



Meeting Agenda

Thursday, March 12, 2015 3:00 pm

High Country Council of Governments

Call to Order

Approval of Minutes: December Board Meeting

New Board Members Appointments (and Oath of Office)

Kory Wilcox - GE Aviation

Bernice Wilson - BRP US, Inc.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and [NCWorks Commission Strategic Plan](#) - Update

Charting Performance - a look at our system

Request for Proposals - Overview of process and document specifications

Update from the Field

Pam Wilson - WIA Director (Avery, Mitchell, Yancey) - Collaboration with Yancey Public Schools

Director's Report - Adrian Tait

Public Comment Period

Announcements

Adjournment

The next meeting of the High Country Workforce Development Board will be **Thursday, May 14, 2015.**

High Country Workforce Development Board Meeting Minutes

December 11, 2014

Members Present: Jason Carlton, Kim Cashatt, Kim Davis, Jennie Harpold, Rhonda Herman, Trasa Jones, Dan Little, Sam Ray, Stacy Sears, Dwight Simmons, Robert Ware, and Sallie Woodring

Staff Present: Misty Bishop-Price, Rebecca Bloomquist, Don Sherrill, and Adrian Tait

Guests: Kim Bell, Jane Blackburn, Dawn Boyer, Monica Caruso, Will Collins, John Greene, Marty Hemric, Anita Lowe, Bill Moretz, Ginger Shaffer, Betty Silver, Chris Silvers, Lynette Taylor, Pam Wilson, and Debbie Woodard

Call to Order: Chairwoman Rhonda Herman

Approval of September Minutes: Motion for approval was made by Jason Carlton and seconded by Trasa Jones.

New Board Member Oaths of Office: Kory Wilcox and Bernice Wilson did not attend the meeting; therefore, Oaths of Office will be administered at the next meeting.

Committee Reports

Executive Committee: Rhonda Herman, Chair

- Discussion of holding convening and/or supporting key industry sectors
 - Convening meetings for health care and hospitality and tourism.
 - Supporting the Business, Education, & Industry Forum (Wilkes) and supporting the Mayland Manufacturer's Association.
- Request for Proposals for Program Year 2015
 - Structuring RFP to foster competition.
 - Moving from WIA services to total career center operations management.
 - Rethinking business services (in-house department or contracted services).

Employer Services Committee: Trasa Jones, Chair

- 1000 in 100 Initiative – Governor McCrory's statewide initiative to visit 1000 businesses across the 100 North Carolina counties in 100 days (September through December 2014). These visits follow an interview format to find out from employers about their workforce needs and are conducted by a visitation team led by the HCWDB Director or a community college representative (other members have included career center staff, K-12 schools, economic development, and chambers of commerce). Key learnings from these visits include the following:
 - Employers do not know about the NCWorks system and are interested in the many services available.
 - Soft skills are common needs.

- Most employers expressed concerns about applicant/employee lack of interest in working saying it appeared to them that people would rather receive public assistance than work a full-time job.
- Manufacturing companies consistently cited a lack of interest in manufacturing jobs with the younger workforce.
- Companies that use NCWorks to list jobs indicated difficulty when searching for applicants stating that NCWorks.gov can be overwhelming.
- Many had used the community college system for training and were pleased with the assistance they received.
- Numerous examples of demand for trainings that the colleges could develop included hospitality management, commercial driving licensure, and others.
- NCWorks Certified Work Ready Communities
 - The NC Chamber Foundation, in partnership with the NC Department of Public Instruction, NC Community College system, NCWorks Career Center, and Workforce Development Boards has launched the initiative.
 - Leverages strong history with the National Career Readiness Certificate and asks communities to engage with employers in their recognition and/or usage of the CRC.
 - Wilkes County first in High Country region to apply for certification.
 - Mitchell, Watauga, and Yancey counties are planning to apply in March of 2015.
 - www.workreadycommunities.org
- Incumbent Worker Grant Award
 - VPC Builders of Boone has been awarded a \$9,945 training grant.
 - Employee training will focus on gaining skills in energy efficient construction and home performance auditing.
- Regional Economic Development Meeting (committee goal)
 - The HCWDB and the High Country Council of Governments are working to determine dates for a winter meeting to include town and county managers, county economic developers, grant-making organizations, and others.
 - Several workforce initiatives will be featured.

NCWorks Committee: Dwight Simmons, Chair

- Performance Reports
 - Staff are drafting updated reports that will provide data on center traffic, types of services being delivered, and will have the next revision in January 2015.
- Job Seeker Brochure
 - HCWDB staff have been working closely with the NC Association of WDBs and the Division of Workforce Solutions (DWS) to create new marketing material for centers across the state.
 - The final product of the brochure will be distributed in early January 2015 to local centers.

- A similar employer services brochure is being finalized based on feedback from HCWDB committees and is anticipated to be available in January 2015.
- New Staff in Alleghany and Ashe Centers
 - Interviews will begin for these two full-time positions in January 2015.
 - Additional staff will allow increased hours of operation and additional services to job seekers and employers in these two counties.
- NCWorks Career Center Certification – Level 2
 - NC Commission on Workforce Development recently approved certification criteria for centers unable to meet the certification criteria for Level 1 status (for example operating with reduced hours, staff, or programs).
 - DWS will be releasing the applications for Level 2 certification this month.
 - Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Mitchell, and Yancey counties will be eligible to apply.
 - It is anticipated centers will become certified within the next few months.
- Presentation of NCWorks Career Center Level 1 Certifications
 - Watauga and Wilkes centers were both presented their respective Level 1 Certifications. Both centers will now be known as NCWorks Career Centers.

Youth Council: Sallie Woodring, Chair

- Regional School Engagement
 - Plans underway to convene a Winter Career Pathways meeting to allow area schools to share best practices and discuss a regional approach to the Grade 8 Career Education initiative and the dropout prevention program implemented by Avery County Schools.
 - Invitees include superintendents, career and technical education directors, career development coordinators, career center staff, community colleges, and regional directors from the NC Department of Instruction.
 - Dates and final list of attendees still being determined.
- Youth Branding
 - Phasing out of current “Get REAL” youth brand to bring youth services in alignment with the NCWorks branding effort.
 - Revision of youth marketing materials to begin in January.
 - Materials for youth to be coordinated with other career center materials.
 - Participating in this effort with other workforce boards.

Presentation: Will Collins, Executive Director of NCWorks and NC Division of Workforce Solutions

Will Collins, the Executive Director of NC Works and the NC Division of Workforce Solutions gave a short presentation updating the Board on happenings within the NCWorks System from a statewide perspective.

- Secretary Sharon Decker is leaving the NC Department of Commerce at the end of December 2014, and Mr. John Skvarla will become the new Secretary of Commerce in January. Mr. Skvarla, who has a business background and is an attorney, is transitioning from NC Department of Natural Resources.
- Integrated Service Delivery (ISD) has been implemented in Career Centers across the state. ISD is difficult, but it is working. By design, it's meant to be a challenge so there's a chance for improvement.
- Statewide numbers from NCWorks.gov are growing. Currently, there are 521,000 job seekers registered and more than 5,000 employers registered. The NCWorks.gov website is averaging five million page hits every week.
- Currently there is a \$50 fee for NC Apprenticeship Program. The NC Community College system has pledged \$3,000 to help cover that fee for Apprenticeship students across the state.
- Career Pathways will be a part of the implementation of the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA).
- The National Governor's Association chose North Carolina as one (1) of fourteen (14) states to participate in a Policy Academy that blends education to workforce.
- Mr. Collins is collaborating with Dr. Pat Mitchell at the Rural Center to find ways to address the challenges that are particular to rural areas relating to workforce development.
- Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) will have significant impacts on how DWS works. WIOA complements NCWorks very well.
- 1000 in 100 Initiative: currently 905 employers have been registered in the database that is being used to track feedback from these visits. It is expected the goal of 1000 will be met.

Presentation: Custom Solutions for Employers – Betty Silver, Regional Director with NC Community College Customized Training (Power Point presentation available upon request)

Betty Silver, the Regional Director of NC Community College Customized Training gave a short presentation about the GE Aviation Expansion in North Carolina. Ms. Silver's regional area covers thirty-three (33) counties and eleven (11) community colleges.

- GE Aviation has four (4) locations across North Carolina: Asheville, Durham, West Jefferson, and Wilmington.
 - A total of 270 jobs will be added across the state.
 - NC Community College System's commitment is \$3.3 million.
- West Jefferson is going from five (5) to thirty-four (34) processes and expecting to bring their workforce up to 272 employees by 2017.
- NCWorks Customized Training Process used when assisting employers:
 - Discovery of Project
 - Identification of Timeline

- Design and Development of Comprehensive Training Plan
- Delivery of Pre-Employment Training
- Delivery of Post-Employment Training
- On-going Support
- NCWorks Career Center assists the process through the following:
 - Recruitment
 - Screening (Assessment)
 - Training (Pre-hire, Post-hire, and Incumbent)
- Human Capital Outreach Team for GE had four (4) components:
 - Community Awareness – attended meetings, spoke on radio shows, sponsored an Ashe Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours
 - Recruitment – worked with the new GE Training Center staff and created prep classes for candidates
 - Training Facility – worked on the new GE Training Center to be located adjacent to the manufacturing facility
 - Training – created the pre-hire class that is to begin in February
- Candidates go through a multi-step process which includes applicant preparation at the Career Center then pre- and post-hire training as well as a selection process.
- GE Hiring Event scheduled for December 18, 2014 from 1:00pm to 7:00pm at the Ashe Campus of Wilkes Community College. It's anticipated there will be more than 300 people attending.
 - In the first ten (10) days after jobs were posted there were seventy-eight (78) applicants. The goal is attract 150 applicants by January.

Recommendations for Office Renovations

HCWDB Director provided a brief update about the potential for updating and modifying the Career Centers in Avery and Yancey counties.

Director's Report

Please see attached document for the detailed report.

December 2014 Workforce Development Director's Update

Continued Technology Improvements

Two new software tools will go into place in December and January.

Customer Relations Management Tool

This tool will allow multi-agency teams from across the state to better coordinate employer outreach and service delivery. The NC Division of Workforce Solutions, Community College System and Association of Workforce Development Boards have partnered to purchase this module which integrates into NCWorks Online. Training begins mid December with full release to key partners in January. We are inviting Economic Developers, Chambers of Commerce, Small Business Centers, Vocational Rehabilitation Employer Reps, and others to participate as users.

Futureworks Performance Dashboard

Beginning in January our board will have a subscription to PM Preview, a dashboard that shows a detailed view of Workforce Investment Act services. In the past our quarterly reports have only been available at a regional level, this service will allow us to look all the way down to individual offices and staff. PM Preview utilizes the Performance Matters data warehouse and application framework. The PM Preview application is built just for our agency, with only your WIA data and includes the following features and services.

- Secured Web application *specific to your state*, requires only a Web browser (IE) and an Internet connection.
- Single click Excel exporting
- Create a personal library of saved reports
- Share reports across the *your* user community
- Ad hoc report building, including custom charts and calculations using built in math and statistical formulas.
- Customize report formats
- Print options
- Comprehensive Support Center
- How-to Videos
- Participants Rosters (single admin level user only)
- WIOA performance metrics upgrade
- Access to PMQ application to explore national public WIA data released by USDOL
- Check out <http://www.futureworksystems.com/>

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

- Planning meetings for implementing this new law have begun.
- Draft regulations to be released January 2015
- Services to employers are now explicitly required
- Changes to board makeup - to be confirmed by Local Workforce Consortium
- Requires planning and coordination across broad regions - multiple workforce boards
- Unified State Plans that include multiple agencies delivering workforce services

Acknowledgements

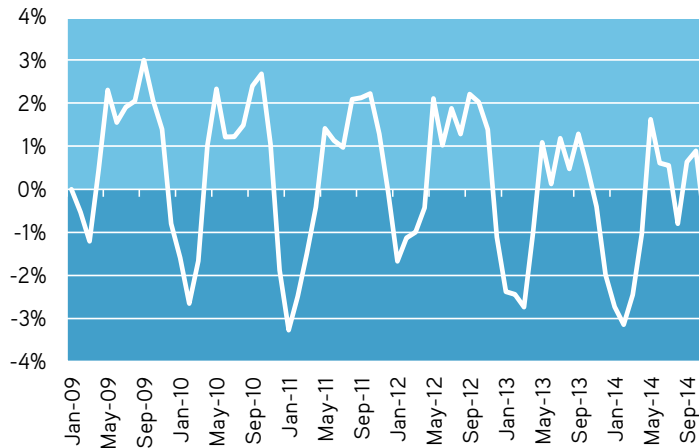
Congratulations and best of luck to Division of Workforce Solutions Regional Manager, Robert Ware. Robert is retiring this month after more than 30 years of service helping people connect with jobs. Congratulations to board chair Rhonda Herman on her promotion to President at McFarland Publishing. We wish her the best in this new role.

LABOR MARKET OVERVIEW

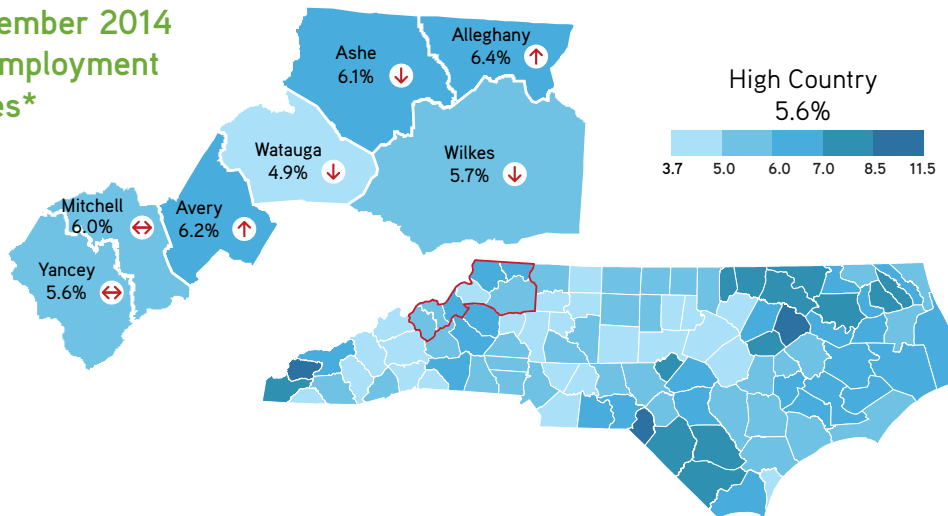
Regional Labor Market Snapshot

5-Year
Percent Change
in Employment*

High Country Region



November 2014
Unemployment
Rates*



Employment & Wages by Supersector 2nd Quarter 2014

Supersector	Establishments	Avg. Employment	Avg. Weekly Wage
Natural Resources & Mining	152	1,127	\$717.00
Construction	660	3,059	\$663.00
Manufacturing	198	6,994	\$662.00
Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	1,272	13,301	\$529.00
Information	79	641	\$694.00
Financial Activities	462	2,107	\$749.00
Professional & Business Services	662	6,469	\$723.00
Education & Health Services	593	18,337	\$717.00
Leisure & Hospitality Services	560	9,687	\$286.00
Other Services	408	1,842	\$412.00
Public Administration	117	4,631	\$626.00

Note: All data produced in this publication are generated by LEAD unless otherwise stated.

*November 2014 data are preliminary, while other 2014 data are revised. All other reported data have undergone annual revision.

Trending

UNEMPLOYMENT*

November 2014

High Country Total = 4,939



High Country 5.6%



North Carolina 5.3%



United States 5.5%

REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT*

High Country Total = 82,939

1,477 Fewer People Working
in November than previous month

394 Fewer People Working
than same period one year ago

CLAIMS-TAKING ACTIVITY

Initial Claims Total = 424

30% Increase in Claims
in November over previous month

Benefits Paid Total = \$306,493

5% Decrease in Payments
in November over previous month

Duration of Claims Down 1% to 13.7
in November over the previous month

INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING BENEFITS

High Country Total = 421

10% Increase in Claimants
in November over previous month

AVAILABLE JOBS

2,548 Jobs Posted Online
over past 90 days

47 More Job Openings
than same period one year ago

Source: The Conference Board Help Wanted Online

LABOR MARKET OVERVIEW

High Country Workforce Development Board

Civilian Labor Force Estimates*

		November 2014	October 2014	September 2014	November 2013
Alleghany	Labor Force	4,064	4,163	4,172	4,202
	Employed	3,805	3,918	3,906	3,882
	Unemployed	259	245	266	320
	Rate	6.4	5.9	6.4	7.6
Ashe	Labor Force	11,226	11,133	11,233	11,573
	Employed	10,542	10,436	10,463	10,603
	Unemployed	684	697	770	970
	Rate	6.1	6.3	6.9	8.4
Avery	Labor Force	7,234	7,592	7,565	7,536
	Employed	6,789	7,160	7,095	6,937
	Unemployed	445	432	470	599
	Rate	6.2	5.7	6.2	7.9
Mitchell	Labor Force	6,579	6,715	6,741	6,827
	Employed	6,181	6,315	6,289	6,234
	Unemployed	398	400	452	593
	Rate	6.0	6.0	6.7	8.7
Watauga	Labor Force	23,629	24,364	24,485	23,642
	Employed	22,473	23,151	23,178	22,259
	Unemployed	1,156	1,213	1,307	1,383
	Rate	4.9	5.0	5.3	5.8
Wilkes	Labor Force	27,910	28,083	28,093	28,812
	Employed	26,318	26,398	26,221	26,537
	Unemployed	1,592	1,685	1,872	2,275
	Rate	5.7	6.0	6.7	7.9
Yancey	Labor Force	7,236	7,456	7,521	7,484
	Employed	6,831	7,038	7,053	6,881
	Unemployed	405	418	468	603
	Rate	5.6	5.6	6.2	8.1

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Initial Claims

	November 2014	November 2013
Alleghany	35	24
Ashe	66	74
Avery	54	71
Mitchell	63	86
Watauga	52	84
Wilkes	106	186
Yancey	48	81

Duration of Benefits

	November 2014	November 2013
Alleghany	12.3	14.6
Ashe	14.3	17.1
Avery	13.0	16.7
Mitchell	13.8	16.6
Watauga	13.5	17.4
Wilkes	13.6	16.2
Yancey	14.7	15.5

Individuals Receiving Benefits

	November 2014	November 2013
Alleghany	34	42
Ashe	73	138
Avery	61	100
Mitchell	36	78
Watauga	68	124
Wilkes	115	360
Yancey	34	71

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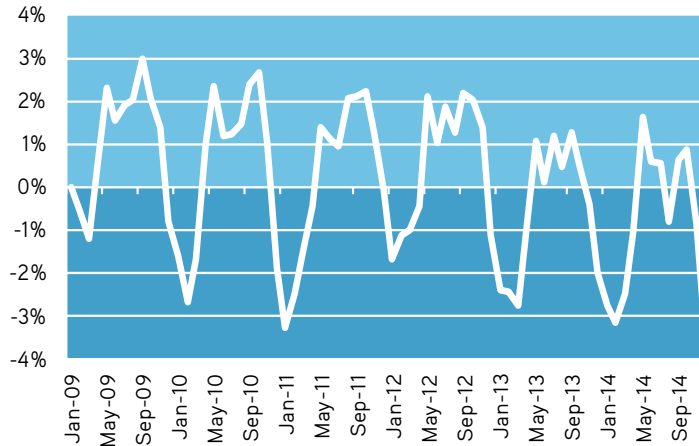


LABOR MARKET OVERVIEW

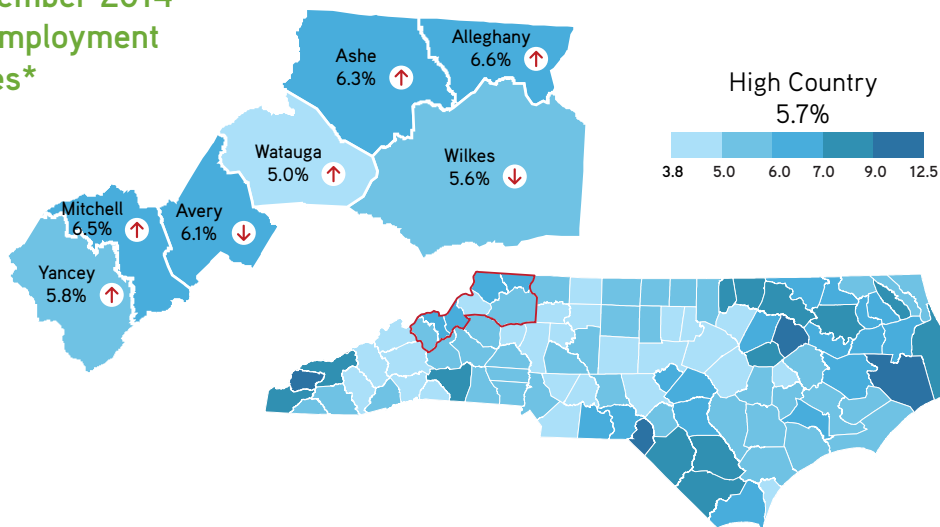
Regional Labor Market Snapshot

5-Year Percent Change in Employment*

High Country Region



December 2014 Unemployment Rates*



Trending

UNEMPLOYMENT*

December 2014

High Country Total = 4,908



High Country 5.7%



North Carolina 5.2%



United States 5.4%

REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT*

High Country Total = 80,957

2,019 Fewer People Working in December than previous month

1,053 Fewer People Working than same period one year ago

CLAIMS-TAKING ACTIVITY

Initial Claims Total = 497

17% Increase in Claims in December over previous month

Benefits Paid Total = \$405,913

32% Increase in Payments in December over previous month

Duration of Claims Down 5% to 13.0 in December over the previous month

INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING BENEFITS

High Country Total = 551

31% Increase in Claimants in December over previous month

AVAILABLE JOBS

2,395 Jobs Posted Online over past 90 days

17 More Job Openings than same period one year ago

Who's Hiring

past 90 days from Jan. 30, 2015

Appalachian Healthcare System	77
Lowe's	70
Watauga Medical Center	46
Tyson Foods	42
Mission Hospital	31
Appalachian Regional Healthcare	28
Wells Fargo	25
Watauga County Schools	25

What Jobs

past 90 days from Jan. 30, 2015

Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	277
Registered Nurses	101
Customer Service Representatives	69
First-Line Supervisors, Retail Sales	59
Insurance Sales Agents	41
Retail Salespersons	40
First-Line Supervisors, Food Prep.	38
Merch. Displayers & Window Trimmers	37

Source: The Conference Board Help Wanted Online

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Source: The Conference Board Help Wanted Online

LABOR MARKET OVERVIEW

High Country Workforce Development Board

Civilian Labor Force Estimates*

		December 2014	November 2014	October 2014	December 2013
Alleghany	Labor Force	3,891	4,066	4,163	4,115
	Employed	3,635	3,806	3,918	3,815
	Unemployed	256	260	245	300
	Rate	6.6	6.4	5.9	7.3
Ashe	Labor Force	10,724	11,232	11,133	11,139
	Employed	10,045	10,546	10,436	10,202
	Unemployed	679	686	697	937
	Rate	6.3	6.1	6.3	8.4
Avery	Labor Force	7,104	7,239	7,592	7,515
	Employed	6,673	6,792	7,160	6,942
	Unemployed	431	447	432	573
	Rate	6.1	6.2	5.7	7.6
Mitchell	Labor Force	6,443	6,584	6,715	6,703
	Employed	6,022	6,184	6,315	6,128
	Unemployed	421	400	400	575
	Rate	6.5	6.1	6.0	8.6
Watauga	Labor Force	23,405	23,629	24,364	23,269
	Employed	22,229	22,482	23,151	21,945
	Unemployed	1,176	1,147	1,213	1,324
	Rate	5.0	4.9	5.0	5.7
Wilkes	Labor Force	27,231	27,924	28,083	28,325
	Employed	25,698	26,331	26,398	26,185
	Unemployed	1,533	1,593	1,685	2,140
	Rate	5.6	5.7	6.0	7.6
Yancey	Labor Force	7,067	7,243	7,456	7,370
	Employed	6,655	6,835	7,038	6,793
	Unemployed	412	408	418	577
	Rate	5.8	5.6	5.6	7.8

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Initial Claims

	December 2014	December 2013
Alleghany	33	38
Ashe	100	148
Avery	37	61
Mitchell	57	86
Watauga	52	102
Wilkes	179	263
Yancey	39	73

Duration of Benefits

	December 2014	December 2013
Alleghany	11.8	15.5
Ashe	13.8	18.2
Avery	12.8	17.0
Mitchell	12.7	16.9
Watauga	13.2	18.3
Wilkes	12.7	17.4
Yancey	13.7	16.5

Individuals Receiving Benefits

	December 2014	December 2013
Alleghany	34	56
Ashe	102	180
Avery	77	116
Mitchell	81	104
Watauga	76	146
Wilkes	127	345
Yancey	54	85

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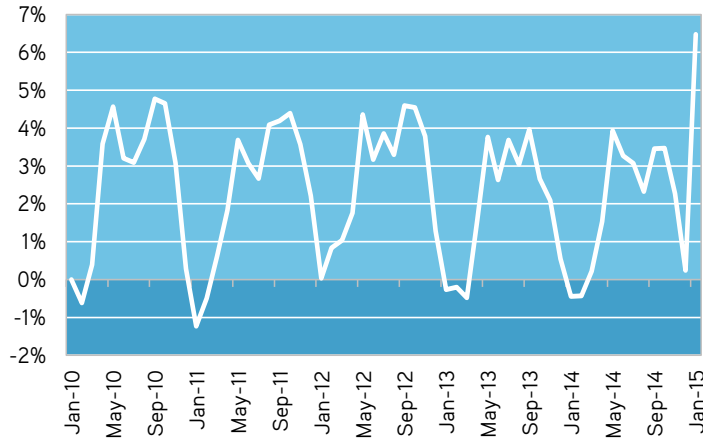


LABOR MARKET OVERVIEW

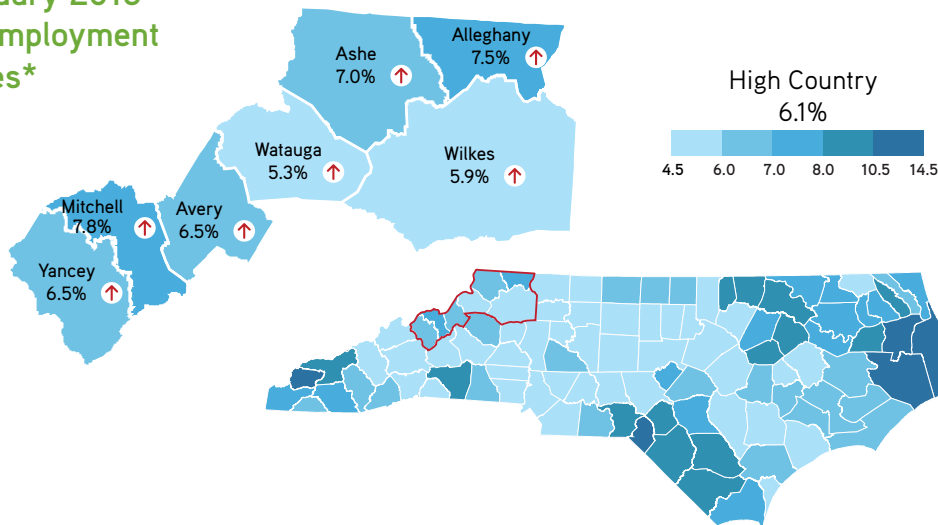
Regional Labor Market Snapshot

5-Year Percent Change in Employment*

High Country Region



January 2015 Unemployment Rates*



Community Investment Report Top Announced Projects 2014 Annual Data

County	Company	Announced Jobs
Wilkes	Interflex Group	63
Mitchell	Buck Stove Corp	50
Wilkes	PSG Custom Fabrications, LLC	40

Who's Hiring

past 90 days from March 10, 2015

- Lowe's 74
- Appalachian Healthcare System 69

What Jobs

past 90 days from March 10, 2015

- Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers 268
- Registered Nurses 108

Source: The Conference Board Help Wanted Online

Source: The Conference Board Help Wanted Online

Note: All data produced in this publication are generated by LEAD unless otherwise stated.

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Trending

UNEMPLOYMENT*

January 2015

High Country Total = 5,678



High Country 6.1%



North Carolina 5.9%



United States 6.1%

REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT*

High Country Total = 86,797

5,080 More People Working in January than previous month

5,639 More People Working than same period one year ago

CLAIMS-TAKING ACTIVITY

Initial Claims Total = 524

5% Increase in Claims

in January over previous month

Benefits Paid Total = \$448,743

11% Increase in Claims

in January over previous month

Duration of Claims Down >-0.1% to 13 in January over the previous month

INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING BENEFITS

High Country Total = 739

34% Increase in Claimants

in January over previous month

AVAILABLE JOBS

2,559 Jobs Posted Online over past 90 days

108 More Job Openings than same period one year ago

Source: The Conference Board Help Wanted Online

LABOR MARKET OVERVIEW

High Country Workforce Development Board

Civilian Labor Force Estimates*

		January 2015	December 2014	November 2014	January 2014
Alleghany	Labor Force	4,281	3,917	4,086	4,061
	Employed	3,962	3,669	3,824	3,712
	Unemployed	319	248	262	349
	Rate	7.5	6.3	6.4	8.6
Ashe	Labor Force	11,950	10,797	11,286	11,014
	Employed	11,116	10,139	10,596	9,984
	Unemployed	834	658	690	1,030
	Rate	7.0	6.1	6.1	9.4
Avery	Labor Force	7,494	7,154	7,274	7,558
	Employed	7,009	6,736	6,824	6,937
	Unemployed	485	418	450	621
	Rate	6.5	5.8	6.2	8.2
Mitchell	Labor Force	6,293	6,487	6,615	6,643
	Employed	5,805	6,079	6,213	6,018
	Unemployed	488	408	402	625
	Rate	7.8	6.3	6.1	9.4
Watauga	Labor Force	26,333	23,578	23,743	22,985
	Employed	24,926	22,438	22,589	21,543
	Unemployed	1,407	1,140	1,154	1,442
	Rate	5.3	4.8	4.9	6.3
Wilkes	Labor Force	29,008	27,426	28,058	28,393
	Employed	27,295	25,939	26,456	26,208
	Unemployed	1,713	1,487	1,602	2,185
	Rate	5.9	5.4	5.7	7.7
Yancey	Labor Force	7,231	7,117	7,278	7,365
	Employed	6,761	6,717	6,868	6,756
	Unemployed	470	400	410	609
	Rate	6.5	5.6	5.6	8.3

*January 2015 data are preliminary, while all other data have undergone annual revision.

Initial Claims

	January 2015	January 2014
Alleghany	46	67
Ashe	96	179
Avery	56	73
Mitchell	50	84
Watauga	92	127
Wilkes	137	203
Yancey	47	59

Duration of Benefits

	January 2015	January 2014
Alleghany	12.2	17.1
Ashe	13.7	19.6
Avery	13.1	17.7
Mitchell	12.9	18.0
Watauga	12.9	18.1
Wilkes	12.4	18.5
Yancey	14.3	20.0

Individuals Receiving Benefits

	January 2015	January 2014
Alleghany	49	96
Ashe	152	241
Avery	85	158
Mitchell	100	160
Watauga	96	179
Wilkes	190	355
Yancey	67	119

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High Country Workforce Development Board | 828.265.5434 | highcountry@HCWDB.gov

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STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN 2014-2016

System Alignment and Transformation

- Establish a committee of state-level agency representatives to coordinate and align policy.
- Create councils in each of the Prosperity Zones that include education, workforce, economic development, and industry leaders.
- Launch the *NCWorks* brand that all workforce development system programs will use to help customers recognize the value of the system.
- Create the *NCWorks Promise* that establishes value and trust with customers interacting with the system.
- Develop and implement a system-wide and consistent outreach strategy.

Strengthen Customer Services

- Develop a consistent menu of services and activities highlighting business and industry engagement opportunities.
- Identify and launch a customer relationship management tool that all workforce development partners are required to use.
- Investigate how work-based learning activities could be incorporated into agreements with companies receiving state economic development incentives.
- Expand the number of *NCWorks Certified Work-Ready Communities*.
- Create a framework for ensuring cross-trained, qualified staff have the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to support the local delivery system.
- Initiate the process of interfacing *NCWorks Online* with North Carolina's array of workforce development case management systems.

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN 2014-2016

Career Pathways

- Develop accessible and consistent NCWorks Career Pathways for critical industry clusters with multiple entry/exit points.
- Require workforce development partners use the career pathways to target resources towards helping individuals gain the skills and experience needed for in-demand occupations.
- Establish a memorandum of understanding with all statewide education and workforce development entities to get all workforce system participants enrolled in *NCWorks Online*.
- Develop a single portal for career information.
- Connect Small Business Centers to workforce delivery access points to increase entrepreneurship locally.

Accountability

- Develop an annual workforce development system report card with universal success metrics.
- Create metrics based on consistently collected feedback from customers to strengthen the workforce development system.
- Modify North Carolina's wage records to require the collection of employee occupation codes to better assess the outcomes of those individuals who participate in the workforce development system.
- Pilot consumer reporting that provides industry-recognized credentials to better assess the outcomes of those individuals who participate in the workforce development system.

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION ADVISORY SYSTEM U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR Washington, D.C. 20210	CLASSIFICATION WIOA - Vision
	CORRESPONDENCE SYMBOL OPDR -DPLR
	DATE February 19, 2015

ADVISORY: TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT GUIDANCE LETTER NO. 19-14

TO: STATE WORKFORCE AGENCIES
 STATE WORKFORCE ADMINISTRATORS
 STATE WORKFORCE LIAISONS
 STATE AND LOCAL WORKFORCE BOARD CHAIRS AND DIRECTORS
 LABOR COMMISSIONERS

FROM: PORTIA WU /s/
 Assistant Secretary

SUBJECT: Vision for the Workforce System and Initial Implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

1. **Purpose.** This Training Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) lays out the vision for a revitalized transformed workforce system as a result of implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Further, it encourages workforce system leaders and partners to take action now to support successful implementation to fully realize the vision of WIOA. Finally, it provides an overview of upcoming guidance and technical assistance to support effective implementation of WIOA.

2. **References.**

- WIOA, Public Law (Pub. L.) 113-128, enacted July 22, 2014.
- Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), Pub. L. 105-220, et seq.
- [TEGL No. 15-14, Implementation of the New Uniform Guidance Regulations](#), dated December 19, 2014.
- TEGL No. 12-14, *Allowable Uses and Funding Limits of WIA Program Year 2014 Funds for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Transitional Activities*.
- Training and Employment Notice (TEN) No. 6-14, *Information for Stakeholder Engagement for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Implementation*.
- TEN No. 5-14, *WIOA Announcement and Initial Informational Resources*.
- WIOA implementation dates, at www.doleta.gov/wioa/pdf/WIOA-Key-Implementation-Dates.pdf.
- TEGL No. 3-14, *Implementing a Job-Driven Workforce System*.
- 2 CFR, Part 2900, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.

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3. **Vision for WIOA and the Workforce System.** WIOA, which supersedes the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, presents an extraordinary opportunity to improve job and career options for our nation’s workers and jobseekers through an integrated, job-driven public workforce system that links diverse talent to businesses. It supports the development of strong, vibrant regional economies where businesses thrive and people want to live and work.

This revitalized workforce system will be characterized by three critical hallmarks of excellence:

- ✓ The needs of business and workers drive workforce solutions;
- ✓ One-Stop Centers (or American Job Centers) provide excellent customer service to jobseekers and employers and focus on continuous improvement; and
- ✓ The workforce system supports strong regional economies and plays an active role in community and workforce development.

Across the system, continuous improvement is supported through evaluation, accountability, identification of best practices, and data driven decision making.

- a. **The Needs of Businesses and Workers Drive Workforce Solutions:** Businesses inform and guide the workforce system and access skilled talent as they shape regional workforce investments and build a pipeline of skilled workers. This engagement includes leadership in the workforce system and active participation in the development and provision of education and training, work-based learning, career pathways, and industry sector partnerships. Jobseekers and workers, including those individuals with barriers to employment, such as individuals with disabilities, as defined by WIOA, have the information and guidance to make informed decisions about training and careers, as well as access to the education, training and support services they need to compete in current and future labor markets.
- b. **One-Stop Centers (American Job Centers or AJCs) Provide Excellent Customer Service to Jobseekers, Workers and Employers and Focus on Continuous Improvement:** One-Stop Centers and partners provide jobseekers, including individuals with barriers to employment, such as individuals with disabilities, with the skills and credentials necessary to secure and advance in employment with family-sustaining wages. Additionally, AJCs enable employers to easily identify and hire skilled workers and access other supports, including education and training for their current workforce. Further, rigorous evaluations support continuous improvement of AJCs by identifying which strategies work better for different populations; states, local areas, and training providers remain accountable for performance; high-quality, integrated data informs policy maker, employer and jobseeker decision making; and training providers are accountable for performance using the data and evidence.
- c. **The Workforce System Supports Strong Regional Economies:** Meeting workforce needs is critical to economic growth. State and local workforce development boards—in partnership with workforce, economic development, education, and social service organizations at the state, regional and local levels—align education and training investments to regional civic and economic growth strategies, ensuring that all jobseekers and businesses can access pathways to prosperity.

4. **Implementing WIOA: Realizing the Vision.** State and local workforce system leaders should take immediate action to achieve the vision of modernizing the workforce system and ensuring it operates as a comprehensive, integrated and streamlined system that expands opportunities for all workers and businesses.

Key operational and governing principles:

- a. ***States align programs and ensure integrated services through a unified strategic plan and shared governance.*** Every state collaborates across the core programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth, Wagner-Peyser, Adult Education and Vocational Rehabilitation) to create a single unified and integrated strategic state plan. States govern the core programs as one system, assessing strategic needs and aligning them with service strategies to ensure the workforce system meets employment and skill needs of all workers and employers. States also collaborate with One-Stop partner programs and other partners at the state and local levels to produce Combined WIOA plans. States use the certification process and competition to help achieve this vision and ensure continuous improvement.
- b. ***Workforce boards focus on strategy.*** As strategic leaders, state and local workforce boards, in partnership with governors and chief elected officials, facilitate public-private partnerships; support sector strategies and career pathways that advance opportunities for all workers and jobseekers, including low-skilled adults, youth, and individuals with disabilities; foster innovation; and ensure streamlined operations and service delivery excellence.
- c. ***States and local areas align workforce programs with regional economic development strategies.*** Local boards, program leaders, and elected officials share a common vision and design and govern the system regionally; create unified regional and local plans integrating education, training, support services, and other workforce services across the core programs; align workforce policies and services with regional economies; and support sector strategies tailored to their needs.
- d. ***The One-Stop Center network and partner programs are organized to provide high-quality services to individuals and employers.*** State and local boards, One-Stop Center operators and partners must increase coordination of programs and resources to support a comprehensive system that seamlessly provides integrated services that are accessible to all jobseekers, workers, and businesses.
- e. ***States and local areas promote accountability and transparency, and data drives decisions and informs customer choice.*** State and local leaders ensure investments in employment, education and training programs are evidence-based and data-driven, and programs are accountable to participants and taxpayers. This includes evaluating approaches and aligning performance accountability and data systems to support program management, facilitate common case management systems, and inform policy. State and local areas provide robust, validated data to inform strategy, operations, and evaluations. Information technology systems are designed to reduce burden and present integrated information to support services, inform customer choice and guide strategy development. Technological strategies for improving the quality of services

are adopted, including advances in digital literacy skills and models for accelerating skill acquisition and credential attainment of jobseekers.

5. **Taking Action Now.** Most WIOA provisions related to DOL-administered programs take effect in Program Year (PY) 2015, which starts July 1, 2015. ETA strongly advises states and local areas to begin planning and implementing WIOA transition activities now. As discussed further in Section VI, ETA will issue regulations and additional guidance; in addition, the legislation and the technical assistance tools currently available support initial implementation and transitional activities. While some provisions do not go into effect until PY 2016 (July 1, 2016), such as the unified or combined state plans and the performance accountability system, states should be preparing now for the ultimate implementation of these provisions.

Beyond complying with the requirements of the new law, WIOA offers an opportunity to continue to modernize the workforce system and create a customer-centered system: where the needs of business and workers drive workforce solutions; where One-Stop Career Centers provide excellent customer service to all jobseekers and businesses; and where the workforce system supports strong regional economies. To realize this vision, workforce system leaders are asked to step back and re-envision how they conduct business and restructure activities accordingly.

Below are recommended actions workforce system leaders and partners are strongly encouraged to take now to move toward full implementation of the law. These should be considered in any state and local transition discussions to ensure states and local areas are well positioned on July 1, 2015 to implement WIOA. The list is not exhaustive, and each state and local area should fully assess its own situation and requirements and determine the activities it will need to undertake to support a full and effective transition.

- ✓ ***Identify and allocate funding for transitional activities.*** TEGL 12-14, *Allowable Uses and Funding Limits of Workforce Investment Act Program Year (PY) 2014 funds for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Transitional Activities* explains that states and locals may use up to two percent of the WIA's Fiscal Year 2014 Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker formula funds to transition to WIOA. The TEGL identifies nine priority areas for transition activities more fully described in this document and also details how to incur and report transition activities costs. Please consult TEGL 12-14 in tandem with this guidance. Also, please note the importance of maintaining a balance between exercising the transitional funding authority and continuing to serve current system customers effectively.
- ✓ ***Build new, and strengthen existing, partnerships.*** WIOA requires states and local areas to enhance coordination and partnerships with local entities and supportive service agencies for strengthened service delivery, including through unified state plans and combined state plans. These plans should include statutorily specified additional partners in the planning process; establish a set of system performance measures that apply to all core programs; strengthen linkages between a myriad of complementary programs within the One-Stop Center system; require co-location of employment services in One-Stop Centers; add One-Stop Center partners, such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and the Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG)

programs; enhance the role of apprenticeship; clarify partner programs support for system infrastructure costs and other common costs; and ask the system to work regionally and across local workforce development areas.

Additionally, successful implementation of many of the approaches called for within WIOA, such as career pathways and sector strategies, require robust relationships across programs and with businesses, economic development, education and training institutions, including community colleges and career and technical education local entities and supportive service agencies. As workforce system leaders step back and explore their approach for moving toward the WIOA vision, robust partnerships will be required to successfully enable our dual customers—jobseekers and employers—to drive solutions, to ensure these customers receive excellent services, and to effectively support economic regions.

- ✓ ***Engage with core programs and other partners to begin strategic planning.*** Local and state leaders should engage in strategic planning and find new ways to align core and other key programs, such as Registered Apprenticeship, Job Corps, JVSG, TANF, Perkins Career and Technical Education programs, Unemployment Insurance, and required partners under the Act. It is vital to understand the new unified and combined state plan requirements, and assess whether the right partners are at the table, and are participating fully as equal partners in the design and coordination of the programs and services within the workforce system. Strategic planning should include concrete goals as well as a vision of success: how the workforce system should ideally function in each state to best meet WIOA goals. We encourage local and state leaders to include state economic development staff and alignment of workforce and economic development goals.
- ✓ ***Reassess One-Stop delivery system.*** With your WIOA partners, reassess the One-Stop delivery system and what is needed to achieve seamless service delivery models that place the customer at the center of how programs are designed and delivered. Consider operations, such as “bricks and mortar” and information technology infrastructures in light of new requirements: core and mandatory One-Stop Center partners; co-location of Wagner-Peyser employment services; procedures and policies to transition to selecting One-Stop Center operators through competitive procurement; a Memoranda of Understanding to address One-Stop Center infrastructure funding; physical and programmatic accessibility requirements; and the vision of WIOA and state established goals. These actions will better position states and local workforce development areas to better tailor the state’s plan for infrastructure funding and certification of One-Stop Centers.
- ✓ ***Develop plans to ensure workforce investment boards become WIOA compliant.*** State and local boards must meet the new membership requirements and be able to carry out new functions by July 1, 2015. Chief elected officers should review the new requirements to reconstitute and certify boards. While a business majority is required by WIOA and must be maintained for the transition period of July 22, 2014 through June 30, 2015, suggested strategies may be employed to bring board membership into compliance by July 1, 2015, such as establishing standing committees and transition board members. When establishing standing committees, we strongly encourage

focusing on serving youth, low skilled adults, Indians and Native Americans, individuals with disabilities and other relevant priorities for the local area. Also, local areas can reach out to the state to signal interest in initial designation or re-designation that may result in a new area.

- ✓ ***Develop transition plans.*** Transition to WIOA and realizing its vision is complex, and will require substantial activities leading up to July 1, 2015 and after. We encourage states and local areas to develop transition plans that will allow for transition preparation and tracking of transition and implementation progress and use these to guide implementation of new WIOA requirements. Also, consider customer impacts, such as how current WIA participants are impacted in WIOA transition. ETA is developing several technical assistance tools to assist states and locals in this area.
- ✓ ***Prepare for fiscal and program changes for transition across legislations.*** There are several fiscal and program changes that have been recently issued that require attention as part of transition planning: the new Office of Management and Budget Uniform Guidance was published in the Federal Register on December 19, 2014 and ETA issued associated guidance in [TEGL 15-14](#), also dated December 19, 2014. Financial staff and other applicable staff must become familiar with the requirements of this guidance and the impact on the state system and the transition from WIA to WIOA. States should also prepare for 100 percent transfer between adult and dislocated worker formula funds.
- ✓ ***Assess state laws.*** It is important to review state legislation and identify areas that may conflict with WIOA to develop plans and strategies that resolve these conflicts. When state and federal laws conflict, federal laws take precedence.
- ✓ ***Review Eligible Training Provider processes.*** Review Eligible Training Provider List processes and assess how they need to be updated to reflect new eligibility criteria. Examples include: adding new procedures for the inclusion of Registered Apprenticeship programs; taking into account the need to ensure access to training throughout the state, including rural areas; and ensuring the ability of providers to provide training to individuals who are employed and individuals with barriers to employment. States must also take steps to ensure that eligible training providers are in a position to provide required outcomes information for individuals served by their programs by July 1, 2015. ETA will be providing additional technical assistance to support such implementation.
- ✓ ***Ensure new or existing youth service contract operators support the 75 percent out-of-school youth and the 20 percent work experience expenditure rate requirements.*** States and locals that are not currently meeting the 75 percent out-of-school youth requirement must begin to prepare for this transition. ETA will provide guidance and technical assistance to aid with this transition, including further guidance on use of funds, productive approaches for serving out-of-school youth, as well as alternative resources for serving in-school youth. In the meantime, states, local areas and federal partners should develop plans to address this requirement. States will receive their first WIOA allotment for the youth programs in April 2015 and will begin full implementation of WIOA for the Youth Program at that time

6. **Timeframe of Anticipated Regulations, Guidance & Technical Assistance.** ETA is committed to continuing its collaborative work with its Federal partners and all workforce system stakeholders and grantees to support WIOA implementation. Generally, the WIOA provisions take effect on July 1, 2015, with the exception of the provisions in title IV, which became effective on enactment, and targeted exceptions.

Two Notices of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRMs) will be issued in early 2015: a joint NPRM with the Department of Education which will cover joint activities, including state planning, performance, and provisions covering the One-Stop system; and a second which will cover the remaining ETA-administered provisions in WIOA. (Concurrently, three additional NPRMs will be published by the Department of Education, one implementing Adult Education and Literacy and two implementing WIOA amendments to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.) These NPRMs will provide notice of the current thinking by ETA and the Department of Education and an opportunity for public comment. These NPRMs will be published in the Federal Register and posted on www.regulations.gov. Instructions on how to comment on the NPRMs are included in the preambles of each proposed rule. ETA and the Department of Education will analyze these public comments and develop and issue Final Regulations by early 2016.

As many provisions of the law go into effect July 1, 2015, ETA will issue Operating Instructions in spring 2015 to support such implementation. ETA also intends to issue operating and programmatic guidance and continue to disseminate technical assistance beginning in early 2015 and throughout implementation. We will continue to gather stakeholder input for guidance development and technical assistance needs and convene additional regional events and conferences to provide more in-depth learning and networking opportunities.

The DOL's official Website for additional information on WIOA is www.doleta.gov/wioa. In addition, ETA has created a new WIOA collection page at <https://wioa.workforce3one.org> which currently houses existing technical assistance resources that are relevant for WIOA implementation, and will house more technical assistance resources and guidance as they are developed. These pages will be updated as new information is available.

7. **Inquiries.** Questions regarding this guidance should be directed to the appropriate ETA regional office or through the ETA email address established for this purpose: DOL.WIOA@dol.gov. ETA monitors this account daily, and may respond to inquiries directly or through general communications such as official guidance, webinars, and public Q&A documents. You can also contact your regional office for any inquiries or feedback.