out-of-school youth in successful completion of WIOA activities.

Service providers are also expected to assist in workforce system building activities with education and partners. Activities should include, but are not limited to, partnerships with schools to provide workforce information and resources, assisting with career fairs, hosting workshops, support of Work Ready Communities and the NCWorks system. Proposals should incorporate activities that demonstrate the provider's ability to successfully engage and contribute to the development of workforce services throughout the region.

Program Requirements

Eligibility Verification/Documentation: Selected service providers are required to use NCWorks for all aspects of documentation and tracking of services. Service providers are responsible for determining, verifying, and certifying WIOA eligibility for each youth applicant by obtaining acceptable records/ documents to verify each required eligibility item. Verification documents and other necessary paperwork must be maintained to the extent possible in NCWorks.

Further guidance will be developed regarding paper and electronic files. Documentation of services, referrals, progress, activities, and follow-up will be entered in NCWorks. Documentation should provide information related to successes and barriers related to the completion of the service plan along with potential next steps of services.

Assessments: WIOA requires a thorough and in-depth assessment of the academic level, skill levels, and service needs of each youth at the time of enrollment into WIOA activities that help develop the sequence of services and interventions. Initial/entry assessment will include: basic skills, work readiness skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, barriers to employment, family situation, occupational interests and aptitudes, financial resources and needs, supportive service needs, and developmental needs.

This information should be acquired through various means, including, but not limited to, standardized tests, structured interviews, behavioral observations, inventories, career guidance instruments, performance-based or competency-based assessment tools, and where the information is current and reliable, assessment results from another service provider (school or agency). Follow-up assessment should occur as appropriate to track progress and update service delivery plans.

Service Strategy: Each youth enrolled will have an individualized plan of services and activities (an appropriate mix of the fourteen required program elements), including appropriate learning objectives and goals, based on the entry assessment information. Service plans should be flexible and responsive to the changing needs of the youth as they move through WIOA and should be updated at least every six months. Each plan will identify educational goals that lead to credentials, Literacy/Numeracy goals (for out-of-school basic skills deficient youth during the transition year), selected learning objectives, work-based learning (when provided) and provide preparation for unsubsidized employment. The plan will set clear and realistic goals for educational advancement, entry into employment in a targeted industry, and continued learning and development. Service Plans should be developed and updated in NCWorks.

Comprehensive Case Management: The WIOA service provider will provide comprehensive case management services as part of the year round strategy to support and assist youth to attain meaningful outcomes. Given the wide range of developmental stages of youth between the ages of 16-24, staff must be flexible and aware of age appropriate expectations.

Staff is expected to work closely with youth to provide support and guidance, address needs and barriers, solve problems, serve as role models, and assist in the attainment of the objectives and

goals agreed upon in their plan. Regular personal contact between staff and the young person is essential. Based on the case management relationship, the youth should be aware that he/she has support and accountability in working to achieve his/her personal goals.

Primary case management functions include services coordination, advising and counseling, advocacy, follow-up and accurate and timely record keeping. Staff are to be informed of, and adhere to, professional standards of client confidentiality and safeguarding of personal and confidential information.

Performance Measures: All youth who receive WIOA-funded services will be measured against USDOL WIOA Common Measures for Youth. Each of the youth Common Measures are calculated at the time a youth “exits” WIOA-funded services.

Currently, it is anticipated that the first transition year will be calculated using current WIA common measures, while WIOA measures take effect July 1, 2016. Literacy/numeracy is required during the transition year for out-of-school youth. The HCWDB may also request locally-tracked outcomes and set local measures. See chart in Performance section for current rates and measures.

Reports

Monthly and Quarterly Reports

It is expected that routine monthly and quarterly written programmatic reports will be developed to include WIOA Common Measures, career services, career center traffic, business services and other key performance indicators. HCWDB will work closely with selected service providers to design and administer these reports.

Financial Reports

Financial reports and invoices for reimbursement will be prepared and submitted to the HCWDB office by the 10th day of the following month and include the following:

- Monthly Invoices by funds source to include budget amounts by line item, monthly expenditures by line item, year to date expenses by line item, and accrued expenses.
- Summary and detailed accounting reports by fund source generated from your organization’s general ledger that matches the monthly invoices submitted for reimbursement.

Performance Measures: WIOA

North Carolina uses Common Performance Measures for customers enrolled into WIA/WIOA services. During the first WIOA transition year, common measure will still apply. New WIOA measures will begin in 2016 and replace WIA measures. Current measures include the following:

Adults

- Entered Employment
- Retention in Employment
- Average Earning for Six Months

Dislocated Workers

- Entered Employment
- Retention in Employment
- Average Earnings for Six Months

Youth

- Placement in Employment or Education
- Attainment of a Degree or Certificate
- Numeracy/Literacy

DWS has clarified that PY 2015 Performance Goals will remain unchanged from PY 2014.

High Country Common Performance Measures

Program	Measure	PY 2014/15 HCWDB Goals	Prior 3 Year Average (Actual)
Adult	Entered Employment	72.00%	69.47%
	Employment Retention	90.00%	89.38%
	6 Month Earnings	\$13,000	\$12,469.91
Dislocated Worker	Entered Employment	82.00%	81.69%
	Employment Retention	94.30%	92.72%
	6 Month Earnings	\$14,000	\$12,766.35
Youth	Placement in Employment or Education	72.00%	63.51%
	Attainment of a Degree or Certificate	65.00%	62.64%
	Literacy or Numeracy Gains	67.00%	38.89%

Note: The USDOL and the HCWDB expect to develop federal and local performance measures for business services.

Performance Measures: Local

The NCWorks Commissions seeks to develop initial, minimum performance accountability measures for North Carolina's 23 workforce areas, in addition to federal WIOA performance measures.

Service Providers will be expected to work towards these goals and adhere to keying and reporting processes when defined.

Initial target expectations will be based on the following categories:

1. Participant Engagement: measured by a minimum percentage of the labor force in the area that receives career services, for a minimum of 18%.
2. Business Engagement: measured by those employers that receive staff assisted employer services, for a minimum of 5% of total employers. Data will be collected and reported on the number of businesses registered in NCWorks Online and on the number of businesses that have posted one or more jobs.
3. Training Expenditures: measured by percentage of total allocation for adults/dislocated workers spent on training and work based learning, for a minimum of 35%. Also measured by at least 12% of youth funds to be spent on work based learning, not including staff expenditures.
4. Return on Investment: measured by a comparison of total expenditures and total participant wages.
5. NCWorks Career Pathways: measured by the development of two certified NCWorks Career Pathways for the area.
6. NCWorks Career Center Certification: measured by requirements of the certification process for all centers part of the "one-stop system".

Note: the above is still in draft format and subject to change.

Fiscal and Administrative Management

A number of changes to the federal OMB circulars took place on December 19, 2014. New Uniform guidance was issued in 2 CFR Part 200 and 2 CFR Part 2900. The Employment and Training Administration issued TEGL 15-14 that gives guidance on this reform. In summary, 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 2900 replaces the following: A-103 & A-89, A-87, A-133 & A-50, A-110, A-21, A-110 and A-122.

Internal Financial Management

All contractors are required to conduct internal financial management reviews. The purpose is to provide adequate internal controls and ensure compliance with the following areas related to WIOA funds and services:

- Provisions of the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act and its regulations;
- Provisions of the WIOA Contract;
- Applicable state and workforce development board policies;
- Accepted financial management and accounting practices; and
- Compliance with 2 CFR 200

Internal financial management procedures shall be sufficient to prevent fraud and abuse. All reports of information creating suspicion of or instances of criminal misconduct must be reported immediately to the HCWDB, NCDOC-DWS, and USDOL.

Internal financial management procedures must also ensure that auditable and otherwise adequate records are maintained which support all expenditures of WIOA funds and confirm adherence to policies regarding allowable costs and allocations of cost to proper cost categories. It is necessary to assure that accounting records are supported by source documentation for each transaction. In addition, records should be traceable to documentation and maintained in such a manner as to provide a complete and accurate audit trail during any internal or external examination.

The WIOA contractor shall document all internal financial compliance reviews.

If applicable, the respondent will provide a copy of the organization's Cost Allocation Plan. For-profit organizations will need to provide any proposed profit within the budget document.

Internal Program Management: Contractors are required to establish internal program management procedures to assure compliance with contract requirements, delivery of high-quality services to eligible adults and dislocated workers, and achievement of planned outcomes. Internal program management procedures must also ensure that auditable and otherwise adequate records are maintained to support the eligibility of all WIOA customers and confirm adherence to specific requirements and time limitations.

Audit Submission: As a recipient of WIOA funds, contractors must have an annual financial and compliance audit performed. The audits must be conducted in accordance with auditing standards set forth under the Single Audit Act Amendment of 1996 and revised OMB Circular A-133 at 29 CFR 95.26 for institutions of higher education, hospitals and other non-profit organizations and at 29 CFR 97.26 for units of state and local government. This requirement will be met by providing the HCWDB

with a copy of the annual audit according to OMB Circular A-133. For all for profit businesses, WIOA contractors must have an annual financial and compliance audit performed under Generally Accepted Accounting Standards by an independent auditor. A copy of the audit will be forwarded to the HCWDB. The audit should be submitted within 30 days after the completion of the audit, but no later than six months after the end of the audit period. State-funded organizations such as community colleges should address their audit requirements if different from the above.

Monitoring Procedures : In accordance with WIOA Contract Monitoring and Audit Procedures and the WIOA regulations (20 CFR, Part 652, et al and 20 CFR 667.410), WIOA contracted staff must cooperate with any monitoring, inspection, audit, or investigation of activities related to WIA contracts. These activities may be conducted by the NCDOD-DWS, USDOL, the HCWDB or their designated representatives. This cooperation includes access to, examination of, and/or photocopying of books, records, files, documents, property or equipment related to all aspects of WIOA-funded activities under this contractual agreement.

The HCWDB has developed a systematic monitoring system for evaluating the quality and effectiveness of services. Monitoring is the quality control system whereby the HCWDB gathers and analyzes information to detect problems, identify strengths and weaknesses, and propose improvements to the services. Monitoring activities are conducted periodically to determine whether services are in compliance with contractual agreements, HCWDB policies, WIOA regulations, and HCWDB requirements. HCWDB monitors performance, programmatic, and fiscal activities. In many instances, the different types of monitoring are interrelated and conducted simultaneously.

Records Retention: The following records and documents must be maintained for WIOA-funded customers and employees. They must be available for monitoring and review by the HCWDB and must be retained, subject to audit, for five (5) years following the final audit of the contract. If any aspect of the program is under investigation or in the process of audit resolution and/or debt collection, the WIOA Staff is required to retain records after the five (5) year period and until the final audit resolution of all disallowed and/or questioned costs are paid or accepted as allowable. Please see below for a listing:

- General ledger or equivalent;
- Cash receipts and cash disbursements journals/reports or equivalent;
- Bank statement, reconciliation, deposit slips and canceled checks for each bank account through which WIOA funds were received or disbursed;
- All contracts with the HCWDB/HCCOG including all amendments;
- All financial reports and documentation supporting requests for reimbursement;
- Payroll records including Individual Earnings Record, Employee Withholding Authorization (W-4), FICA reporting forms, federal and state withholding, Unemployment taxes, Employee Personnel Files, Time Records and Employee Time/Salary Allocation plans;
- Invoices and/or supporting data for non-payroll disbursements; and
- Customers' records including participant data forms, verification/documentation items, assessments tests and results, the Individualized Employment Strategy and documentation of outcomes.
- Any other financial records or documents that are related to the contracted funds as requested by the HCWDB.

Insurance Requirements

Insurance: It is strongly encouraged that WIOA customers are covered by accident insurance while participating in WIOA-funded activities. OJT employers must provide proof of workers' compensation or comparable coverage prior to execution of the OJT contract. No WIOA client will be required or permitted to work, or receive services or training in a building or surroundings or under working conditions which are unsanitary, hazardous, or dangerous to the client's health or safety. All participants placed in a paid work experiences or internships, must be covered by workers compensation.

Automobiles: WIOA contractors using motor vehicles in conducting services shall provide automobile insurance that clearly specifies that the HCWDB, HCCOG and/or staff are held harmless against claims arising from ownership, maintenance, or use of said vehicle.

Bonding Insurance Requirements: WIOA contractors must meet bonding requirements as required through the OMB Circulars or other applicable regulations. Public agencies are required by the North Carolina General Statute to be bonded. Non-governmental agencies shall procure a blanket fidelity bond, position bond, or name schedule fidelity bond for all persons or positions authorized to receive or disburse WIOA funds. The Contractor must maintain all bonding in force for the period of the contractual agreement. The proposed contractor must submit a written notice to the HCWDB within fifteen (15) calendar days prior to any reduction in the limits stated on the bonding document. Similarly, the contractor must provide written notice of any cancellation of the bonding policy to the HCWDB immediately upon receipt of the cancellation notices.

Program Income Requirement: USDOL requires that all income generated under any WIOA contract shall be reported and used to further program objectives. Any organizations proposing program income must provide a set of measurable deliverables. Program income is required to be spent prior to use of WIOA funds.

For Profit: Contractors proposing for profit contracts must propose criteria/deliverables for profit and a schedule of payment as part of the budget narrative. All criteria proposed must be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely (SMART goals). Profit margins shall not exceed ten percent (10%) of the Contract. Criteria for Profit will be reviewed and included in negotiating final contracts.

Authority to Re-Capture and Re-Distribute Funds: The WDB has the authority to re-capture and re-distribute funds based on the following criteria not being met.

- Staffing levels
- Enrollments
- Caseloads
- Spending levels

Property Management Requirements

The WIOA contractor agrees to maintain careful accountability of all WIOA purchased non-expendable property (property with a life expectancy of one year or more and a unit cost of \$500.00 or more) and to maintain an inventory of all properties issued by the HCWDB or subsequently acquired with WIOA funds. Acquisition of non-expendable property with a unit cost of \$1,000.00 (including taxes, shipping and handling costs) or more must be approved by HCWDB staff, prior to the purchase. Any disposal of WIOA property must be according to applicable federal, state, and local disposal procedures. Any revenues derived from the sale of property purchased with WIOA funds must be used in WIOA service delivery for the program(s) which funded the original purchase.

Any single piece of equipment that costs greater than \$5,000 and to be purchased with WIOA funds must be approved by the HCWDB and the NCDOC-DWS, depending on cost.

The WIOA contractor will be responsible for maintaining an accurate inventory of all WIOA property in their possession. A copy of the updated annual inventory shall be submitted to the HCWDB staff upon completion. The HCWDB will maintain a fixed-asset listing to be verified for physical location and serviceability at the WIOA contractor facility at least annually.

In the event property purchased with WIOA funds is stolen or destroyed by criminal act, the WIOA contractor will notify appropriate law enforcement officials immediately. The HCWDB must be notified within three (3) working days of discovering the loss or damage. A copy of the police report will be maintained as documentation of loss, and a copy forwarded to the HCWDB.

The WIOA contractor agrees to pay for or replace any property purchased with WIOA funds that is lost, damaged or destroyed through negligence.

Budgets and Invoices

Respondents to this RFP should submit a combined Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth budget that is included with the RFP up to, but not greater than the projected available funding for each program as identified in the chart provided. The JDI NEG funding is not included on the budget sheets. Once a provider is selected, we will work with the service provider to budget those funds. The amounts on the funding chart are intended to be used as guidelines for respondents and are subject to revision based upon final notification of WIOA funding availability from the NCDOC-DWS. The budget spreadsheet document will provide a summary of your proposed cost by line item with additional worksheets to provide additional back up detail of projected budgets. If additional narrative detail is needed, please provide that as well. It is understood that participant expenses will be difficult to accurately predict at this time; however, a projection of these expenses based on plans for services to customers is requested. More detailed budgets will be developed after the service provider is selected and allocation amounts are more defined.

Proposed budgets must be within the amounts indicated and must be reasonable based on proposed staffing, service levels, and service delivery plans. The amount awarded will be determined on a competitive basis, but not necessarily based on the lowest proposed cost. Subsequent revisions and negotiations of final contract budgets may be required due to funding award decisions.

Since this is a reimbursement contract, service providers will be expected to incur the costs for all program services and make payments on behalf of the enrolled customers, then report each month's expenses by the 10th day of the following month for each of the fund sources in the contract. The monthly reimbursement submission will include a line item invoice, with budgets, current month expenses, unexpended balances, and accrued expenses. As backup to the invoice, a summary line item expenditure reports and detailed line item expenditure reports by fund source that support the invoice amounts should be submitted each month.

WIOA funds are distributed through a process of drawdowns from US DOL and then from the State to the HCCOG. Since this is a reimbursement process, the time from incurred expense to receipt of reimbursement may take up to 30 to 60 days. Bidding organizations must have fiscal ability to operate under this timeframe.

Since the program year and fiscal year runs from July 1st through the following June 30th, final payment for each program year's WIOA expenses will occur with the June invoice that will be submitted by the service provider to HCCOG during the month of July along with end of year Financial Closeout documents. **Service providers are expected to expend at least 70% of their contracted funds by the end of each program year.**

Although not expected, if any part of the work covered by this request is to be sub-granted, the grantee shall identify the sub-granting organization and a sub-grant agreement must be entered into between the two parties. Copies of the sub-grant agreements must be submitted to the HCWDB for approval, prior to execution of any sub-grant agreements.

PROPOSAL FORMAT AND REQUIRED FORMS

Proposals should include all items listed below, in the order shown. The following forms should be completed with all information requested and executed properly. Proposals that fail to include all applicable forms and information will not be considered. **Please number each page.**

1. **2015 WIOA Response Package Cover Sheet**
2. **Program and Financial Management Form** - Carefully review each section. Identify the appropriate agency staff member responsible for compliance.
3. **Statement of Work Narrative** - If a section does not apply, write "N/A" or "Does not apply" by the respective section. Sections include:
 - a. Experience and Capacity
 - b. Budget
 - c. NCWorks Career Center Operations
 - d. Adult/Dislocated Worker Services
 - e. Business Services
 - f. Youth Services
4. **Assurances and Certifications Form** - Requires signature of authorized representative.
5. **Statement of Compliance Form** - Requires signature of authorized representative.
6. **Certificate Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion Lower Tier Covered Transactions** - Requires signature of authorized representative.
7. **Certification Regarding Drug-Free Workplace** - List the site for the performance of work.
8. **Job Descriptions** - Complete for each WIOA staff member proposed and indicate the county or counties they will serve.
9. **RFP Budget Form** - Complete the Budget Summary, supporting worksheets, budget narrative for all costs required to implement the program design.
10. **RFP Projected Service Levels Form** - Complete Projected Service Levels form.
11. **Other** - Please attach the following items:
 - a. Most recent end of year Financial Statement and copy of last audit;
 - b. Agency Grievance Procedures;
 - c. Copy of Bond Coverage (or explanation of planned coverage if an award is made);
 - d. Agency Personnel and Travel policies;
 - e. Current Organization Chart (Include Equal Opportunity Officer);
 - f. Charter and Bylaws of Organization, attach list of Current Board Members;
 - g. Cost Allocation Plan (if applicable, provide a copy of the agency's approved Indirect Cost Plan);
 - h. Certificate of General Liability Insurance; and
 - i. Certificate of Worker's Compensation Insurance

PROPOSAL NARRATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

This portion of the proposal should give reviewers a clear picture of the proposed services and the capability of the offeror to deliver the proposed services.

Proposers should follow the alphabetical and numerical sequence of the format described below. Provide responses as brief as possible but with enough information to adequately respond to the questions or statements. **In order to provide a clear picture of the program design, program activities/services, anticipated outcomes, and the Proposer's capability of delivering the services, please address all of the following areas in order.**

Please include the question followed by the response.

Experience and Capacity (To be completed by all bidders)

A. Experience

1. Please provide a description of your organization to include the following details:
 - The legal organizational name and legal status;
 - Briefly describe your organization's mission, history, and accomplishments. Also include number of years in operation, size of the organization, and the geographic distribution of the service delivery area;
 - How the organization is currently funded; and
 - Describe how offering services in response to the RFP will fit into the Proposer organization's mission or business plan. Include internal structure including management and supervisory staff positions to be used to operate this program in the HCWDB service area.
2. Describe your organization's financial and administrative experience in managing and accounting for multiple federal, state and local funding sources in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP); conducting self-monitoring for contract performance and compliance; and developing and implementing a continuous improvement model.
3. Describe past experience and current activities or programs administered and operated by the proposer that demonstrates the capability of the Proposer to do the following:
 - Serve as NCWorks System Operator, including functional supervision of partner programs, facility, and personnel in the HCWDB NCWorks Career Centers; and
 - Manage, administer and operate a workforce development program under WIOA to serve adults, dislocated workers, businesses, and youth. Include specific data on outcomes achieved to demonstrate your ability to meet contractual performance standards for WIOA services or comparable programs.
4. Describe your experience providing oversight of multi-organization staff teams and experience in developing and delivering technical assistance and capacity building with workforce staff and organizations.

5. Describe how your resources, professional contacts, knowledge of the labor market, and special expertise will support the HCWDB to meet and exceed performance goals for the NCWorks system.

B. Capacity

1. Describe resources your organization brings to the workforce system that will assist in the coordination and delivery of services and how the organization as a whole will support the work of staff and the programs.
2. Staffing Plan - Please detail your plan to staff the proposed services for the counties in which your organization is bidding. Please include the following details:
 - Number of staff (indicate full time or part time) to include where staff will be housed. If staff will serve more than one center, please indicate this with the appropriate details regarding the locations, time at each center and schedule if known;
 - Job descriptions to include, job titles, job duties to be funded under this proposal and range of activities to be performed. Please use provided form;
 - Qualifications of key staff to be assigned on-site to this program including education, experience, and any specialized training or certifications specific to workforce service delivery. If your organization will need to hire staff as a result of being awarded a contract, please outline your plan to hire qualified staff; and
 - Describe how you expect to provide on-going staff training to ensure your staff has access to the most current information, tools, and promising practices.
3. Administrative Capacity - What monitoring and evaluation of the program operations and staff are to be routinely carried out? Include any systems that may be used to track, capture and report performance or outcomes.
4. Fiscal Management and Reporting Capacity - Describe your fiscal system and include the following:
 - The process the Proposer uses or proposes to use to timely capture and report fiscal information to the HCWDB's administrative entity;
 - What systems are in place to ensure fiscal accountability, timely, and appropriate expenditure of WIOA funds;
 - Describe how the Proposer will internally track both actual and projected obligations and encumbrances;
 - Describe the Proposer's ability and method it would use to repay disallowed costs if such disallowances are identified in the monitoring or audit of the contract; and
 - Proposers must have the capacity to track expenses down to the participant level either within their organization's accounting system or alternative tracking system such as Gazelle or other proprietary software designed for that purpose. Please describe how this will be accomplished.

5. For potential new providers: Provide a schedule for addressing start-up priorities including, but not limited to, staffing, staff training, and purchasing. Explain how the transition of current participants from previous contractors will smoothly shift to the new contractor, including meetings, changes in delivery of services, and timeframe during the first quarter.

For current providers: Describe any plans necessary to smoothly transition to WIOA services to include any anticipated changes not identified elsewhere in the proposal.

Budget

1. Proposers should complete the budget workbook in Excel (2015 RFP Budget Summary) to include the line item budget summary and the detailed worksheets for the budget proposed. Please name PY 2015 WIOA Budget-Organization Name. Name can be abbreviated. The workbook includes Adult, Dislocated Worker, In-School Youth, and Out of School Youth. Your budget should not exceed the projected funding amounts for the counties that you propose to serve. Please develop a single budget to serve proposed counties.

Note: The Excel workbook has a number of worksheets, each labeled on the worksheet tab at the bottom of the screen. Please complete all tabs in order to provide details of the budget summary. The detail worksheets are sequential based on the line items on the summary worksheet and formulated to calculate the totals. The Staff Salaries and Staff Fringe is included on the Staffing Worksheet. All the line items related to Equipment and Supplies is on the Equip-Supplies worksheet. There is not a worksheet for Indirect Costs or the Profit line items.

If you are proposing to be reimbursed for Indirect Costs, you must submit a copy of the approved indirect cost plan that has been approved by the federal cognizant agency for your organization for indirect costs to be considered for payment.

If any narrative is needed about any of the budget, in addition to the indirect costs or profit line items, please do so and reference line item and program in the narrative.

2. For-profit proposals must include a narrative of your proposed profit along with the deliverables that must be met before profit will be reimbursed to your organization. The profit may not exceed 10% of the total project costs. Deliverables may be broken down into smaller increments of the total in order to receive a profit payment at predetermined achievement points. If you plan to do this, please provide the details in your narrative.
3. If the bidder proposes to use a direct cost allocation plan, describe in detail any proposed direct cost allocation plan to be utilized when costs are allocable to more than one program/funding source. Identify common costs to be included in the plan. Applicants must follow the guidelines established in the 2 CFR 200.

NCWorks Career Center Operations

A. Delivery

1. Provide a brief summary highlighting the Proposer's vision of NCWorks Career Center Operations. This may also include customer service, target customers, recruitment, and planned outcomes and/or goals for the NCWorks Career Center.
2. How does your organization foresee shared supervision in the NCWorks Centers between the contractor's staff and the NCDWS staff within the "functional supervision" model adopted by the State?
3. Job seeker and employer workshops and product box services are expected to be an integral part of the HCWDB NCWorks Career Centers. Describe process for ensuring that a "healthy" mix of workshops and services are made available to meet the needs of customers on a regular basis. Describe any plans related to delivery, topics, and outreach. Please include efforts around the Career Readiness Certificate.
4. Describe your process for initially assessing universal customers' needs and directing job seeker customers to the appropriate services.

B. Partnerships

1. The operator will need to be a leader, collaborator, and partner at area NCWorks partner meetings. Describe how this may best be accomplished.
2. Describe your organization's current level of partnership with each of the WIOA mandated partners in your area and how this may result in increased service delivery. Also identify partnerships with other organizations in the High Country region that may assist in goals of service delivery or system building activities. Describe any new partnerships that you will prioritize during the contract period.
3. Describe instances, projects or collaborative relationships in which your organization has led or worked closely with one or more WIOA system partners or other workforce and economic development entities on cooperative workforce development projects, programs or initiatives. Include the role of your organization and outcomes.

Adult/Dislocated Worker Services

A. Program Description

1. Provide a description of the proposed project along with projected goals/outcomes desired.
2. Describe the target population and geographic area to be served.

B. WIOA Adult/Dislocated Worker (Job Seeker) Services Statement of Work

Proposals shall include a Statement of Work narrative detailing all aspects of the proposed project design. The Statement of Work will include all aspects of the program and services outlined in this RFP and other information deemed relevant. The purpose of the Statement of Work is to provide an in-depth description of the design of services, to demonstrate how requirements will be met, and to describe the process for achieving the WIOA Youth Performance Outcomes. Please address the following components in the statement of work and how they will be carried out:

1. Describe how your organization will manage the eligibility and enrollment process to insure that all customers enrolled are eligible and appropriate for WIOA services? At a minimum, please include information about staff training and supervision related to the eligibility and enrollment process, internal monitoring, and development of Individual Employment Plans.
2. How will the Proposer ensure that applicants that cannot be served by the Proposer's program are referred to appropriate services elsewhere? Include how the Proposer will ensure all referrals are tracked.
3. Describe how you will serve large numbers of varying individuals who will receive career services within an integrated service delivery system. In your description discuss service delivery for serving individuals with barriers to also include:
 - Individuals with limited English proficiency
 - Low-income individuals
 - Persons with limited literacy skills
 - Offenders
 - Highly skilled job seekers
4. Describe any innovations and strategies that have been found to increase the likelihood of success for individuals and how you plan on using those strategies within the NCWorks system.
5. Describe how your organization will manage the provision of WIOA funded training services (OJT may be addressed in the next question). Include specifics about determining individual customer need for training, assisting the customer to select an appropriate

occupational sector, developing a comprehensive individual employment plan to include the training services, and management of the ITA process. Include other details about how you will engage the customer to be successful with the educational component and the transition from training to employment.

6. Work Based learning continues to be a focus in the WIOA legislation. Describe how you will provide paid on the job training including the pre award analysis, contract development, skill gap analysis, training plan development, monitoring, evaluation and any additional details that demonstrate your ability to successfully offer on the job training. Also, please provide any other program design ideas regarding short term work based learning options, other than OJT, that you think would result in employment.
7. Describe strategies that will ensure services are in alignment with current local and regional labor market demands.
8. Provide a narrative describing plans for service delivery that results in achievement of enrollment goals, performance measures and outreach and recruitment to target groups.

BUSINESS SERVICES

A. Program Description

1. Provide a description of the proposed business services along with projected goals/outcomes desired.
2. Describe the target population and geographic area to be served.

B. Business Services Statement of Work

Proposals shall include a Statement of Work narrative detailing all aspects of the proposed project design. The Statement of Work will include all aspects of the program and services outlined in this RFP and other information deemed relevant. The purpose of the Statement of Work is to provide an in-depth description of the design of services, to demonstrate how requirements will be met, and to describe the process for achieving the WIOA Business Services Outcomes. Please address the following components in the statement of work and how they will be carried out:

1. Describe strategies to identify the workforce development needs of businesses. Include services or strategies that can be provided by the NCWorks System to meet business needs.
2. Describe strategies to match the hiring needs of businesses with individuals who meet or exceed their minimum qualifications, thus eliminating referrals of unqualified candidates.
3. Describe outreach, collaboration, and processes that will result in successful work based learning opportunities for WIOA participants.
4. Describe efforts/plans that will support sector strategies and career pathways.
5. Describe what relationships, partnerships, and community group organizations are essential to your outreach efforts to reach businesses and how services are coordinated in efforts of increasing use of the system.

YOUTH SERVICES

A. Program Description

1. Provide a description of the proposed project along with projected goals/outcomes desired.
2. Describe the target population and geographic area to be served.

B. WIOA Youth Services Statement of Work

Proposals shall include a Statement of Work narrative detailing all aspects of the proposed project design. The Statement of Work will include all aspects of the program and services outlined in this RFP and other information deemed relevant. The purpose of the Statement of Work is to provide an in-depth description of the design of services, to demonstrate how requirements will be met, and to describe the process for achieving the WIOA Youth Performance Outcomes. Please address the following components in the statement of work and how they will be carried out:

1. **Education and Training:** Describe the educational aspect of the program. Highlight the opportunities that are readily available to youth/young adults, how the provider will help them achieve educational goals, and what resources, tools, and/or partnerships will be used. Address these at all levels to include dropouts, short term training, and post-secondary education along with strategies to assist youth obtain/complete credentials. Also include strategies to address literacy/numeracy during the transition year.
2. **Career Pathways:** Describe strategies that will be used to expose young adults to career pathways. Describe how services will assist young adults from enrollment, to education, to entry into employment. Describe partnerships with employers or industry sectors to support career pathways. What strategies will be used to support youth with obtaining self-sufficient employment?
3. **Leadership Development:** Describe the leadership development aspect of the program. Highlight the opportunities for young adults to participate in community service, peer-centered activities, classroom development, and soft skills training. Describe how young adults will learn responsibility, positive social skills, and civic behavior.
4. **Work Based Learning:** Describe how the program will target funds for work based learning and how it will be incorporated into program design. Include types of work based learning to be offered to participants and how locations will be selected and monitored.
5. **Program Elements:** Briefly describe how and by whom each of the 14 elements will be provided to support career readiness. Indicate if they will be provided by the service provider, by referral, or in partnerships. Please identify agencies being used for referrals and partnerships.

6. Describe strategies of keeping youth/young adults engaged, use of incentives, and how follow-up may be conducted to support performance measures.
7. How will the Proposer ensure that applicants that cannot be served by the Proposer's program are referred to appropriate services elsewhere? Include how the Proposer will ensure all referrals are tracked.
8. Identify specific partnerships and collaborations in place, or those that are needed, to provide outreach and recruitment for out of school youth. Include strategies of how the provider will ensure expenditures reach 80% for out of school youth. Also include strategies that will integrate youth services into the career center flow and how the career center can support and contribute to youth services.
9. Describe strategies to be used to obtain feedback from youth, parents, community partners, employers, and schools to further improve the effectiveness of the WIOA services being offered.
10. Describe any other plans, partnerships, resources, tools, etc. that will expand the delivery of youth services to the proposed service area that will assist in reaching successful performance measures not already discussed or that may support the NCWorks system in general.

GENERAL PROVISIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

1. This RFP does not commit the HCWDB to award a grant.
2. Proposals must be submitted in the format set forth in the Proposal Format and Required Forms section of the RFP and adhere to the minimum requirements specified therein.
3. Formal notification to award a contract and the actual execution of a contract are subject to the following:
 - a. Receipt of WIOA funds granted;
 - b. Results of negotiations between selected service providers and HCWDB administrative staff; and
 - c. Continued availability of WIOA funds.
4. Any changes to the WIOA program, the NC WIOA Plan, or the HCWDB WIOA Plan, may result in changes to contracting and requirements. In such instances, the HCWDB will not be held liable for what is in the offeror's proposal or this RFP package.
5. Each offeror submitting a proposal will be notified in writing of the HCWDB decision concerning its proposal.
6. Proposals submitted for funding consideration and programs operated must be consistent with the federal WIOA legislation, all applicable federal regulations, the NC Division of Workforce Solutions policies and issuances, the HCWDB policies and procedures.
7. Offerors selected for funding must also ensure compliance with all applicable Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars.
8. HCWDB may require selected service providers to participate in negotiations and to rewrite their proposals as agreed upon during the negotiations.
9. Additional funds received by the HCWDB may be contracted by expanding existing programs and contracts, or by consideration of proposals not initially funded under this RFP, if such proposals were rated in the competitive range. These decisions shall be at the discretion of the HCWDB.
10. The HCWDB may decide not to fund part or all of a proposal even though it is found to be in the competitive range if, in the opinion of the HCWDB, the services proposed are not needed, or the costs are higher than the HCWDB finds reasonable in relation to the overall funds available, or if past management concerns lead the HCWDB to believe that the service provider has undertaken more services than it can successfully handle.
11. If through the negotiation process, it becomes evident that the proposed service provider may not be able to fulfill contract expectations, the HCWDB reserves the right not to enter into contract with the organization, regardless of HCWDB approval of the offeror's proposal.
12. The HCWDB is required to abide by all WIOA legislation and its subsequent regulations. Therefore, the HCWDB reserves the right to modify or alter the requirements and standards as set forth in this RFP based on program requirements mandated by state or federal agencies.
13. Service providers will be expected to adhere to HCWDB procedures to collect, verify and submit any required monthly or quarterly reports as well as monthly invoices to the HCWDB.
14. All grievances arising out of WIOA or this RFP must be filed according to HCWDB's established grievance procedures as specified in the RFP Appeals Policy.
15. All service providers must ensure equal opportunity to all individuals. No individual in the High Country Local Area shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or

subjected to discrimination under any WIOA-funded program or activity because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or political affiliation or belief.

16. Service providers must accept liability for all aspects of any WIOA program conducted under contract with the HCWDB. Service providers will be liable for any disallowed costs or illegal expenditures of funds or program operations conducted.
17. Reductions in the funding level of any contract resulting from this solicitation process may be considered during the contract period when a service provider fails to meet expenditure, participant, and/or outcome goals specified in the contract or when anticipated funding is not forthcoming from the federal or state governments.
18. Service providers will allow access to all WIOA records, program materials, staff, and participants to local, state, and federal representatives. In addition, service providers are required to maintain all WIOA records for five years from the last day of each program year.

RESPONSE PACKAGE COVER SHEET

2015-2016 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
NCWorks Career Center Operations;
Adult, Dislocated Worker and Business Services; Youth Services
High Country Local Area

Agency Name:
Street Address:
Mailing Address:
Contact Person(s):
Telephone Number(s):
Fax Number(s):
E-Mail:
Federal ID#:

The following proposal is hereby submitted in response to HCWDB WIOA-RFP to provide WIOA Title I(B) services to include NCWorks Career Center Operator; Adult, Dislocated Worker and Business Services; and Youth Services. Please indicate in the chart below which counties where you are proposing to provide the WIOA services.

County	Indicate by "Yes", for counties you are proposing to serve
Alleghany County	
Ashe County	
Avery County	
Mitchell County	
Watauga County	
Wilkes County	
Yancey County	

CERTIFICATION: I certify that the information contained in this proposal, fairly represents this entity and its operating plans and budget necessary to conduct the proposed WIOA Employment, Training and Services Program Activities described herein. I acknowledge that I have read and understand the requirements of the RFP and that this entity is prepared to implement the proposed activities as described herein. I further certify that I am authorized to sign this proposal and any contractual agreement emanating there from on behalf of the entity submitting the proposal.

_____/_____
(SIGNATURE and DATE of Signatory Official)

_____/_____
(Typed or Printed NAME and JOB TITLE of Signatory Official)

PROGRAM AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Instructions: Please complete the following section. Areas that address compliance issues must identify the appropriate member of the agency's staff who will be responsible for compliance. Add any comments you find necessary for clarification.

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)

Name of EEO Officer:
Position Title:
Phone number:

Internal Program Management and Monitoring Procedures

Staff Name:
Email:
Phone number:

Invoicing and Financial Reporting

Staff Name:
Email:
Phone number:

Requirements for Depository Accounts Holding WIOA Funds

Name of Institution(s):
Is this account interest bearing?

Property Management Requirements

Staff Name:
Email:
Phone number:

ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATION

As an agency requesting WIOA funding, we assure and certify that our agency will comply with the following provisions:

1. That it will exclusively use the statewide/regional brand name for the statewide/High Country workforce development system in lieu of traditional workforce development language and organizational names in the marketing and delivery of services and programs;
2. That it will consistently identify individual programs and activities in user-friendly terms, rather than bureaucratic lingo;
3. That it will designate appropriate job titles for staff who work with WIOA participants and detailed job descriptions will be available for each job title. These job titles will consistently be used with external customers;
4. That it will maintain customer files according to local area policies and guidance and adhere to data validation expectations;
5. That it will not place participants in WIOA-subsidized work settings which are designed to provide maintenance to the employers' place of business;
6. That it will fully comply with the requirements of the WIOA; all federal regulations issued pursuant to the Act; the North Carolina Strategic Plan; the High Country Strategic Plan; Chief Elected Official; HCWDB and High Country Workforce Development Area; and the NC Division of Workforce Solutions;
7. That it will administer the program in full compliance with safeguards against fraud and abuse as set forth in the law and regulations; that no portion of its program will in any way discriminate against, deny benefits or employment to, or exclude from participation any person on the grounds of race, color, national origin, religion, age, sex, disability, sexual orientation, or political affiliation, or any other non-relevant factor;
8. That it will house all WIOA service provider staff at the career center of each county to the greatest extent possible for which it receives a contract and will accept all associated workforce roles and responsibilities;
9. That it will operate the program in full compliance with health and safety standards established under state and federal law and that conditions of employment and training will be appropriate and reasonable in light of such factors as the type of work, geographical area, and proficiency of the participant;
10. That ineligible applicants will be referred to other appropriate services, including career services available at the career center;
11. That other resources will be exhausted prior to using WIOA funds;
12. That all participants employed by the program who are not covered under state workers' compensation laws and all participants enrolled in classroom training shall be provided with adequate on-site medical/accident insurance;
13. That all WIOA customers participating in on-the-job training activities or individuals employed in other activities under WIOA be compensated at the same rates, including periodic increases and working conditions, as trainees or employees who are similarly situated in similar occupations by the same employer and who have similar training, experience, and skills and such rates shall be accordance with applicable law. In no event shall the wage be less than the applicable state or local minimum wage law;

14. That no participant will be employed to fill a job opening when any other person is on layoff from same or equivalent job, or when employer terminates the employment of any regular employee or otherwise reduces its workforce with the intention of filling vacancies with WIOA participants.
15. That no WIOA funds will be used for contributions on behalf of any participant to retirement systems or plans; to impair existing contracts for services for collective bargaining agreements; to assist, promote, or deter union activities; or to displace any currently employed worker;
16. That reports to the HCWDB or its staff will be provided in a timely fashion, as requested;
17. That all customer information will be keyed into the client management information system, NCWorks, in accordance with state and local policy, both in terms of content and timeframe expectations;
18. That eligibility verification will be completed and documented in accordance with federal, state, and local policy;
19. That participant loans will not be made from WIOA funds;
20. That total project costs will not exceed the amount agreed upon during contract negotiations and included in contracts;
21. That it will coordinate training site visits by the HCWDB staff and HCWDB members on request and will fully cooperate with monitoring reviews and other site visits by any representative of the WIOA;
22. That it will, in carrying out the contract, refrain from activities involving either actual or the appearance of conflict of interest according to NC General Statutes and HCWDB's Conflict of Interest Policy;
23. That it will adhere to the North Carolina records retention policy and all WIOA financial and programmatic records (including customer files) will be maintained by each service provider for a minimum of five years from the date the program year audit is completed.
24. That it will have an annual single audit performed in accordance with current federal regulations and that upon receipt of completed audit, contractor will submit a copy to the HCWDB within thirty days (30) unless a longer period is agreed to;
25. That it will comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (PL 88-352);
26. That it will comply with the nepotism provisions as they relate to federally funded programs;
27. That it will comply with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 by completing and maintaining on file an I-9 form for each participant receiving WIOA wages;
28. That it will comply with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act of 1970 (PL 91-646) which requires fair and equitable treatment of persons displaced as a result of federally assisted programs;
29. That the organization is not debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, or declared ineligible from participation in this project;
30. That it does not use federal funds for lobbying purposes. If lobbying has occurred utilizing funds other than federal funds, the contractor agrees to file a disclosure report, if applicable;
31. For grants, contracts, and subcontracts in excess of \$100,000, or where the NC Department of Commerce Division of Workforce Solutions has determined that orders under an indefinite quantity agreement in any year will exceed \$100,000, or if a facility to be used has been the subject of a conviction under the Clean Air Act (42 USC 1319 (c)) and is listed by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) or is not otherwise exempt, the operator assures that (1) no facility to be utilized in the performance of the proposed grant is on the

EPA List of Violating Facilities; and (2) prior to award, it will notify the Division of the receipt of any communication from the Director of Federal Activities, USEPA, indicating that a facility to be used for a contract is under consideration to be listed.

32. That no funds will be used to develop or implement education curricula for school systems in the state as referenced in;
33. That no WIOA funding will be used for sectarian activities and that employees paid from WIOA funds will not participate in sectarian religious activities in the execution of their job duties;
34. That no WIOA funds will be used to encourage or induce the relocation of a business;
35. That no WIOA funds will be used for customized or skill training and related activities after the relocation of a business until after 120 days;
36. That no WIOA funds will be used for foreign travel;
37. That no WIOA funds will be used to duplicate services available in the area;
38. That participants will not be charged fees for placements or referrals;
39. That no WIOA financial assistance will be provided to any program that involves political activities and the contractor agrees to comply with the provisions of the Hatch Act which limits the political activity of certain state and local government employees and enrollees in federally funded programs;
40. That all WIOA participants and WIOA funded staff are aware of grievance procedures and the Contractor assures and certifies that the Contractor has in place an established grievance procedure to be utilized for grievances or complaints about its program and activities from participants/enrollees, sub-grantees, and subcontractors and other interested parties.
41. The Contractor will comply with NC-General Statutes, which prohibits public officials and employees from having a personal interest in any contract to which s/he is also a party in an official capacity.
42. The Contractor assures and certifies that it, and all of its subcontractors, will comply with applicable provisions of the following laws as they relate to employment and training procedures:

The Drug Free Workplace Act	The Davis-Bacon Act
The Immigration Reform Act	Child Labor Laws
The American's with Disabilities Act	The Fair Labor Standards Act

This is to certify that all specifications contained in the HCWDB's RFP have been read, understood, and addressed in the proposal; that the required format has been followed; that all of the information contained in this proposal is true and correct; that the Contractor organization will comply with all of the above assurances; and that this proposal has been duly authorized by the governing body of the Contractor organization.

Signature of Authorized Representative

Date

Name

Title

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

I hereby certify:

1. That the proposer is duly approved to submit this application requesting funding under the WIOA.
2. That the proposer does hereby agree to execute all work related to this application in accordance with the WIOA grant, the NC Division of Workforce Solution policies, HCWDB policies and guidelines, and other administrative requirements issued by the Governor of North Carolina. The vendor shall notify the HCWDB within 30 calendar days after issuance of any amended directives if it cannot so comply with the amendments; and
3. That the proposer will ensure special efforts to prevent fraud and other program abuses, such as but not limited to, deceitful practices, intentional misconduct, willful misrepresentation and improper conduct which may or may not be fraudulent in nature; and
4. That the contents of the application are truthful and accurate and the above named vendor agrees to comply with the policies stated in this application; and
5. That this application represents a firm request subject only to mutually agreeable negotiations; and
6. That the proposer is in agreement that the HCWDB reserves the right to accept or reject any proposal for funding; and
7. That the proposer has not been debarred or suspended from receiving federal grants, contracts, or assistance; and that if awarded a contract for the service, assures that no sub-contracts, grants or assistance will be made, or permitted to any debarred or suspended organization as provided under Executive Order 12549.

Organization (proposer)

Authorized Representative Signature

Typed Name/Title

Notary Name/Date

Affix Notary Seal

CERTIFICATE REGARDING DEBARMENT, SUSPENSION, INELIGIBILITY and VOLUNTARY EXCLUSION

Lower Tier Covered Transactions

This certification is required by the regulations implementing Executive Order 12549, Debarment and Suspension, 29 CFR Part 98, Section 98.510, Participants' Responsibilities. The regulations were published as Part VII of the May 26, 1988 Federal Register (Pages 19160-19211).

(BEFORE COMPLETING THE CERTIFICATION, READ THE ATTACHED INSTRUCTIONS WHICH ARE AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE CERTIFICATION)

1. The prospective recipient of federal assistance funds certifies, by submission of this proposal, that neither it nor its principals are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any federal department or agency.
2. Where the prospective recipient of federal assistance funds is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, such prospective participant shall attach an explanation to this proposal.

Contractor Organization:

Name and Title of Authorized Representative

Signature

Date

CERTIFICATION REGARDING DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE REQUIREMENTS

- A. The grantee certifies that it will or will continue to provide a drug-free workplace by the following:
- (a) Publishing a statement notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the grantee's workplace and specifying the actions that will be taken against employees for violation of such prohibition;
 - (b) Establishing an ongoing drug-free awareness program to inform employees about
 - (1) The dangers of drug abuse in the workplace;
 - (2) The grantee's policy of maintaining a drug-free workplace;
 - (3) Any available drug counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs; and
 - (4) The penalties that may be imposed upon employees for drug abuse violations occurring in the workplace;
 - (c) Making it a requirement that each employee to be engaged in the performance of the grant be given a copy of the statement required by paragraph (a);
 - (d) Notifying the employee in the statement required by paragraph (a) that, as a condition of employment under the grant, the employee will - -
 - (1) Abide by the terms of the statement; and
 - (2) Notify the employer in writing of his or her conviction for a violation of a criminal drug statute occurring in the workplace no later than five calendar days after such conviction;
 - (e) Notifying the agency in writing, within ten calendar days after receiving notice under paragraph (d)(2) from an employee or otherwise receiving actual notice of such conviction. Employers of convicted employees must provide notice, including position title, to every grant officer or other designee on whose grant activity the convicted employee was working, unless the Federal agency has designated a central point for the receipt of such notices. Notice shall include the identification number(s) of each affected grant;
 - (f) Taking one of the following actions, within 30 calendar days of receiving notice under paragraph (d)(2), with respect to any employee who is so convicted - -
 - (1) Taking appropriate personnel action against such an employee, up to and including termination, consistent with the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; or

- (2) Requiring such employee to participate satisfactorily in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by a Federal, State, or local health, law enforcement, or other appropriate agency;

(g) Making a good faith effort to continue to maintain a drug-free workplace through implementation of paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), and (f).

B. The grantee may insert in the space provided below the site(s) for the performance of work done in connection with the specific grant:

Place(s) of Performance (street address, city, county, state, zip code):

Check [] if there are workplaces on file that are not identified here.

Agency

Signature of Signatory Authority

Date

Signatory Title

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CERTIFICATION-LOWER TIER TRANSACTIONS

- By signing and submitting this proposal, the prospective recipient of federal assistance funds is providing the certification as set out below.
- The certification in this clause is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was entered into. If it is later determined that the prospective recipient of federal assistance funds knowingly rendered an erroneous certification, in addition to other remedies available to the federal government, the Department of Labor (DOL) may pursue available remedies, including suspension and/or debarment.
- The prospective recipient of federal assistance funds shall provide immediate written notice to the person to whom this proposal is submitted if at any time the prospective recipient of Federal assistance funds learns that its certification was erroneous when submitted or has become erroneous by reason of changed circumstances.
- The terms “covered transaction,” “debarred,” “suspended,” “ineligible,” “lower tier covered transaction,” “participant,” “person,” “primary covered transaction,” “principal,” “proposal,” and “voluntarily excluded,” as used in this clause, have the meanings set out in the Definitions and Coverage sections of rules implementing Executive Order 12549. You may contact the person to which this proposal is submitted for assistance in obtaining a copy of those regulations.
- The prospective recipient of federal assistance funds agrees by submitting this proposal that, should the proposed covered transaction be entered into, it shall not knowingly enter into any lower tier covered transaction with a person who is debarred, suspended, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this covered transaction, unless authorized by the DOL.
- The prospective recipient of federal assistance funds further agrees by submitting this proposal that it will include the clause titled “Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion - Lower Tier covered Transactions,” without modification, in all lower tier covered transactions and in all solicitations for lower tier covered transactions.
- A participant in a covered transaction may rely upon a certification of a prospective participant in a lower tier covered transaction that it is not debarred, suspended, or voluntarily excluded from the covered transaction, unless it knows that the certification is erroneous. A participant may decide the method and frequency by which it determines the eligibility of its principals. Each participant may, but is not required to check the List of parties Excluded from Procurement or Non-procurement Programs.
- Nothing contained in the foregoing shall be construed to require establishment of a system of records in order to render, in good faith, the certification required by this clause. The knowledge and information of a participant is not required to exceed that which is normally possessed by a prudent person in the ordinary course of business dealings.
- Except for transactions authorized under paragraph 5 of these instructions, if a participant in a covered transaction knowingly enters into a lower tier covered transaction with a person who is suspended, debarred, ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction, in addition to other remedies available to the federal government, the DOL may pursue available remedies, including suspension and/or debarment.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Using this format, complete a separate Job Description for each Position/Job Classification that will provide WIOA services under the terms of this agreement, whether funded in full, in part, or not at all, with WIOA funds from this program. Please identify the following:

1. Job Title and Program
2. Describe actual job duties or tasks to be performed in relation to the above named WIOA program and job title (or attach job description).
3. Minimum education, experience, and qualifications of the person to perform the above job duties.
4. What is the anticipated amount of time this staff person will provide WIOA-funded services:
 - a. _____ hours per day
 - b. _____ hours per week
 - c. _____ office location
5. What is the anticipated amount of time this staff person will provide WIOA-funded services:
 - a. _____ Adult
 - b. _____ Dislocated Workers
 - c. _____ Business Services
 - d. _____ Youth
 - e. _____ Career Center Operator
6. Name of Immediate Supervisor: (If position needs to be filled, indicate this.)
7. Will the staff person(s) assigned to this position work in other sections/departments with the agency? If so, please describe.