Local Plan Guidelines

Local Workforce Development Board: Jefferson/Franklin

STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

1. Local Workforce Development Board's Vision

State the Board's vision for the Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) and how this vision meets, interprets, and furthers the Governor's vision in the current WIOA Missouri Combined State Plan.

"The mission of the Jefferson/Franklin Region is to assist in the development of a skilled workforce that responds to the area's changing labor market needs."

"It is the vision of the Jefferson/Franklin Region to collaborate with partner agencies and other community entities to identify and secure resources to meet employer and job seeker education and training needs."

The Local Jefferson/Franklin Region Workforce Development Board (LWDB) mission and vision meets, interprets, and furthers the Governor's current WIOA Missouri Combined State Plan and the President's national workforce goals for the WIOA. The Plan emphasizes the importance of a skilled workforce to support long-term economic growth. The Jefferson/Franklin Region places high importance in the collaboration of local workforce, education, and support services with local partners to meet the needs of the local labor market by providing job seekers with employment and training opportunities and with businesses with a skilled trained workforce.

2. Local Workforce Development Board's Goals

Provide the Board's goals for engaging employers and preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment). Include goals relating to the performance-accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency.

The goals/priorities identified are:

a. to expand access to employment, education (career pathways), training, and support services for youth and adults with barriers to employment;
b. to coordinate workforce investment, education, and economic development efforts among multiple agencies;
c. to enhance the labor-market relevance of workforce investment, education, and economic development, providing workers with skills and credentials and providing employers with a skilled workforce;
d. to improve the structure of, and delivery of, services through the workforce development system;
e. to boost the prosperity of workers and employers, the economic growth of communities, regions, and states, and overall U.S. global competitiveness;
f. to increase the employment, retention, and earnings of system participants, and to enlarge their attainment of postsecondary credentials, with the aim of improving workforce quality, reducing welfare dependency, increasing economic self- sufficiency, and meeting skill requirements of employers through regular review of performance-accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency.

3. Local Workforce Development Board's Priorities

Identify the workforce development needs of businesses, jobseekers, and workers in the LWDA, and how those needs are determined.

The Jefferson/Franklin Region links its training investments to the Regions' targeted industry sectors and high demand occupations.
Needs of businesses and job seekers/workers are identified as follows:

a. The LWDB and local community colleges identify local needs by speaking and working directly with employers. The Job Centers, Jefferson College and East Central College include area employers in meetings to determine what needs are present and how to address those needs.
b. Information is gathered from the Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC), and the Eligible Training Providers List (ETPL).
c. The LWDB also examines the 2023 State of St. Louis Workforce Report prepared by the St. Louis Community College. Research continues to support the findings reported in the previous local workforce plan submitted under WIOA. The LWDA should continue to focus efforts on advanced manufacturing, healthcare, I.T., finance, and warehouse/logistics.
d. The LWDB Business Services Team discusses and recommends areas of training and services that will benefit all area employers (see Business Service Plan).
e. The LWDB works closely with the Economic Development Director in both counties to identify the region's employment and training needs. The Jefferson County Economic Development Director sits on the LWDB.

Business

The Region and Greater St. Louis Metropolitan Area employers are currently indicating a need for short-term training for stackable credentials, licenses or certifications and utilizing On-the Job-Training (OJT), Missouri Registered Apprenticeship Programs, and customized training for new and incumbent workers.

Jefferson College and East Central College use formative evaluation to adjust to immediate needs from employer feedback and use summative evaluation to address major program changes. This is an ongoing process throughout the year. In addition to technical skills, businesses have indicated a need for applicants who have strong "soft skills." "Soft skills," include improved work ethic (including increased attendance), improved skills in developing interpersonal relationships, active listening, and conflict resolution skills. Through discussions with training providers, these "soft skills" have been included in the course curriculum.

Business and economic development cannot succeed without a trained and skilled workforce. The Job Centers in Jefferson and Franklin Counties and Workforce Investment activities, in Missouri, and nationwide, play an integral part in identifying and providing for local workforce development needs. The identified needs for the Jefferson/Franklin Region are strong technical skills in advanced manufacturing, healthcare, information technology (I.T). finance, warehouse/logistics and strong "soft skills". These needs also apply to the Jefferson/Franklin Region and businesses in the Greater St. Louis Metropolitan Area.

Job Seekers

After determining the workforce needs of the Region and Greater St. Louis Metropolitan Area, local community colleges play an integral role in determining what education and training courses will

most benefit job seekers. Their success comes only when they produce graduates who able to find work in the area's identified workforce. Areas identified in the Jefferson/Franklin Region include advanced manufacturing, health Care, I.T, finance, and warehouse/logistics. The LWDB and partners include access and funding for short-term training, high school equivalency, postsecondary education, life skills training, workplace readiness training, and skill-based training.

In addition to the above employment, educational and training services, The Arnold and Washington Job Centers offer customers an avenue to obtain credentials through testing provided at Missouri Job Centers. Customers can obtain a National Career Readiness Certification (NCRC) using the ACT skills certification system. The NCRC is used for screening, hiring and promotion, as well as for fulfilling training needs for existing employers.

The Arnold and Washington Job Centers also play a pivotal role in providing veteran services, one of Missouri's top priorities. The Centers have priority services for veterans; they are served before all other customers. Veterans can request to see the Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) staff or Local Veteran Employment Representative (LVER) at any time in the process to receive specialized services.

4. Local Workforce Development Board's Strategies

Describe the Board's strategies and goals for operation, innovation and continual improvement based on meeting requirements for the needs of businesses, job seekers and workers. Required strategies are listed below. Please describe the strategies and objectives for:

Strategic planning for meeting the needs of businesses, job seekers, and workers is a collaborative planning process. It evolves and becomes stronger while remaining committed to its core values. Objectives articulate the knowledge and skills that are expected to be achieved.

a. Career Pathways – The LWDB has identified advanced manufacturing, I.T., healthcare, finance, and logistics/transportation as areas to promote. The LWDB will utilize existing Career Pathways at local community college through traditional classroom training along with other alternative options to include apprenticeship, On-the-Job Training, or other work-based learning formats. Meaningful career pathways will help job seekers to prepare for, obtain, maintain, and progress in a career.
b. Employer Engagement – Engage business and industry leaders as a majority of workforce board members and work closely with Jefferson College and East Central College business and industry groups. Members of the Business Services Team and Job Center staff will attend local chamber meetings, economic development meetings, and various industry-related meetings/events to engage employers.
c. Business Needs Assessment – The Business Services Team links with business and industry through its collaboration with local community colleges and the St. Louis Regional Plan coordination of business outreach efforts. Local needs are identified by formal and informal surveys conducted by the Business Services Team.
d. Alignment and Coordination of Core Program Services – Staff aligns, and coordinates services provided to customers. Staff members participate in a weekly update session in the Job Center. In addition, the region has an on-line Resource Guide that is regularly updated and is available to staff and the public.
e. Coordination with Economic Development – Coordination with Economic Development is on-going. The LWDB promotes economic development services offered by Jefferson and Franklin Counties Economic Development agencies coordinated with other surrounding regional entities. Economic Development is represented on the Workforce Development Board. The LWDB will promote services delivered by the Jefferson/Franklin Region Economic Development agency. These services

include entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.

f. Outreach to Jobseekers and Businesses – Job seekers outreach is through offering labor market information, assessments, job seeking assistance, resume preparation, workshops, career exploration, and National Career readiness certificates. The outreach also includes working with the underemployed who may be interested in taking the next step on their career pathway. Hosting job fairs at times other than 9 to 5, participating in career expos. The Jefferson/Franklin Region has a Priority of Service Policy that includes services for Veterans and their eligible spouses. Special workshops at local community colleges are utilized to provide outreach to displaced homemakers and non-traditional customers. Business outreach is conducted through local Job Centers, Community Colleges, WDB employer representatives as well as the Business Services Team. Job Centers visit with employers to highlight upcoming events and use of the Job Centers for employer needs (interviewing, workshops, Job Fairs, etc.)
g. Access—Improvements to Physical and Programmatic Accessibility – Job Centers promote and maintain ADA compliant physical and programmatic accessibility to increase participation by those challenged by accessibility issues. ***See Attachment 22.*** Partner reviews by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Rehabilitation Services for the Blind, Next Step for Life (Jefferson County), and Missouri Goodwill Industries provide important feedback for improvement in physical and program accessibility.
h. Customer Service Training – Customer Service Training is required of all Job Center staff. This training is conducted at regularly scheduled training meetings. The training includes customer confidentiality and equal opportunity policies. It also includes how to use assistive technology and how to make accommodations. Staff also have access to special on-line training delivered by the State of Missouri. Vocational Rehabilitation conducts training during staff meetings with topics that may include specific disabilities and how staff can effectively assist a customer with that disability. Customer service survey results are also received and reviewed with staff on a regular basis. If specific issues are identified, management will educate staff on appropriate service delivery for that issue.
i. Assessment – Basic skills assessments for job seekers are an important step in providing appropriate services for the customer. Job Centers provide a variety of assessments for customers seeking more insight into their technical skills, strengths, and personality. These assessments determine the job seeker's ability to be successful and to prescribe remediation and/or training as appropriate.
j. Support Services – WIOA participants will be assessed for the need for supportive services according to the local Supportive Service Policy. ***See Attachment 12.*** The goal for supportive services is to allow WIOA participants to continue employment and training activities that will lead to self-sufficiency.
k. Outcome measures assessment, monitoring and management – The State of Missouri requires an annual monitoring report presented to the CLEO and LWDB members regarding compliance and performance reviews. This annual report includes Sub-State Monitoring results, compliance concerns, performance reviews, adequacy of assessments, planning of activities and services, coordination with One-Stop Delivery System partners, and customer outcomes.

   Using the tools of MoJobs reports and MoPerforms/FutureWorks BI, we can monitor and track performance to work at reaching our regions negotiated performance levels. Regarding local compliance and monitoring staff, these staff do not have input on program processes, daily program decisions, or program approvals, they are not involved in the daily interactions of program staff and program operations. Monitoring includes but is not limited to WIOA program eligibility and compliance, The Jefferson/Franklin LWDB has a goal to monitor 100% of all enrollments in

every program we operate. This ensures all files are monitored for eligibility documentation and access to services. Local Monitoring is conducted in accordance with the Local Sub-state Monitoring Plan and Policy. ***See Attachment 11.*** Financial Audits are conducted annually by Certified Public Accountants.

5. Economic, Labor Market, and Workforce Analysis Source

Please indicate the source of the information. If using Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC) data, please indicate the source is MERIC. If using another resource, please reference the source. MERIC regional representatives can be found online at: https://meric.mo.gov/about-us

Updated MERIC Economic, Labor Market, and Workforce Analysis information was provided by Missouri's Office of Workforce Development. See sections 6-8 below.

6. Economic Analysis

Describe the LWDA's current economic condition, including the following information by county (if your LWDA includes more than one county) and the overall region:

a. Average personal income level;

b. Number and percent of working-age population living at or below poverty level;

Personal Income

In the Jefferson/Franklin Workforce Development Area (WDA), per capita personal income was below the state average of $57,818. The per capita personal income for both counties was above $50,000 in 2022.

In 2022, personal income for the US and Missouri increased 2.0 percent and 3.2 percent respectively when compared to 2021.

The statewide poverty rate of working age persons, or those 18-64 years, was 12.3 percent in 2022. The poverty rate in both counties of the Jefferson/Franklin WDA was less than the state average.

Name	2022 Per Capita Personal Income	Working Age (18-64) Population living below poverty level	
		Number	Percentage
Missouri	$57,818	445,345	12.3%
Franklin	$53,957	4,898	7.9%
Jefferson	$51,143	10,855	7.8%

Sources: *Per Capita Personal Income - U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2022*
Poverty Level - American Community Survey-5 Year data (2018-2022)

c. Number and percent of working age population determined to have a barrier to employment;

Barriers to employment can include homelessness, disability status, lower education levels, and limited proficiency with the English language. Both counties in this region had a lower percentage of working age population (18-64 years old) with disabilities as compared to the state average of 12.3 percent. The percentage of the working age population with English as a second language in Missouri was 7.1 percent. Both counties had a lower percentage of the working age population with English as a second language, at 2.0 percent and 3.9 percent.

In Missouri, 10.8 percent of the working age population did not have a high school diploma in 2022. Jefferson County had a higher percentage of the population without a high school diploma at 10.9 percent. Franklin County had a lower percentage of the population without a high school diploma at 10.5 percent.

Barriers To Employment									
Area	Total Population	Total Population 18-64	% of 18-64 In Population	Total Population 18-64 with less than high school diploma	% of Population 18- 64 without high school diploma	Total Population 18-64 with a disability	% of Population 18-64 with a disability	Total Population 18-64 who speak language other than English	% of Population 18-64 who speak language other than English
Missouri	6,154,422	3,697,543	60.1%	265,816	10.8%	449,967	12.3%	261,796	7.1%
Franklin	104,858	62,026	59.2%	3,642	10.5%	7,156	11.6%	1,210	2.0%
Jefferson	226,984	139,354	61.4%	4,350	10.9%	15,692	11.3%	5,447	3.9%

Source: *American Community Survey-5 Year data (2018-2022)*

d. Employment rates for the last 5 years;

The unemployment rate in the Jefferson/Franklin Region is declining after peaking in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The unemployment rate for 2022 was below the state average of 2.5 percent in both counties.

Unemployment Rate by County - Jefferson/Franklin					
Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
US	3.9%	3.7%	8.1%	5.3%	3.6%
Missouri	3.2%	3.2%	6.1%	4.1%	2.5%
Franklin	3.1%	3.1%	6.2%	3.7%	2.3%
Jefferson	3.1%	3.0%	6.1%	3.8%	2.4%

Source: *Local Area Unemployment Statistics, Not Seasonally Adjusted*

e. Major layoff events over the past 3 years and any anticipated layoffs; and

There have been no major layoffs in the two counties in the past 3 years and there are no known anticipated layoffs.

f. Any other factors that may affect local/regional economic conditions.

The two counties are located on or near major interstates which easily allows commuters to work in the two counties. The Jefferson County Economic Development group also has a large project to increase river traffic and businesses along the Mississippi river.

7. Labor Market Analysis

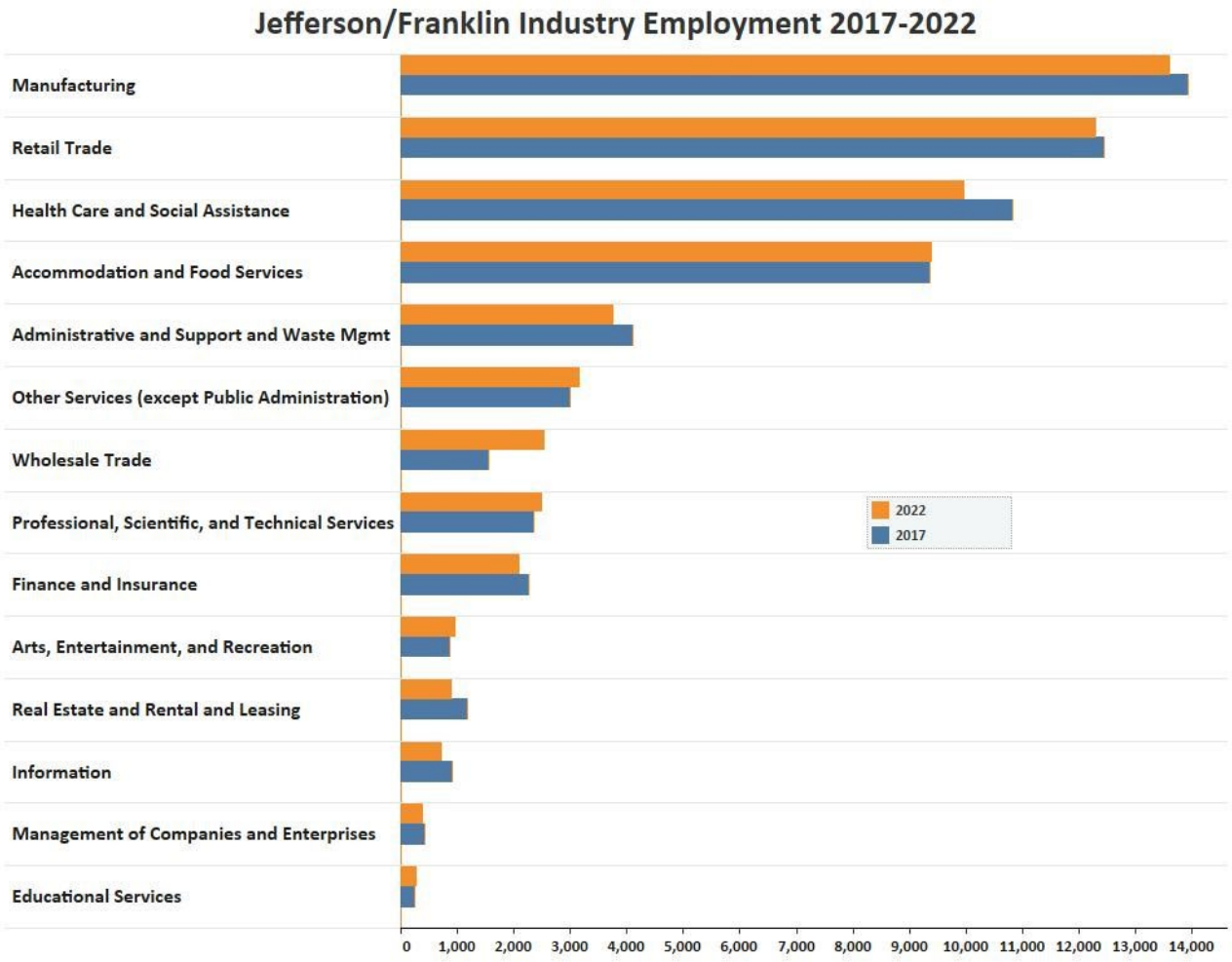
Provide an analysis of the LWDA's current labor market including:

a. Existing Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations

Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which there is existing demand.

Current Industry Demand

The Jefferson/Franklin Region had a compound annual growth rate of 0.1 percent over the 5-year period from 2017 to 2022, with a 0.5 percent overall gain from 2017 to 2022. Several industry groups had a positive growth rate over the same period. Those industries included *Utilities* (422 employment increase at 23.0% compound annual growth rate); *Wholesale Trade* (978 at 10.2%); and *Educational Services* (49 at 3.9%).


Jefferson/Franklin Industry Employment 2017-2022
Manufacturing
Retail Trade
Health Care and Social Assistance
Accommodation and Food Services
Administrative and Support and Waste Mgmt
Other Services (except Public Administration)
Wholesale Trade
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
Finance and Insurance
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing
Information
Management of Companies and Enterprises
Educational Services
2022
2017
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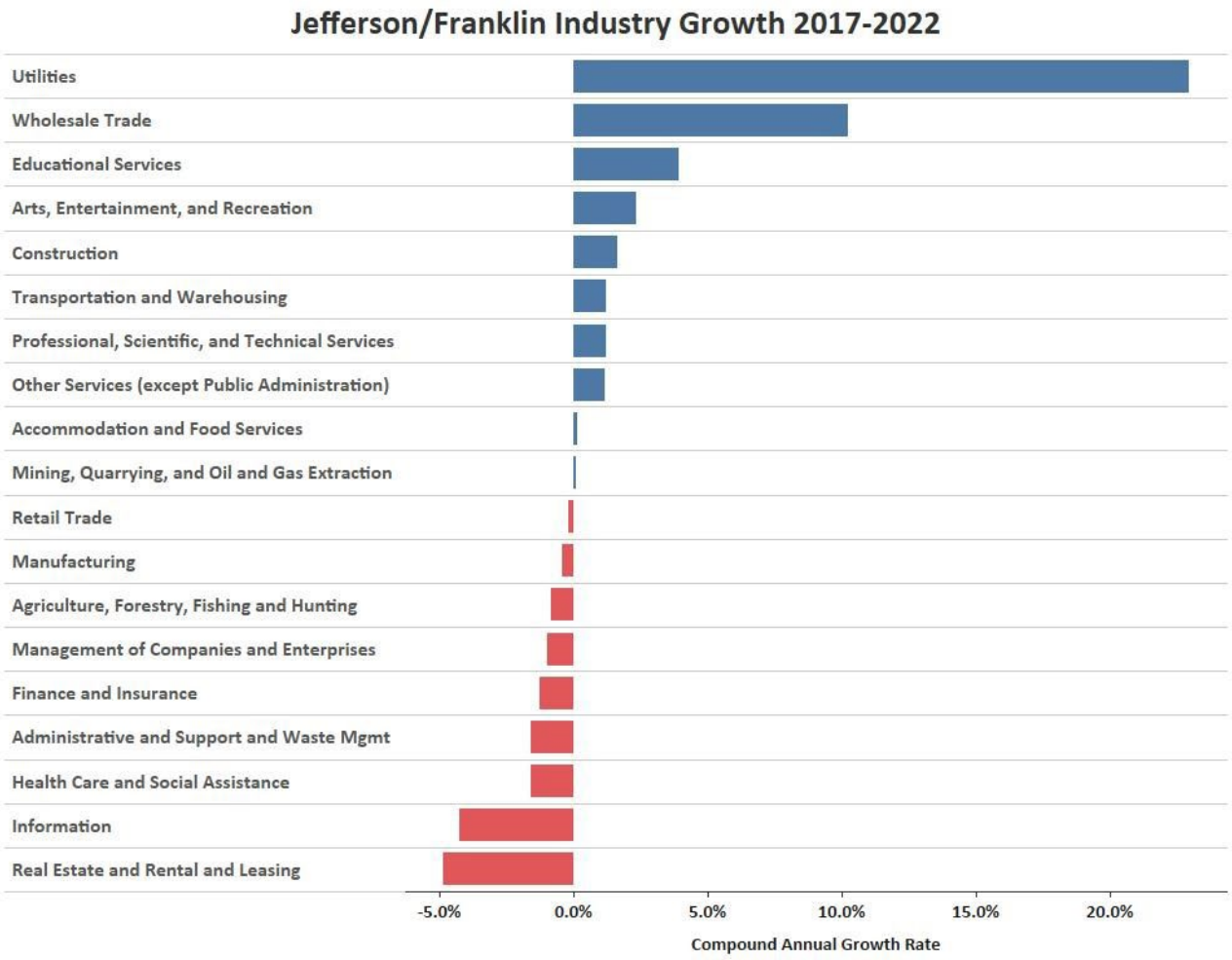


Location Quotient

Location Quotient (LQ) describes the concentration of an industry in a geographic region in relation to the nation. The national average is 1.0. Industries with an LQ higher than 1.0 indicate an above average concentration of that industry in the area.

In 2022, the Jefferson/Franklin Region had fifteen industries with LQs of 1.5 or higher, including *Machinery Manufacturing* (4.3); *Plastics and Rubber Products Manufacturing* (3.3); *Primary Metal Manufacturing* (3.1); *Textile Product Mills* (3.1); *Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing* (2.9); and *Chemical Manufacturing* (2.8).

2022 Fraklin-Jefferson Location Quotients		
Industry	Employment	Location Quotient
Machinery Manufacturing	2,693	4.3
Plastics and Rubber Products Manufacturing	1,415	3.3
Primary Metal Manufacturing	655	3.1
Textile Product Mills	184	3.1
Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing	690	2.9
Chemical Manufacturing	1,432	2.8
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	2,211	2.7
Gasoline Stations and Fuel Dealers	1,585	2.7
Utilities	655	2.1
Repair and Maintenance	1,627	2.1
General Merchandise Retailers	3,695	2.0
Building Material and Garden Equipment and S	1,529	1.9
Specialty Trade Contractors	4,716	1.7
Goods-Producing	20,856	1.6
Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction	925	1.5

Source: *Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), 2022 Annual Averages*

Current Occupational Demand

Current occupational demand can be attained through the job ads placed by employers. From November 2022 to October 2023, nearly 18,900 on-line job ads were placed for jobs located in the Jefferson/Franklin Region according to Lightcast™.

Job ads were placed for positions at every skill and education level. Missouri uses a system of **Now**, **Next,** and **Later** to categorize jobs according to the typical education and experience required for success on the job. **Now** jobs typically require a high school education or less and short-term training. **Next** jobs typically require moderate to long-term training or experience or education beyond high school. **Later** jobs typically require a bachelor's degree or higher education.

Now occupations with the highest number of job postings included *Retail Salespersons*; *Fast Food and Counter Workers; Customer Service Representatives*; *Home Health and Personal Care Aides*; and *Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand*.

Occupations with the most job postings in the **Next** category were *Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses*; *First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers*; *Food Service Managers*; *Nursing Assistants;* and *Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing*.

Later occupations with the highest number of job postings were *Registered Nurses*; *Physical Therapists*; *Medical and Health Services Managers*; *Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors*; and *Clinical Laboratory Technologists and Technicians*.

Many of the occupations with the most job postings also have high numbers of projected openings through 2030. The occupations with high numbers of job postings and high numbers of projected annual openings are identified with the star.

Top Job Ads - Franklin-Jefferson			
SOC Code	Occupation Title	Online Job Postings	
NOW - Typically requires high school education or less and short-term training			
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	693	★
35-3023	Fast Food and Counter Workers	422	★
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	415	★
31-1120	Home Health and Personal Care Aides	409	★
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	252	★
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	235	★
53-7065	Stockers and Order Fillers	196	★
53-3031	Driver/Sales Workers	172	
35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses	154	★
41-2011	Cashiers	149	★
NEXT - Typically requires moderate/long-term training or experience or education beyond high school			
29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	596	
41-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	499	★
11-9051	Food Service Managers	482	
31-1131	Nursing Assistants	460	★
41-4012	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing	282	★
51-9199	Production Workers, All Other	223	
35-1012	First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	192	★
49-9071	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	187	★
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	184	★
43-6013	Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	167	★
LATER - typically requires a bachelor's degree or higher			
29-1141	Registered Nurses	1,549	★
29-1123	Physical Therapists	264	
11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	214	★
21-1018	Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors	166	
29-2010	Clinical Laboratory Technologists and Technicians	147	★
29-1122	Occupational Therapists	128	
11-9199	Managers, All Other	125	
15-1252	Software Developers	116	★
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	104	★
29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	99	

Source: *Lightcast, online job ads between Nov. 1, 2022 - Oct. 31, 2023*

★ *= Top Job Openings in Now, Next and Later categories, 2020-2030 Occupational Projections for St. Louis Region, MERIC*

Missouri Workforce 2023 Survey

From February 20, 2023, to April 17, 2023, over 2,800 Missouri companies with five or more employees were surveyed to gauge the state of the workforce from the employer's perspective. A total of 1,705 employers started the survey but did not respond to all questions, and 1,183 employers completed every question in the survey. Seventy-three percent employers responded over the phone and 27 percent completed the online version of the survey. Companies were asked 26 questions, some with multiple parts, about hiring trends, skill needs and shortages, workforce initiatives, recruitment strategies, and education and experience requirements. Companies interviewed were randomly selected from a categorized list of Missouri businesses from the Data Axle employer database. The sample was selected to be representative of Missouri's industry sectors and workforce regions. Regional quotas were based on the region's share of employment relative to the state. Over half (51%) of employers surveyed had 11-49 employees. The industries selected for the survey were chosen to

represent a composite picture of the state's industry mix with a statistically significant sample surveyed from each of the industry sector matching the approximate ratio of these industries across the state.

To gauge employment trends, employers were asked about their staffing levels and future hiring plans. When asked about employment changes over the last 12 months, half (50%) said that *employment levels (total employment) remained the same as before* (47% in 2021, 57% in 2020, and 48% in 2019). In 2019, more employers reported increasing employment levels rather than decreasing (21% reporting a significant or slight decrease compared to 32% reporting a significant or slight increase). This flipped in 2020 and 2021, mostly due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2023, about 28 percent of surveyed employers reported *increased* employment levels, either slightly or significantly, while 22 percent reported *significant or slight decrease* in employment levels.

For the third year in a row, *hiring new full-time employees* remained the top method of expanding employment, with 75 percent of employers stating they would *hire new full-time employees.* Fifty-nine percent of employers reported they would *hire part-time employees.*

Employers were asked about the barriers they encountered in expanding employment. *Lack of applicants overall* was a new option for employers in the 2023 survey, and 66 percent of surveyed employers selected this option, making it the top barrier to expansion of employment. The next highest barriers were *shortage of applicants with knowledge or skills* and *economic conditions*, which have been the top cited barriers since the survey began in 2019. *Shortage of applicants with knowledge or skills* increased significantly from previous years, from 47 percent in 2019 and 2020, to 60 percent in 2021, and 65 percent in 2023. *Economic conditions* as a barrier to employment decreased from 37 percent in 2021 to 30 percent in 2023. Similarly, fewer employers encountered *government policies or regulations* as a barrier to expanding employment, dropping from 30 percent in 2021 to 13 percent in 2023.

Other significant barriers encountered in 2023 included *lack of childcare* and *transportation access,* with 21 percent of respondents reporting these as barriers to expanding employment.

The survey also asked employers to rate the importance of each barrier on a scale of one to five, with one being insignificant and five being critical. The highest weighted average response for any barrier cited this year was *lack of applicants overall,* getting an importance score of 4.05 out of 5. The next highest weighted response was *government policies or regulations* (3.88), followed by *shortage of applicants with knowledge or skills* (3.85). Although the share of employers choosing *government policies or regulations* as a barrier to employment expansion has decreased, for those that did encounter it, it was still a critical barrier. *Shortage of available training programs* dropped in importance from 3.98 in 2019 to 3.15 in 2023.

Companies employ workers in a variety of functional areas with different work responsibilities. *Patient Care* and *Skilled Trades* functional areas had the largest percentage of employers reporting shortages of skilled applicants at 65 percent each. Skill shortages in *Customer Service* have increased substantially, increasing from 25 percent in 2019 and 31 percent in 2020, to 47 percent in 2021, decreasing slightly to 45 percent in 2023.

To address the problem of skill shortages in the current workers, employers use several remedial measures, and *on-the-job-training* remains the most preferred method. Over 9 in 10 employers (91%) stated they used *on-the-job training* to assist current workers in addressing the need for new or increased skills. However, there is a significant decrease in applying these remedial measures in 2023 when compared to 2021, most significantly in *providing a flexible schedule to pursue outside continuing education* (67% in 2021 vs. 46% in 2023) and *in-house classroom training* (60% in 2021 vs. 41% in 2023).

Relatedly, employers were also asked if there was any change over the last two years in flexibility for hiring applicants with less than the advertised preferred level of qualifications in education, experience, and skill level. Most employers said they stayed about the same in flexibility for hiring applicants. The majority that changed became more flexible in their consideration of applicants. Twenty-three percent of employers were more flexible with education requirements, 31 percent were more flexible with experience level requirements, and 29 percent were more flexible on skill level requirements.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been an increased interest in understanding remote work. Prior to pandemic, (February 2020) about 15 percent employers were having some workers working remotely. Remote work peaked in 2020 during the height of the pandemic, with over half of employers (56%) stating they had some workers working remotely, either full or part-time. This dropped significantly to 20 percent in 2021 and

has increased slightly to 25 percent in 2023. When asked if they expected the number of remote workers to change over time, the vast majority (92%) of employers said they expected it to stay the same. In the question about workforce initiatives considered in the coming year, 13 percent of employers indicated considering *remote work*.

Employers evaluated various business concerns for the future on a scale of one to five, with one being not concerned and five being very concerned. Employers were most concerned about *attracting or retaining talent,* with a weighted average of 3.7. Several concerns decreased in importance from 2021, including *lack of information for decision making* (2.92 in 2021 vs. 2.38 in 2023) and *supply chain disruptions* (3.61 in 2021 vs. 3.1 in 2023). *Cost of health insurance* was among the major concerns reported in the 2023 survey.

Although employers are optimistic about expanding employment, with 44 percent planning to *increase employment levels* over the next 12 months, they continue to struggle to find skilled applicants. Sixty-two percent of employers had positions that took over 30 days to fill. A *lack of overall applicants* and *shortage of applicants with knowledge or skills* were the top barriers to expanding employment, with the *shortage of applicants with knowledge or skills* at the highest reported level it has been since the first survey in 2019. The most important business concern for employers was *attracting and retaining talent.* To try and retain existing workers, employers have *increased wages* (86%), *offered a flexible work schedule* (64%), or *offered additional training* (52%). Responses to this survey reinforce the widely-held experience of a tight labor market and difficulty finding workers.

b. **Emerging Demand Industry Sectors and Occupation**

Provide an analysis of the industries and occupations for which demand is emerging.

Industry Projections

Industry and occupational projections are made for the entire St. Louis Region and include the counties of Franklin, Jefferson, St. Charles, St. Louis City, and St. Louis County. Since the economies and workforce are interrelated for this geography, projections are made for the five-county region, and not for the individual Workforce Development Areas.

The long-term industry projections help determine the industries that are expected to experience job growth over time. The latest round of projections is through the ten-year period ending in 2030.

The top five industries by numeric employment change were *Food Services and Drinking Places; Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services*; *Administrative and Support Services*; *Ambulatory Health Care Services*; and *Hospitals*.

St. Louis Region Industry Projections 2020-2030

NAICS	Industry	Employment 2020	Employment 2030	2020-2030 Change Numeric	2020-2030 Change Percent
10	**Total All Industries**	**1,120,239**	**1,201,727**	**81,488**	**7.3%**
722	Food Services and Drinking Places	71,753	89,529	17,776	24.8%
541	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	64,921	72,429	7,508	11.6%
561	Administrative and Support Services	58,127	65,348	7,221	12.4%
621	Ambulatory Health Care Services	45,732	52,405	6,673	14.6%
622	Hospitals	67,779	74,144	6,365	9.4%
611	Educational Services	82,344	88,037	5,693	6.9%
238	Specialty Trade Contractors	33,339	37,133	3,794	11.4%
721	Accommodation, including Hotels and Motels	8,400	11,609	3,209	38.2%
423	Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods	29,798	32,231	2,433	8.2%
813	Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Professional, and Similar Organizations	26,101	28,251	2,150	8.2%
711	Performing Arts, Spectator Sports, and Related Industries	2,484	4,477	1,993	80.2%
713	Amusement, Gambling, and Recreation Industries	9,115	10,966	1,851	20.3%
999	Local Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals	34,490	35,753	1,263	3.7%
488	Support Activities for Transportation	4,728	5,919	1,191	25.2%
424	Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	14,012	14,946	934	6.7%

Source: *MERIC 2020-2030 Long Term Projections*

Occupational Projections

Job openings occur due to three reasons – **exits**, **transfers**, and **growth**. **Exits** occur as people leave the workforce for reasons such as retirement. **Transfers** occur when workers leave one occupation for a different occupation. Occupational **growth** occurs as businesses grow and need more workers to serve their customers. Emerging occupations can be identified through projected growth openings. The following chart identifies occupations that have the highest number of annual growth openings in the region. Total openings are the sum of transfers, exits, and growth, and indicates the projected number of vacancies that businesses will need to fill each year.

Missouri uses a system of **Now**, **Next,** and **Later** to categorize occupations according to these levels. **Now** jobs typically require a high school education or less and short-term training. **Next** occupations typically require moderate to long-term training or experience or education beyond high school. **Later** occupations typically require a bachelor's degree or higher.

Growth openings are projected at all education and training levels. Occupations in the table below are listed by the highest number of growth openings. **Now** occupations with the highest numbers of projected growth openings were *Home Health and Personal Care Aides*; *Fast Food and Counter Workers*; and *Waiters and Waitresses*. **Next** occupations with the highest numbers of projected growth openings were *Cooks, Restaurant*; *First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers*; and *Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers*. **Later** occupations with the most projected growth openings were *Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers*; *Registered Nurses*; and *General and Operations Managers*.

St. Louis Region Highest Growth Openings 2020-2030

Occupation	Average Wage	Percent Growth	Annual Openings			
			Exits	Transfers	Growth	Total
NOW - Typically requires short-term on-the-job training or less, little to no experience, and/or a high school diploma						
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	$26,856	20.4%	2,339	2,069	**677**	5,085
Fast Food and Counter Workers	$25,107	15.6%	2,386	2,602	**356**	5,344
Waiters and Waitresses	$24,801	21.4%	1,345	2,188	**355**	3,888
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	$36,784	10.4%	722	1,435	**162**	2,319
Bartenders	$27,951	33.9%	212	566	**135**	913
Security Guards	$36,130	17.6%	434	634	**132**	1,200
Construction Laborers	$61,053	15.2%	263	600	**126**	989
Passenger Vehicle Drivers, Except Bus Drivers, Transit and Intercity	$31,619	19.5%	360	271	**97**	728
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	$30,738	6.0%	1,012	1,136	**95**	2,243
Dining Room and Cafeteria Attendants and Bartender Helpers	$24,234	29.0%	300	301	**88**	689
NEXT - Typically requires non-degree certificate, associate degree, apprenticeship, some experience, or moderate- to long-term training						
Cooks, Restaurant	$27,958	51.7%	758	1,102	**528**	2,388
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	$36,708	23.3%	320	730	**150**	1,200
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	$52,480	8.5%	554	917	**111**	1,582
Fitness Trainers and Aerobics Instructors	$38,039	30.1%	242	392	**108**	742
Computer User Support Specialists	$56,153	12.4%	126	355	**78**	559
Carpenters	$65,036	7.8%	293	627	**76**	996
Insurance Sales Agents	$72,547	11.4%	220	369	**71**	660
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and :	$81,848	7.6%	281	643	**70**	994
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	$47,236	6.5%	390	646	**70**	1,106
Medical Secretaries	$38,591	9.9%	366	402	**68**	836
LATER - Typically requires a bachelor's degree or higher						
Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	$100,718	18.3%	390	825	**282**	1,497
Registered Nurses	$68,561	8.6%	906	854	**281**	2,041
General and Operations Managers	$115,316	10.0%	496	1,538	**235**	2,269
Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	$72,247	22.1%	147	454	**124**	725
Nurse Practitioners	$105,878	47.4%	65	97	**119**	281
Medical and Health Services Managers	$113,250	30.4%	108	219	**114**	441
Management Analysts	$92,817	13.1%	237	425	**91**	753
Financial Managers	$153,478	18.7%	101	248	**84**	433
Accountants and Auditors	$77,123	6.5%	370	787	**84**	1,241
Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	$52,173	6.4%	268	410	**62**	740

Source: *MERIC 2020-2030 Long-Term Occupational Projections*

c. Employers' Employment Needs

Identify the job skills necessary to obtain current and projected employment opportunities. With regard to the industry sectors and occupations, provide an analysis of the employment needs of employers. Describe the knowledge, skills and abilities required, including credentials and licenses.

Real-Time Labor Market Data

Job ads placed by employers offer another source of information on the knowledge, skills, and certifications requested by Missouri's employers. Lightcast™ is a data tool that spiders to over several thousand different web sites with job ads. The information found in the ads are placed in a database that can be queried to gain insight on employer needs.

The following table lists the specialized skills, certifications, and software and programming abilities requested most frequently by employers in job ads.

Generally, in the software and programming category, Microsoft Office and its products such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Access rank at the top of the list across all industries. Therefore, in the following list, these Microsoft products have not been included as those tend to crowd the list by appearing at the top across all the industries. Industry-specific programs identified in the job ads are listed in the table.

Employer Skill Needs - Jefferson & Franklin Counties

Industry	Specialized Skills	Qualifications	Software and Programming
Retail Trade	Merchandising	Valid Driver's License	Inventory Management System
	Cash Register	Certified Pharmacy Technician	Software Systems
	Cash Handling	Registered Pharmacist (RPh)	AutoCAD
	Selling Techniques	Commercial Driver's License (CDL)	Operating Systems
	Inventory Management	Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) Certification	Human Resources Information System (HRIS)
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	Merchandising	Top Secret Sensitive Compartmented Information (TS/SCI Clearance)	Python (Programming Language)
	Python (Programming Language)	Valid Driver's License	Amazon Web Services
	Auditing	Counter Intelligence Polygraph (CI Clearance)	HyperText Markup Language (HTML)
	Amazon Web Services	Security Clearance	Linux
	Geospatial Intelligence	CompTIA Security+	Jenkins
Transportation & Warehousing	Warehousing	Valid Driver's License	Inventory Control Systems
	Selling Techniques	Commercial Driver's License (CDL)	Google+
	Forklift Truck	Tanker Endorsement	SAP Applications
	Diesel Engines	Hazmat Endorsement	Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Software
	Mail Sorting	Tanker And Hazmat Combo X Endorsement	Spreadsheets
Real Estate & Rental & Leasing	Property Management	Valid Driver's License	Database Management Systems
	Carpentry	HVAC Certification	Spreadsheets
	Merchandising	Certified Safety Professional	Operating Systems
	Machinery	Real Estate Salesperson License	Google Workspace
	Accounts Receivable	Certified Public Accountant	Active Server Pages (ASP)
Manufacturing	Warehousing	Valid Driver's License	SAP Applications
	Machinery	Security Clearance	Linux
	HVAC	Top Secret Sensitive Compartmented Information (TS/SCI Clearance)	Python (Programming Language)
	Forklift Truck	Secret Clearance	Operating Systems
	Auditing	Commercial Driver's License (CDL)	Ansible
Health Care & Social Assistance	Nursing	Registered Nurse (RN)	Epic EMR
	Patient Rights	Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification	eClinicalWorks (ECW)
	Nursing Process	Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)	Dentrix
	Administrative Support	Valid Driver's License	System Software
	Telehealth	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification	Microsoft Teams
Construction	Construction	Valid Driver's License	Presentation Software
	Telecommunications	Commercial Driver's License (CDL)	AutoCAD
	Power Tool Operation	10 Hour OSHA General Industry Card	Custom Software
	Framing (Construction)	30 Hour OSHA General Industry Card	Microsoft Software
	General Mathematics	Forklift Certification	Zoom (Video Conferencing Tool)
Accommodation & Food Services	Restaurant Operation	Valid Driver's License	Lync SDN (Software Defined Networking) Manager
	Food Safety And Sanitation	ServSafe Certification	Computer Reservations Systems
	Restaurant Management	Food Handler's Card	Spreadsheets
	Cooking	Food Safety Certification	Operating Systems
	Food Preparation	Commercial Driver's License (CDL)	Inventory Management System
Information	Marketing	Valid Driver's License	Operating Systems
	Telecommunications	Top Secret Sensitive Compartmented Information (TS/SCI Clearance)	SAS (Software)
	Air Handler	Speech-Language Pathology License	JavaScript (Programming Language)
	Disaster Recovery Solution	Top Secret Clearance	Geographic Information Systems
	Computer Networks	Security Clearance	Human Resources Information System (HRIS)

Source: *Lightcast, online job ads between Nov. 1, 2022 - Oct. 31, 2023*

_8. Workforce Analysis

Describe the current workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, as defined in section 3 of WIOA[1]. This population must include individuals with disabilities among other groups[2] in the economic region and across the LWDA.

a. **Employment and Unemployment**

Provide an analysis of current employment and unemployment data and trends in the LWDA.

Population Data

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that Missouri's population grew to over 6.15 million in 2022, up by 0.2 percent from the previous year. In the Jefferson/Franklin Region over the past year, population increased 0.5 percent. The region added over 1,500 residents from 2021 to 2022 and over 6,700 residents from 2017 to 2022.

Jefferson/Franklin Population Change by County

	1 Year Change 2021-2022		5 Year Change 2017-2022	
NAME	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Missouri	**12,888**	**0.2%**	**79,122**	**1.3%**
Franklin	527	0.5%	2,445	2.4%
Jefferson	1,071	0.5%	4,345	2.0%

Source: *U.S. Census Bureau, Population Annual Estimates*

Demographics

In both counties of the WDA, the percentage of the population in the age group of 25-34 was below the state average. The percentage of the population 55 and up was above the state average of 30.6 percent in Franklin County.

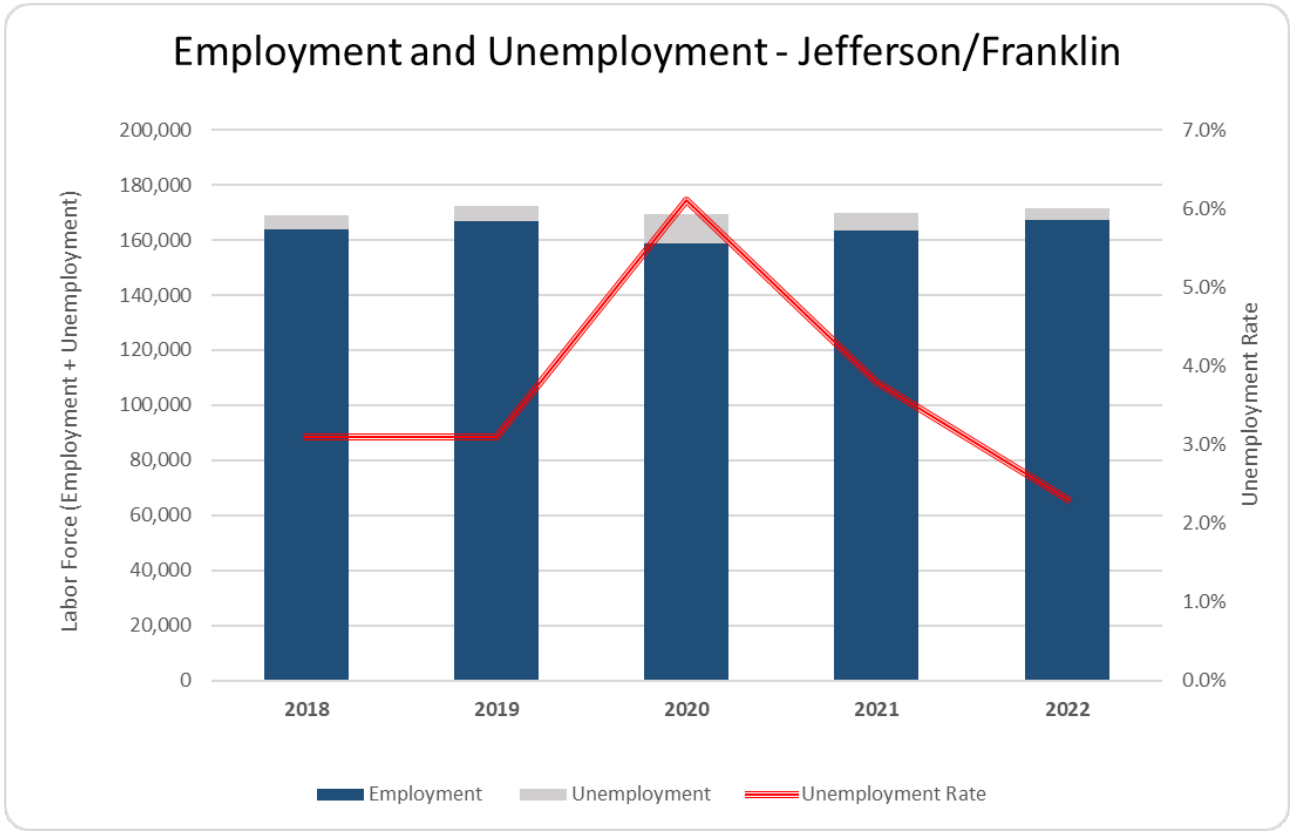
The Missouri statewide average is 49.4 percent male and 50.6 percent female. Jefferson County had the highest percent of male population (50.1%) in the region. The percentage of the population in minority race categories in the Jefferson/Franklin WDA was below the state average in all categories.

County	Population						Gender		Race/Ethnicity								
	Total	Under 20	20 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 54	55+	Female	Male	White	Black or African American	Asian	American Indian and Alaska Native	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	Some other race	One Race	Two or more races	Hispanic or Latino
Missouri	**6,154,422**	**25.0%**	**6.7%**	**13.2%**	**24.4%**	**30.6%**	**50.6%**	**49.4%**	**79.4%**	**11.3%**	**2.1%**	**0.3%**	**0.1%**	**1.5%**	**94.6%**	**5.4%**	**4.6%**
Franklin	104,858	24.7%	5.7%	12.0%	24.1%	33.5%	50.0%	50.0%	91.5%	0.9%	0.4%	0.1%	0.0%	0.6%	93.5%	6.5%	1.9%
Jefferson	226,984	24.9%	5.6%	12.4%	26.6%	30.5%	49.9%	50.1%	91.5%	1.0%	1.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.6%	94.2%	5.8%	2.2%

Source: *American Community Survey-5 Year data (2018-2022)*

Employment and Unemployment

The number of Jefferson/Franklin Region residents in the labor force has remained close to around 169,000 from 2018 to 2022. The unemployment rate for the region jumped to 6.1 percent in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, 2021 and 2022 data show continuation of recovery with the unemployment rate decreasing to 3.8 percent and 2.3 percent respectively.



Source: *Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)*

Labor Force Participation

The labor force is the sum of employed and unemployed persons. The labor force participation rate is the labor force as a percent of the civilian population 16 years and older. Using American Community Survey, 5-year data through 2022, Missouri's labor force participation rate was 62.5 percent. In comparison, the rate for this region was higher, at 64.9 percent. The county with the highest labor force participation rate in the region was Jefferson County (66.1%), while Franklin County was at 62.4 percent.

Civilian Labor Force Participation Rate by County

Region	Population 16 years and over	Civilian Population 16 years and over (In labor force)	Labor Force Participation Rate (Civilian)
Missouri	4,940,395	3,087,517	62.5%
Jefferson/Franklin Region	265,400	172,263	64.9%
Franklin	84,084	52,446	62.4%
Jefferson	181,316	119,817	66.1%

Source: *American Community Survey-5 Year data (2018-2022)*

b. **Labor Market Trends**

Provide an analysis of key labor market trends, including across existing industries and occupations.

In-Demand Occupations

Industry and occupational projections are made for the entire St. Louis Region and include the counties of Franklin, Jefferson, St. Charles, St. Louis City, and St. Louis County. Since the economies and workforce are interrelated for this geography, projections are made for the five-county region, and not for the individual Workforce Development Areas.

Over the long term, industry needs for certain occupations grow while for others decline. A trained and ready workforce is needed to fill employer demand and offer job seekers bright prospects of employment.

Long-term projections are produced in each state in conjunction with the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Since economies vary throughout the state, projections are also generated for the regions in the state and provide insight on the occupations that are growing and declining. The total number of openings account for three different types of vacancies - **exits**, **transfers**, and **growth**. **Exits** occur as individuals leave the workforce for reasons such as retirement. **Transfers** occur as a person leaves an occupation to work in a different occupation. **Growth** simply means that more people are needed to work in the occupation. No matter the reason for the vacancy, skilled workers are needed to fill the job openings.

Missouri adds value to the standard projections template by including the ACT Workkeys Assessment Levels typically required for success in each of the 800+ occupations. Since most of Missouri's counties participate in the Certified Work Ready Communities program, the levels help those researching careers find good options based on their personal assessment.

Missouri uses a system of **Now**, **Next,** and **Later** to categorize the occupations according to the training and education typically required for success on the job. **Now** occupations typically require a high school education or less along with short-term training. **Next** occupations typically require moderate to long-term training or experience and/or education beyond high school. **Later** occupations typically require a bachelor's degree or higher.

While long-term projections offer a solid understanding of longer-term employer needs, job ads placed by employers help in recognizing the current needs of employers. When projections predict a high number of future openings and job ads show current demand for the same occupation, the occupation may be a good career possibility.

The table below displays the top five jobs by the number of projected openings for the 10-year projection period through 2030 in the **Now**, **Next**, and **Later** categories for the region. The flame beside some of the occupations represents "hot jobs" determined by the number of job ads placed by employers.

The **Now** occupations with the most annual job openings were *Fast Food and Counter Workers* (5,344); *Home Health and Personal Care Aides* (5,085); *Waiters and Waitresses* (3,888); *Retail Salesperson* (3,863); and *Cashiers* (3,068). A main reason for the high number of openings in these occupations was transfers and exits.

Occupations with the highest number of annual openings in the **Next** category were *Cooks, Restaurant* (2,388); *Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive* (1,647); *Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers* (1,582); *Nursing Assistants* (1,547); and *Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks* (1,214).

Later occupations with the highest number of annual openings were *General and Operations Managers* (2,269); *Registered Nurses* (2,041); *Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers* (1,497); *Accountants and Auditors* (1,241); and *Project Management Specialists and Business Operations Specialists, All Other* (958).

Many high demand occupations correspond directly with certain industry sectors, such as *Health Care*, *Educational Services*, and *Retail*. Other high demand occupations, such as *Secretaries and Administrative Assistants* and *General and Operations Managers* are found in many different industry sectors.

St. Louis Region Occupational Projections 2020-2030							
	2020	2030	Annual Openings				Average
Occupation	Employment	Employment	Exits	Transfers	Growth	Total	Wage
NOW - Typically requires short-term on-the-job training or less, little to no experience, and/or a high school diploma							
Fast Food and Counter Workers	22,825	26,389	2,386	2,602	356	**5,344**	$25,107
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	33,152	39,921	2,339	2,069	677	**5,085**	$26,856
Waiters and Waitresses	16,546	20,094	1,345	2,188	355	**3,888**	$24,801
Retail Salespersons	28,734	28,041	1,587	2,345	-69	**3,863**	$32,945
Cashiers	19,311	17,087	1,548	1,742	-222	**3,068**	$25,601
NEXT - Typically requires non-degree certificate, associate degree, apprenticeship, some experience, or moderate- to long-term training							
Cooks, Restaurant	10,232	15,517	758	1,102	528	**2,388**	$27,958
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	17,460	16,051	852	936	-141	**1,647**	$40,195
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	12,972	14,080	554	917	111	**1,582**	$52,480
Nursing Assistants	11,993	12,618	788	697	62	**1,547**	$27,153
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	11,573	11,214	668	582	-36	**1,214**	$44,226
LATER - Typically requires a bachelor's degree or higher							
General and Operations Managers	23,638	25,990	496	1,538	235	**2,269**	$115,316
Registered Nurses	32,535	35,347	906	854	281	**2,041**	$68,561
Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers	15,411	18,227	390	825	282	**1,497**	$100,718
Accountants and Auditors	12,873	13,709	370	787	84	**1,241**	$77,123
Project Management Specialists and Business Operations Specialists, All Other	12,183	12,756	289	612	57	**958**	$83,690

Flame icon indicates occupations with high numbers of job ads between Nov. 1, 2022 - Oct. 31, 2023

Sources: *MERIC Long-Term Occupational Projections 2020-2030 and Lightcast, online job ads*

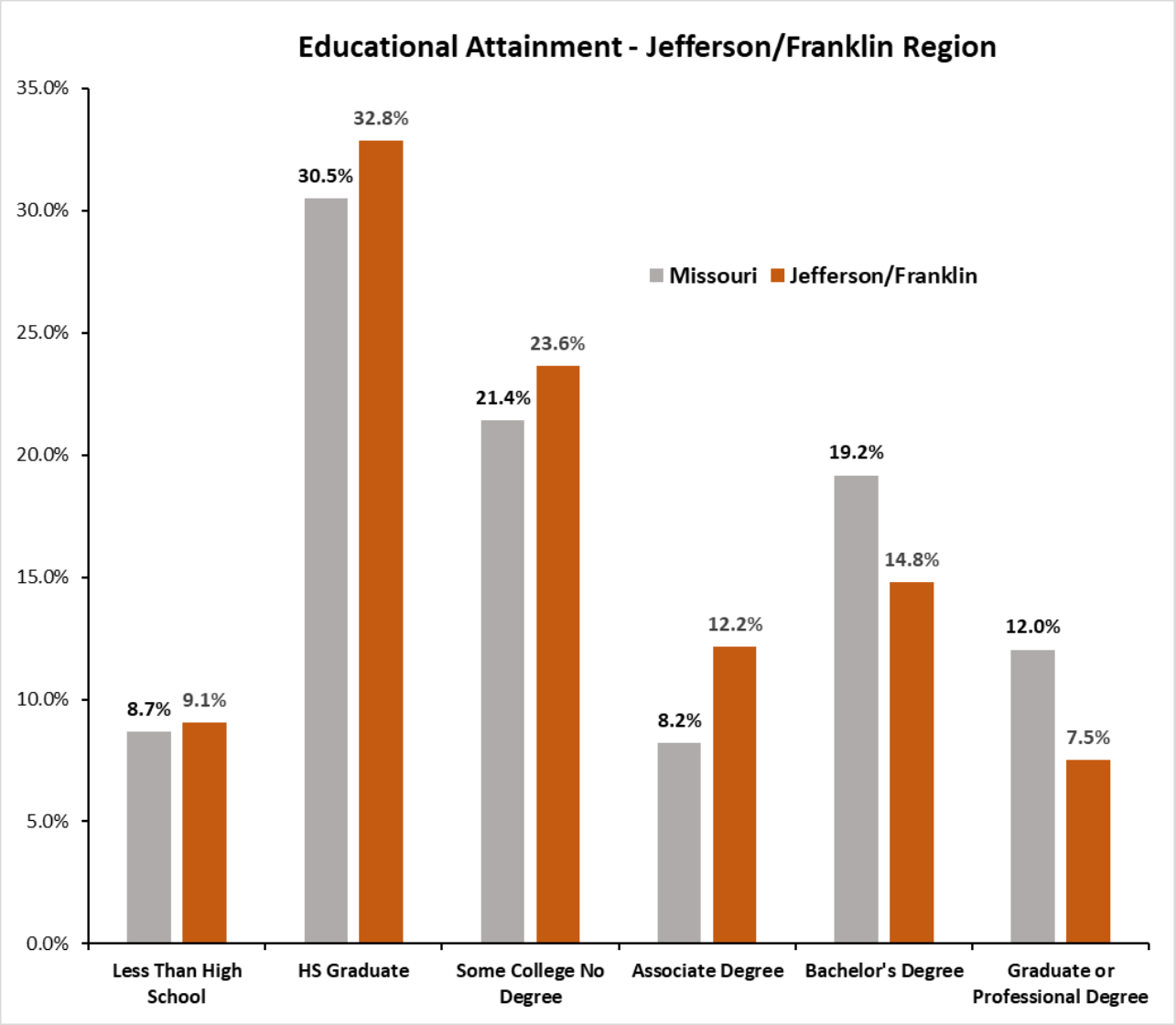
c. **Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce**

Provide an analysis of the educational and skill levels of the workforce.

Educational Attainment

Educational attainment is a measure of the highest level of education obtained by individuals aged 25 and up, or the population generally in the workforce. Ninety-two percent of Missouri's population age 25 and over was a high school graduate or higher in 2022. About 19 percent held a bachelor's degree and 12 percent held a graduate or professional degree.

In the Jefferson/Franklin WDA, the educational attainment rates for individuals were higher than the state average in the categories of less than high school, high school diploma, associate degree, and some college but no degree.



Source: *American Community Survey-5 Year data (2018-2022)*

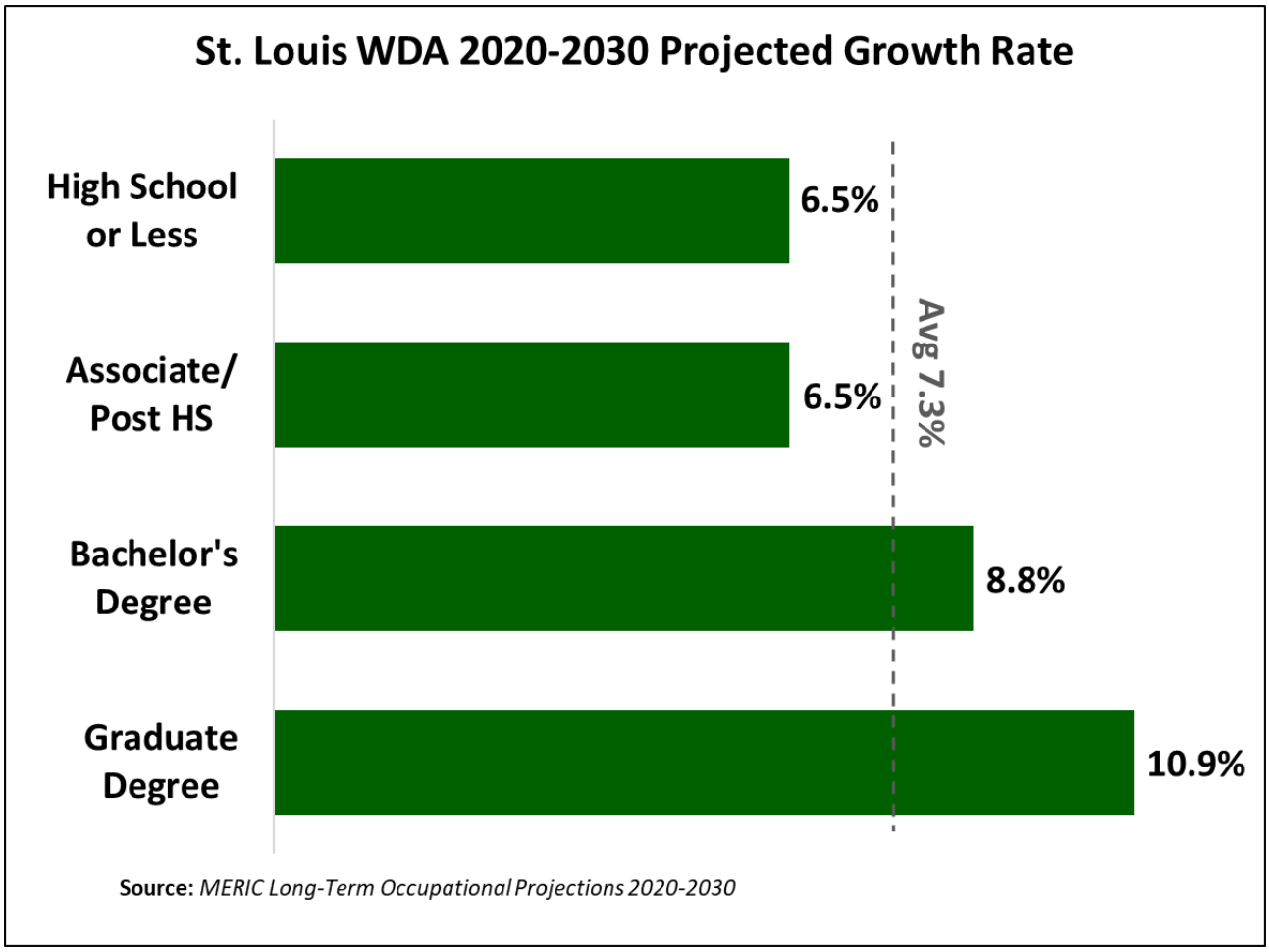
Occupational Projections

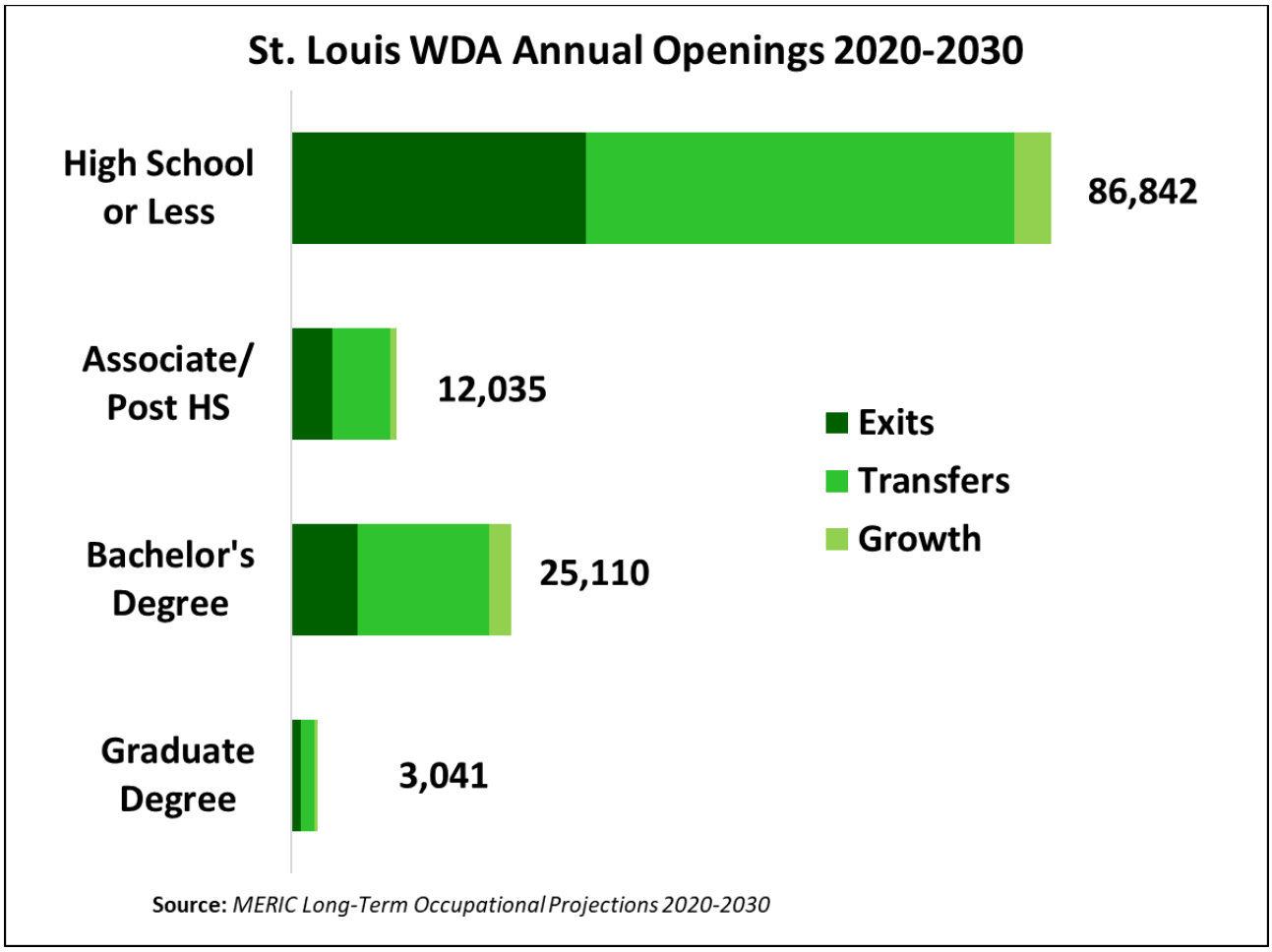
Occupational projections are made for the entire St. Louis Region and include the counties of Franklin, Jefferson, St. Charles, St. Louis City, and St. Louis County. Since the economies and workforce are interrelated for this geography, projections are made for the five-county region, and not for the individual Workforce Development Areas.

Long-term projections are used to identify the fastest growing occupations, as well as occupations with a high number of openings through 2030.

The growth rate of an occupation measures the percentage of job growth by an occupation between the base year and projected year. Occupations requiring a graduate degree are projected to have the fastest growth rate (10.9%), followed by occupations requiring a bachelor's degree (8.8%).

Long-term projections also present data on expected job openings for each occupation through 2030. Openings in an occupation can occur due to an occupation growing, workers moving into a different occupation, or workers leaving the workforce entirely. No matter the reason, qualified individuals are still needed to fill job vacancies. Most openings will be in entry-level jobs, mostly due to high turnover rates as workers either transfer to other occupations or leave the workforce.


St. Louis WDA 2020-2030 Projected Growth Rate
High School or Less
6.5%
Associate/ Post HS
6.5%
Avg 7.3%
Bachelor's Degree
8.8%
Graduate Degree
10.9%
Source: MERIC Long-Term Occupational Projections 2020-2030



d. Skill Gaps

Describe apparent 'skill gaps' in the local area. How were the "skills gaps" determined?

Missouri Workforce 2023 Survey

The Missouri Employer Survey has been conducted four times since 2019. Some questions have remained consistent each year, and others have changed to reflect current issues impacting the state's employers. Methodologies were held as consistent as possible from year-to- year. Comparisons to previous years are made throughout the report where applicable, but each survey indicates a snapshot in time. It can be used to infer changing trends in the labor market and employer sentiment but was not designed as a stringent time series analysis.

Missouri has more than 230,000 payroll employers who provide jobs to over 2.8 million people. Understanding the current hiring trends and challenges faced by the state's employers is essential not only in providing targeted resources and services to help these employers but also in supporting the state's economic and workforce development. Keeping these objectives in view, over 2,800 Missouri companies with five or more employees were surveyed from February 20, 2023, to April 17, 2023. This helped gauge the state of the workforce from the employer's perspective, with 1,183 employers completing the survey. Throughout the report, data in the graphs may not add to 100 percent due to rounding or the ability to select more than one response.

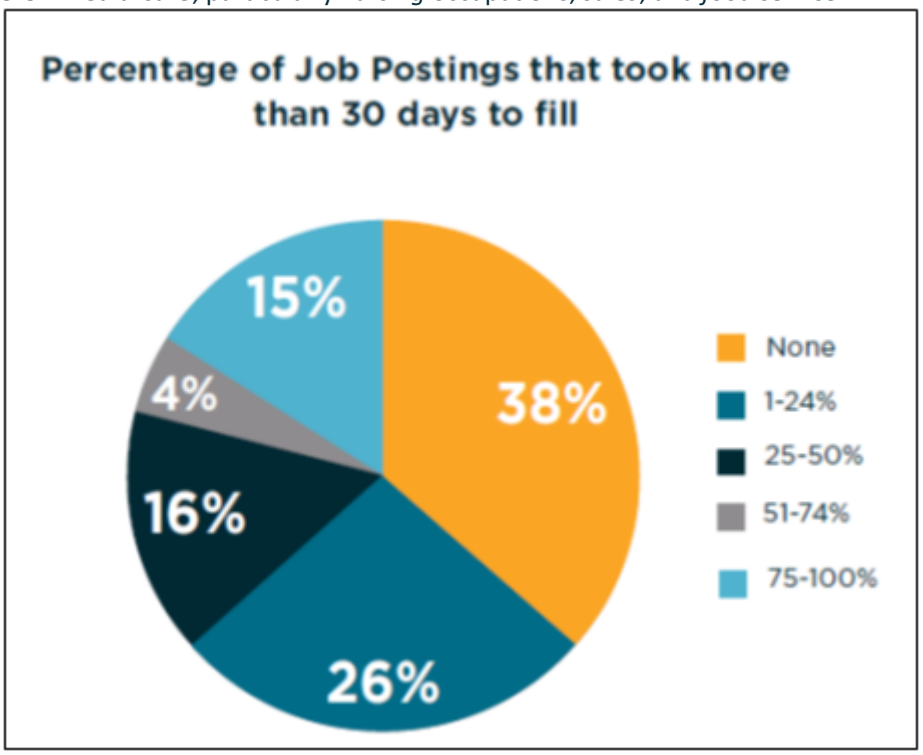
A few takeaways from this survey include:

- Employer's main concerns are hiring and retaining top talent.
- Sixty-two percent of employers had job postings that took more than 30 days to fill.

- The top barrier to expanding employment is a shortage of applicants with knowledge or skills, which has increased significantly from previous years (47% in 2019 and 2020, 60% in 2021, and 65% in 2023).
- Most employees work in person vs. working remotely.
- The top strategy used to retain existing workers is offering increased wages.
- Eighty-nine percent of surveyed employers have increased wages at an average of 11 percent in the last 12 months.

Difficulty hiring quality employees was a constant theme throughout the survey. Sixty-two percent of employers reported they had some positions that took over 30 days to fill and 38 percent reported to have their vacant positions filled in less than 30 days.

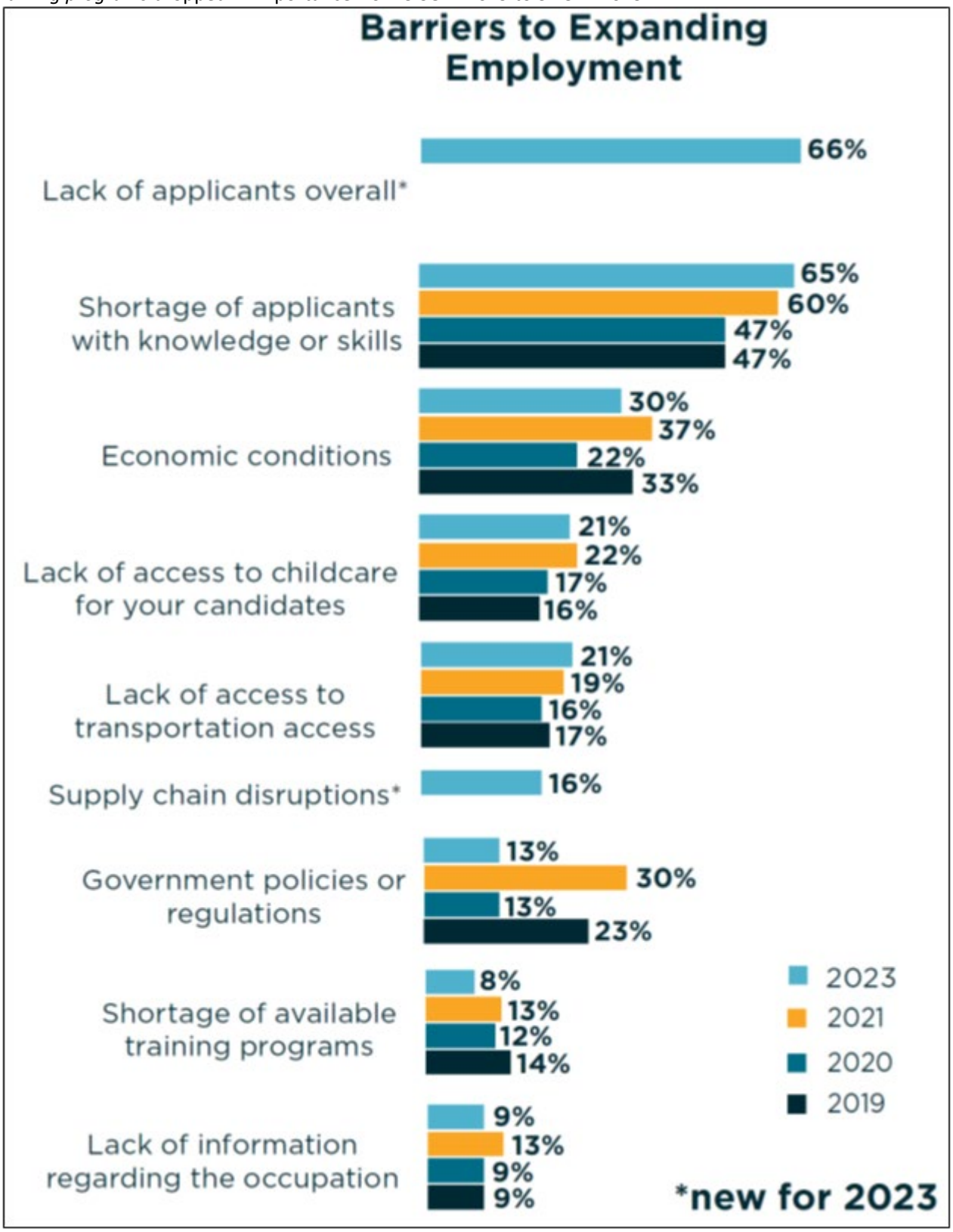
Fifteen percent reported 75-100 percent of their vacant positions took over 30 days to fill. Jobs that were the hardest to fill were in *healthcare*; particularly *nursing* occupations; *sales*; and *food service.*



Employers were asked about the barriers they encountered in expanding employment. *Lack of applicants overall* was a new option for employers in the 2023 survey, and 66 percent of surveyed employers selected this option, making it the top barrier to expansion of employment. The next highest barriers were *shortage of applicants with knowledge or skills* and *economic conditions*, which have been the top cited barriers since the survey began in 2019. *Shortage of applicants with knowledge or skills* increased significantly from previous years, from 47 percent in 2019 and 2020, to 60 percent in 2021, and 65 percent in 2023. *Economic conditions* as a barrier to employment decreased from 37 percent in 2021 to 30 percent in 2023. Similarly, fewer employers encountered *government policies or regulations* as a barrier to expanding employment, dropping from 30 percent in 2021 to 13 percent in 2023.

Other significant barriers encountered in 2023 included *lack of childcare* and *transportation access,* with 21 percent of respondents reporting these as barriers to expanding employment.
The survey also asked employers to rate the importance of each barrier on a scale of one to five, with one being insignificant and five being critical. The highest weighted average response for any barrier cited this year was *lack of applicants overall,* getting an importance score of 4.05 out of 5. The next highest weighted response was *government policies or regulations* (3.88), followed by *shortage of applicants with knowledge or skills* (3.85).

Although the share of employers choosing *government policies or regulations* as a barrier to employment expansion has decreased, for those that did encounter it, it was still a critical barrier. *Shortage of available training programs* dropped in importance from 3.98 in 2019 to 3.15 in 2023.



Sixty-one percent of employers stated they were experiencing a *shortage of skilled applicants.* This is slightly lower than the 68 percent reported in 2021 and much higher than the 28 percent cited in 2019.

Employers were asked about possible shortcomings of applicants. As in previous years, *poor work habits* is the most frequently cited shortcoming at 64 percent (68% in 2021 and 70% in 2019). Other top shortcomings include *lack of general business or industry knowledge* (55% in 2023, 58% in 2021, and 43% in 2019) and *lack of critical thinking and problem solving* (54% in 2023, 59% in 2021, and 49% in 2019).
Since 2019, large changes have occurred in two less frequently mentioned shortcomings – *inability to interact effectively with people of different cultures and socio-economic backgrounds* and *inability to pass a drug test or having a substance abuse issue.* In 2019, 44 percent of employers cited applicant's *inability to interact effectively with people of different cultures and socio-economic backgrounds* as a shortcoming. This dropped to 24 percent in 2021 and 2023. *Inability to pass drug test or has substance abuse issue* increased from 6 percent in 2019 to 30 percent in 2021 and 26 percent in 2023.

Employers were also asked to rate importance of each shortcoming on a scale of one to five, with one being insignificant and five being critical. *Poor work habits* was the most cited shortcoming and also ranked as the most important, with an average importance score of 4.19 out of 5.0. *Poor work habits* was also ranked the highest shortcoming in 2019 and 2021. Other high-ranking shortcomings are *unwillingness or inability to learn* (4.04) and *inability to pass a drug test* (3.98).

Sixty-one percent of employers stated they were experiencing a *shortage of skilled applicants.* This is slightly lower than the 68 percent reported in 2021 and much higher than the 28 percent cited in 2019.

Employers take a variety of measures to address these shortages. Following the trend of previous years when this question was asked from the employers, 80 percent of the respondents reported *hiring less experienced workers and train* them as a measure to address skill shortages in the applicants (81% in 2021 and 87% in 2019). Other popular remedial measures were *offering increased wages* (67%) and *offering flexible work schedules* (52%). *Offering increased wages* rose as a remedial measure from 49 percent of respondents in 2019 to 64 percent in 2020 and 67 percent in 2023. Some less widely used measures, such as *investing in automation instead of hiring, hiring from outside the United States*, and *hiring contractors,* have decreased over the last four years.
Investing in automation instead of hiring decreased from 30 percent in 2019 to 8 percent in 2023, *hiring from outside the United States* decreased from 12 percent in 2019 to 5 percent in 2023, and *hiring contractors* went from 27 percent in 2019 to 14 percent in 2023. Other remedial measures to alleviate the shortage of skilled applicants that were included in the 2023 survey were *offering flexible work schedules* (52%), *offering health insurance* (48%), *providing a one-time bonus* (28%), *offering more paid time off* (20%), *using a temporary agency* (16%), and *offering remote work* (10%).

Companies employ workers in a variety of functional areas with different work responsibilities. *Patient Care* and *Skilled Trades* functional areas had the largest percentage of employers reporting shortages of skilled applicants at 65 percent each. Skill shortages in *Customer Service* have increased substantially, increasing from 25 percent in 2019 and 31 percent in 2020, to 47 percent in 2021, decreasing slightly to 45 percent in 2023.

To address the problem of skill shortages in the current workers, employers use several remedial measures, and *on-the-job-training* remains the most preferred method. Over 9 in 10 employers (91%) stated they used *on-the-job training* to assist current workers in addressing the need for new or increased skills. However, there is a significant decrease in applying these remedial measures in 2023 when compared to 2021, most significantly in *providing a flexible schedule to pursue outside continuing education* (67% in 2021 vs. 46% in 2023) and *in-house classroom training* (60% in 2021 vs. 41% in 2023).

As the economy evolves, customer and workforce needs change. Now more than ever businesses have to adapt to attract and retain quality employees, as well as serve customer's changing needs. Employers were asked which workforce initiatives they were considering for the next year.
Employer's likelihood to consider a variety of initiatives has changed significantly over the last three years. From 2020 to 2021, a large number of employers were considering these workforce initiatives. However, from 2021 to 2023, responses were lower for almost all initiatives. The *remote working* option decreased significantly from 21 percent in 2021 to 13 percent in 2023, indicating a return to physical/centralized workspaces.
The top workforce initiative considered for the next year by employers was *cross-training and knowledge transfer* (67%), followed by *increased employee care and engagement* (53%) and *reskilling or upskilling employees to new ways of working* (46%).

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been an increased interest in understanding remote work. Prior to pandemic, (February 2020) about 15 percent employers were having some workers working remotely. Remote work peaked in 2020 during the height of the pandemic, with over half of employers (56%) stating they had some workers working remotely, either full or part-time. This dropped significantly to 20 percent in 2021 and has increased slightly to 25 percent in 2023. When asked if they expected the number of remote workers to change over time, the vast majority (92%) of employers said they expected it to stay the same. In the question about workforce initiatives considered in the coming year, 13 percent of employers indicated considering *remote work.*

Employers may perform a variety of screening processes before hiring an employee. *Criminal checks* were the most common types of background checks conducted prior to hiring, with 74 percent of Missouri employers reporting they perform one. *Drug screens* were next at 46 percent. In 2023, background screenings involving *professional license or certification, social media, drug screen, and financial checks* decreased significantly from 2021.

In 2019, less than one percent of Missouri employers *would not consider* hiring an applicant convicted of a felony offense who had completed his or her sentence and/or probation. This increased to 20 percent in 2020, was at 19 percent in 2021 and decreased slightly to 16 percent in 2023. Most employers (62%) reported it would *depend on the nature of the felony and time of the offense*, a significant increase from previous surveys Employers responding they would *consider for any job they are qualified for* decreased from 17 percent in 2020 and 2021 to 10 percent in 2023.

The top strategies used by employers in the last 12 months to retain existing workers included *offering increased wages* (86%), *offering a flexible work schedule* (64%), and *offering additional training* (52%). *Remote work* was listed as a strategy by only 13 percent of employers. When asked, "Have you increased wages in the last 12 months," 89 percent of employers said yes. Of the employers who increased wages, the average increase was 11 percent.

[1] [1] Individuals with barriers to employment include displaced homemakers; low-income individuals; Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities; older individuals; ex-offenders; homeless individuals, or homeless children and youths; youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system; individuals who are English-language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers; farmworkers (as defined at section 167(i) of WIOA and Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 35-14); individuals within two years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program; single parents (including single pregnant women); and long-term unemployed individuals.

[2] Veterans, unemployed workers, and youth, and others that the State may identify.

9. Workforce Development, Education, and Training Activities Analysis

Describe the workforce development services and activities, including education and training in the LWDA, to address the education and skills needs of the workforce. Include education and training activities of the core programs and mandatory and optional One-Stop Delivery System partners[3].

a. The Strengths and Weaknesses of Workforce Development Activities

Provide an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the workforce developments services and activities identified above.

Strengths

The region utilizes digital technology to help meet the needs of all citizens. The utilization of Zoom and DocuSign ensures that job center services are disrupted if an individual cannot physically make it into a Job Center. Staff use technology to enable citizens to access services in a way that they are most comfortable with.

The Office of Job Training Programs, serving as staff to the LWDB, with Chief Elected Official (CEO) and LWDB approval, provides continuous improvement, technical assistance, management information system, fiscal management, sub state monitoring and overall maintenance of the Jefferson/Franklin Region One-Stop Delivery System.

The primary expectation of the local Jefferson/Franklin Region's workforce system is to be a seamless, integrated One-stop delivery system. The goal is that a full spectrum of core programs, one-stop delivery system partners and community resources will be available and used to support the skill needs of business, industry, and individual customers.

There are two comprehensive One-Stop Job Centers in the region, Arnold (Jefferson County) and Washington (Franklin County). WIOA partners are co-located and provide services, such as Trade Adjustment Act (OWD), Vocational Rehabilitation, Youth and Dislocated Worker programs, Adult Education & Literacy, and Perkins Career and Technical Education programs. These locations have the capability to provide basic and individualized career services and training services.

These program partners interact and meet on a regular basis to enhance services to the customers and encourage co-enrollment among partner programs. Effective communication among core partners is essential for offering as many available resources as possible to the region's customers. This strengthens the region's ability to provide individuals the access and opportunity to connect with most of the education and training services.

Other One-Stop partners may provide support services and help alleviate barriers that may keep individuals from succeeding in meeting their employment and training goals. The following partners provide services through a MOU: Family Support Division (Arnold and Washington), Jefferson Franklin Community Action Corp., Division of Vocational Rehabilitation/Rehabilitation Services for the Blind, Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, migrant and seasonal farm workers, veterans programs and Jefferson County Community Partnership. Multiple partners located at various locations in each county allows customers to get available services from multiple access points.

The Job Center team members and One-Stop delivery system partners will utilize the region's services to assist customers with quality workforce information and accessing quality training providers.

Team members will utilize a variety of products as appropriate from Education and Training, Occupational Information, Training Assistance and Providers, and financial assistance to allow customers the opportunity to make a customer centered informed choice in choosing a training provider. The Jefferson/Franklin Region has available a full array of employment and training activities.

Basic and Individualized career services are provided through WIOA Adult, Youth and Dislocated Worker programs, Wagner Peyser (WP), Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), Adult Education & Literacy (AEL), State Unemployment and the Senior Community Services program. Basic career services include unemployment compensation assistance, financial aid information, initial assessment, referral to other programs, labor exchange services, and labor market information, and outreach and intake.

Individualized career services include comprehensive assessment, individual employment plan, group counseling, individual counseling, short-term prevocational services, out-of-area job search assistance and relocation assistance, internships and work experiences, career planning, financial literacy, workforce preparation, English language acquisition, and follow-up services.

Education and training services address the education and skill needs of the workforce by providing the following: occupational skills training, on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, transitional jobs, workplace training and cooperative education, skills upgrading and retraining, entrepreneurial training, job readiness training, adult education and literacy, customized training WIOA pre-apprenticeship and registered apprenticeship.

The provision of education and training services is generally accomplished through the collaboration of multiple partners providing assistance in career counseling, financial aid, tuition assistance and supportive services. Partnerships are established with WIOA Adult, Youth and Dislocated Worker programs, TAA, Migrant Seasonal Farmworker program, Job Corps, AEL, VR, Veteran's programs and Perkins Career and Technical education.

Eligible adults, youth and dislocated workers are able to use Individual Training Accounts at qualified educational institutions. Through the Missouri Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) on jobs.mo.gov customers are required to comparatively evaluate costs, location, and performance of individual programs offered by education providers. The advice and guidance available through the One-Stop system provide the assistance customers need in making informed choices when choosing a training provider.

Weakness

While Missouri has made progress in the sharing of data, true data integration is still a challenge. Each partner operates independent systems that do not have the capability to communicate with each other. The State continues to encourage all departments to explore options to share and integrate data through its workforce development initiatives. Core partners have completed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that now allows data sharing of employer information.

Another weakness would be the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). The ETPL was converted to jobs.mo.gov in the Summer of 2023. The new ETPL is not user friendly, and a couple of training providers have declined participation due to the cumbersome approval process. The system itself also has challenges as programs do not show up correctly.

Local Workforce Development Capacity
Provide an analysis of the capacity of local entities to provide the workforce development services and activities to address the identified education and skills needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers in the LWDA.

The capacity of the region's local entities to provide workforce development services and activities has been managed through changing funding levels. The Jefferson/Franklin Region works closely with partners to co–enroll customers and maximize the resources available for funding education and skilled training programs.

There are many One-Stop partners with available training dollars and staff makes sure that customers are aware of federal financial aid and encourages them to apply for grants and scholarships that are available. Customers are encouraged to review a minimum of three training providers to determine the best quality training for a reasonable cost. The region wants their customers to make informed choices when deciding the appropriate occupational skills and training options.

The community colleges in each county consult with area employers and develop training programs to meet the workforce needs of the employers. Training programs are typically short term, cost effective and offer many options for further training and the opportunity for earning stackable credentials. Partnering with service providers to provide workforce development services and activities gives the job seeker population credentials for skill training that will help to improve workforce quality, meet the needs of employers, and increase employment, retention, and earnings for the region's workforce.

Continuous assessment of services delivered through the one-stop system is achieved through weekly meetings with all Job Center and co-located partner staff. These meetings provide an opportunity to discuss funding availability in the various programs and new training programs introduced by the region's training providers. There are training sessions held to help staff become more familiar with labor market, in demand training programs and the enrollment requirements. The Jefferson/Franklin Region and its partners work collaboratively to identify and share the education and skill needs of the workforce and employers within the region.

OPERATIONAL ELEMENTS

Local Structure

10. Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) Profile

Describe the geographical workforce development area, including the LWDA's major communities, major employers, training, and educational institutions (technical and community colleges, universities, etc.), population, diversity of the population, and relevant growth trends.

The geographical workforce development area is Jefferson and Franklin counties of Missouri which is a

part of the St. Louis metropolitan area. The Missouri Job Centers are located in the largest communities within the region, Arnold in Jefferson County – population of 20,819 and Washington in Franklin County – population of 14,916 (city-data.com).

According to MERIC, approximately 5% of the region's populations identifies as "Black or African American" with the majority living in Jefferson County. Just over 3% of the region's population identifies as "Hispanic or Latino" and is almost evenly split between the two counties.

In the two county region, 8.1% of those ages 18-64 live at or below the poverty level and 11.4% report having a disability.

Jefferson and Franklin counties are suburbs of St. Louis with both urban and rural communities. The major employers in the area are represented by healthcare, manufacturing and public- school districts. Jefferson county employers include Mercy Hospital Jefferson, Metal Container, Sinclair & Rush, Ardagh, HJ Enterprises and LMC Industries. Public school districts include Fox C-6, Northwest R-I, Hillsboro R-3, Festus, DeSoto 73 and Windsor C-I. Franklin County employers include Mercy Hospital Washington, Missouri Baptist Hospital, Magnet Group, Henniges Automotive, Parker Sporlan Div., Aerofil Technology, Inc., Pauwels Transformers, Inc., WEG Transformers USA, and Meramec Group, Inc. Public school districts include Washington, Union R-XI, St. Clair R-XIII and Sullivan.

Local community colleges are Jefferson College, Hillsboro (Jefferson County), and East Central College, Union (Franklin County). Four Rivers Career Center is located in Washington (Franklin County). Jefferson County and Franklin counties have a small minority population. Population data is shown on the U.S. Census Charts below. The minority population concentrates in major cities, in the counties.

In Jefferson County, these would include Arnold, DeSoto, Festus, and Pevely. In Franklin County, these would include Sullivan and Washington. (U.S. Census data)

The St. Louis Metropolitan region is composed of four counties and the city of St. Louis with the region as a whole accounting for 38% of the state's total employment. Among the top workforce employers by North America Industry Classification System (NAICS) Industry Sector in the St. Louis Workforce region: Health Care and Social Assistance, Retail Trade, Accommodation and Food Services, Educational Services, Public Administration and Manufacturing.

Jefferson and Franklin counties' largest employers include hospitals, county government and educational services. Manufacturing and retail trade continue to be growth industries within the two-county area. Workforce demographics indicate that male and female workers are equally distributed with the majority of workers being 30 to 54 years of age. The educational attainment for most workers includes some level of post-secondary education. It is anticipated that the Jefferson/Franklin County labor force population will continue to seek training to acquire the skills needed to obtain long term gainful employment in the workforce. In addition to the local community colleges in each county, the St. Louis Metropolitan region offers educational institutions to meet the skill development needs of the Jefferson/Franklin region's population.

11. Local Facility and Information

a. Identify the local comprehensive One-Stop Center(s), including current mailing and street addresses, telephone and fax numbers and list them in **Attachment 1** to the Plan.

Arnold Job Center

3675 West Outer Rd, Suite 102
Arnold, MO 63010
Phone: 636-865-6060
Fax: 636-865-6009
Email: arnold@dhewd.mo.gov

Washington Job Center
108 Washington Square
Washington, MO 63090
Phone: 636-583-9670
Fax: 636-239-0329
Email: washington@dhewd.mo.gov

b. Identify the local affiliate sites, including current mailing and street addresses, telephone and fax numbers and list them in **Attachment 1** to the Plan.

- There are no affiliate sites.

c. Identify the local specialized sites, including current mailing and street addresses, telephone and fax numbers and list them in **Attachment 1** to the Plan.

- There are no specialized sites.

[3] Mandatory One-Stop partners: Each LWDA must have one comprehensive One-Stop Center that provides access to physical services of the core programs and other required partners. In addition to the core programs, for individuals with multiple needs to access the services, the following partner programs are required to provide access through the One-Stops: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Career and Technical Education (Perkins Act), Community Services Block Grant, Indian and Native American programs, Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Employment and Training programs, Job Corps, Local Veterans' Employment Representatives and Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program, National Farmworker Jobs Program, Senior Community Service Employment Program, Trade Adjustment Assistance programs, Unemployment Insurance, Re-entry Programs, and YouthBuild.

d. If your LWDA has any other additional service sites and the LWDA refers to them as anything other than comprehensive, affiliate or specialized centers, please list the service sites by the title your LWDA uses and describe the services provided in **Attachment 1**. Also, list the one-stop partners providing services at those locations.
    - There are no additional service sites.

12. Local One-Stop Partner/MOU/IFA Information

a. Memorandums of Understanding (MOU)
Include in **Attachment 2** a copy of each MOU between the Board and each of the One-Stop partners (or one "umbrella" MOU for the same purpose) concerning the operation of the One-Stop Delivery System in the LWDA. The MOU must be up-to-date, signed and dated. Include the MOU(s) as Attachment 3. Missouri Job Centers must ensure that equal access to employment and training services are provided to the farm workers and agricultural employers in their LWDAs.

See Attachment 2.

b. Cost Sharing Agreement/Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA)
Include as part of the MOU in **Attachment 2** the Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) and negotiated cost-sharing worksheet/workbook for each Missouri Job Center that includes the line items, dollar amounts and percentage rates for One-stop partners, OWD and the Board. Indicate the number of FTEs present and/or the amount of space (sq. footage) utilized by the partner.

See Attachment 2.

Integration of One-Stop Service Delivery

13. Local Workforce Development System

Describe the workforce development system in the LWDA.

a. Describe how the Local WDB will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with rapid response activities.
The Employment Transition Team (ETT) program, now the Business Services Unit (BSU) is operated by the Office of Workforce Development (OWD) in coordination with the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB). OWD Business Services & Rapid Response specialists are responsible for coordinating and overseeing ETT services within the region. Local coordination contacts are made with a LWDB representative, Arnold and Washington Career Center leaders, regional business services team, Union Representatives, and community groups. OWD's staff take the lead role in responding to layoff events. OWD provides on-site services or in-person ETT services to any layoff affecting twenty-five (25) or more employees. ETT services will be planned and delivered as soon as possible by contacting the employer immediately after receiving notification of the layoff event. An assessment of the employer's layoff schedule, the potential for averting the layoff, and the background and probable assistance needs of the affected workers shall be developed. Review of re-employment prospects for workers in the local community and available resources will also be assessed to meet the short and long-term needs of the affected workers. The method used to quickly respond to a current or projected permanent closure or mass layoff, shall be to activate the

local employment transition team consisting of the following partners: the One Stop Operator, local Missouri Career Center offices, Unemployment Insurance, local economic development and/or union representative as needed, and other representatives designated as appropriate. The employment transition team will coordinate an employee meeting to provide informational packets that include the ETT programs and services brochure, Division of Employment Security (DES) UI Benefits fact sheet, the Missouri Economic Research Information Center (MERIC) regional Real Time Labor Market Summary and any local flyer or brochure. ERE participants complete a partial Registration Form and Survey. A labor management committee or Transition Team voluntarily agreed to by the employee's bargaining representative and company management may be established to prepare a strategy for assessing the employment and training needs of the affected workers. A transition committee comprised of representatives of the employer, the affected workers and the local community devised an implementation strategy that responds to the reemployment needs of the workers.

b. Describe how the Board will ensure the expenditure of funds for training providers are selected from both the Eligible Training Provider List/System approved for use by the State of Missouri as well as approved from the State list by the local workforce development board.

Staff will insure all of the following requirements are met before approving the provider for local funds:

a) The program is listed on the Missouri ETPL with State and Local approval.
b) Training-related job placements of past graduates equal the entered employment, retention and wage performance rate required of the Jefferson/Franklin Region for the current Program Year. This requires the training provider to collect job placement data on its graduates.
c) Staff will do their due diligence to ensure that individuals coming into the Job Center with similar training/credentials are able to earn a living wage with that training or credential (To ensure we are not paying to train individuals for occupations that do not move them out of poverty)
d) Staff will do their due diligence to ensure that most participants that start a training program complete the program.
e) Staff will compare the cost to complete the program to insure it is not higher than twice the amount of completing the equivalent program at other local training providers on the State ETPL within a reasonable distance.

If the above criteria are met, staff will reach out to the training provider to verify contact information and explain the vendor packet required to receive WIOA tuition payments from the Jefferson/Franklin Region. No employment and training activity is approved without appearing on the ETPL.

14. Accessibility

Describe how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and one-stop partners will comply with WIOA section 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and service, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. (See current OWD Issuance and the State of Missouri Non-discrimination Plan)

The Jefferson/Franklin Region offers workforce development services at the One-Stop Comprehensive Centers located in Arnold and Washington. The One-Stop Centers provide physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities to ensure that the full array of one-stop services is available to all job center customers.

Communication mechanisms and Assistive Technology equipment within the job centers ensure that individuals with disabilities are receiving the same information as effectively as any other customer. The availability of auxiliary aids and services allow customers with visual, hearing, physical, and cognitive disabilities the communication access to products and services. ***See Attachment 22.***

Sign language interpreter services may be provided to individuals upon request to enhance communication with hearing impaired individuals.

Staff training is important in the effectiveness of providing services when a customer discloses their disability and may need accommodation to address their individual needs. Training is provided for staff to be knowledgeable of the assistive technology and other resources needed for individuals with disabilities to be successfully employed. Strong partnerships have been established with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Rehabilitation Services for the Blind, Next Step for Life (Jefferson County) and Missouri Goodwill Industries (Franklin County). These agencies continue to be a resource for job center customers with disabilities to provide adequate preparation and reasonable accommodation to enable individuals to achieve their maximum potential in the home, community, educational settings and in employment. Vocational Rehabilitation, Independent Living Rehabilitation, Older Blind Services and Transition Services are available to assist in providing all individuals with disabilities the opportunity for improved workforce services. Job Centers support service integration and has established co-enrollment processes to better serve customers that may benefit from the services provided by Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)and Rehabilitation Services for the Blind (RSB).

Co-enrollment with WIOA core partners provides individuals with the support services needed to enter a career pathway and become self-sufficient. When Job Center customers disclose that they have a physical or mental impairment that has caused difficulties with working, the staff may see the need for additional services through VR/RSB and the customer is co-enrolled into both WIOA core programs. staff will provide the customer with contact information and how to apply for VR/RSB services. The Questionnaire for VR services and the Health Assessment forms may be provided to the customer to complete prior to the first VR meeting. The Job Center will provide initial assessment and enrollment into WIOA career services. Career exploration, work readiness activities and labor market information will be provided to assist the customer in making informed choices when they are establishing career goals.

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) information provides another resource to assist with finding employment. WIOA funds may also be available to assist with vocational training or on-the-job training. VR staff shall provide guidance and counseling and determine the appropriate VR services such as Ticket to Work, supported employment or vocational training. Both partners work in collaboration to assist the customer with job development and placement. Customers who are visually impaired or blind may access job center services utilizing the available assistive technology equipment. They will receive all the services offered by the job center such as assessment, career exploration work readiness, training opportunities and labor market information. A referral may be made to RSB to provide additional assistance in job placement and provide the additional support necessary for the customer to become productively employed. WIOA youth programs may co-enroll high school students with a disability who are aged 16-21 and are enrolled with VR to prepare for the transition from school to post-high school

employment, education, specialized training, and independence. Co-enrollment will provide more opportunities to improve workplace skills through work-based learning experiences and career readiness activities. Participation in postsecondary education will be promoted to allow students to become employed in high-demand jobs and careers, including science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) careers. WIOA co-enrollment in core partner programs further enhances employability for individuals with disabilities to obtain, maintain or advance in employment.

15. Assessment of One-Stop Program and Partners

a. Describe how the Board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers and participants.

The Board will ensure continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through partner meetings and a quarterly review by the LWDB Executive Committee. The intent is to ensure the LWDB is an efficient entity. Should the needs of local employers and participants be not being met, special committees may be formed to offer direction and oversight.

b. Describe the actions the LWDB will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performance WDB.

Through subcontractor performance contracts and partner MOU's the Jefferson/Franklin WDB in coordination with Local Elected Officials (LEO's) will hold service providers and partners accountable for programmatic and fiscal performance for which subcontractor and partners have agreed. The WDB is prepared to impose performance mandates as required and/or necessary to meet the region-wide performance. The LEO's and WDB continually review the local Jefferson/Franklin Plan as respects to a sustainability plan on how to sustain program performance and fiscal integrity in the event the region experiences additional formula fund cuts. The sustainability plan will be reviewed by the LEO's and WDB and adjustments will be made as necessary to continue providing quality service to our job seekers and business customers. These actions and efforts will ensure the Jefferson/Franklin WDB remains a high-performance workforce development board. The Jefferson/Franklin LWDB reviews program performance at quarterly LWDB meeting to ensure that the Board is aware of performance. The review includes then negotiated rate and the current performance rate.

The Board will work to maintain its high performance by reviewing actions to improve local WIOA performance rates include but are not limited to:

►Continuous monitoring reviews being conducted by the Compliance and Monitoring staff to ensure case management validity.

►Review of all new enrollments. The Compliance and Monitoring staff reviews 100% of all program enrollments to ensure compliance with eligibility, service activities, case note entries, and other policy guidelines.

►Staff utilize the MoPerforms Database System to monitor performance measures. This monitoring allows us to make some changes to participant activity, if needed.

►If partner data agreements are in place, information and coordination of activities may improve the performance of programs.

►Customer surveys will determine if improvements can be made to the delivery of services.

The LWDB will continue to support and implement the unified system of measuring program performance, accountability, and customer service satisfaction among specific partners providing services.

Local Administration

16. Chief Elected Official (CEO)

Please identify the CEO. List the name, title, address, phone number and email address. Place it on a cover sheet in **Attachment 3.**

See Attachment 3.

17. CEO Consortium Agreement and Bylaws

If the LWDA includes more than one unit of local government, the Chief Elected Officials (CEO) may develop a CEO agreement; however, it is not mandatory under WIOA law. If the LWDA is including a CEO agreement, please specify the respective roles of the individual CEOs and include the **CEO Consortium Agreement as Attachment 3 including any CEO Bylaws** that are in effect.

See Attachment 3.

NOTE: (The CEO membership should be reviewed after each county and/or municipal election. If there are changes in the CEO membership, or leadership, a new CEO agreement will need to be signed and submitted to OWD-by the first day of June following the election.) OWD must be notified with the contact information as soon as the CEO takes office.

18. Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) Membership

Please list the **LWDB members in Attachment 4**. Identify the members of the Board, the organization or business they represent, and the category (i.e., business, labor, adult education and literacy, vocational rehabilitation, Wagner-Peyser/OWD, higher education, economic development, TANF, Other) The LWDB Certification Form may be used. See current OWD Issuance Local Workforce Development Board Membership Requirements and Recertification Procedures under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

a. LWDB Standing Committees

List of all **standing committees** on a separate page in **Attachment 4**.

See Attachment 4.

b. LWDB Certification Letter (most recent)

Include in **Attachment 4** a copy of the current **LWDB certification letter**

See Attachment 4.

19. LWDB Bylaws

The Board must review its by-laws annually and complete the "Local Workforce Development Board's ATTESTATION FOR REVIEW OF BY-LAWS" form included near the end of this document. Include the Board's current by-laws and the completed attestation form (copy is included in this guidance) as **Attachment 5** to the Plan.

See Attachment 5.

Local Planning & Fiscal Oversight

20. Local Fiscal Agent

Identify the **Local Fiscal Agent**. Include contact information. Include the information as **Attachment 6**.
See current OWD Issuance Policy on Designation of a Local Fiscal Agent by the Chief Elected Official.

See Attachment 6.

21. Competitive Procurement

Describe the competitive (procurement) process used to award the grants and contracts in the LWDA for activities carried out under Title I of WIOA, including the process to procure training services for Youth and any that are made as exceptions to the ITA process. Include the information on the following processes: advertisement/notification to prospective bidders, time period bidders have to respond to the solicitation, evaluation and award/non-award notification. This may include those pages from the Board's procurement guidelines that describe the competitive-procurement process and the process to procure Youth training providers. Include the **Financial Procurement Policy as Attachment 9.**

Jefferson/Franklin Consortium will follow general and administrative rules that apply to the use of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I funds. Procurement Contracts will be conducted on a cost reimbursement basis.

Example of Request for Proposal Schedule
Date scheduled: Announcement to procure training services
Date scheduled: Pre-Bid Conference date
Date scheduled: Letter of intent and written questions due date
Date scheduled: Response to questions
Date scheduled: Proposal due
Date scheduled: Proposal evaluation Date scheduled: Pre-Award conference with offerors within the Competitive range
Date scheduled: Youth Committee approval Date scheduled: LWDB approval AWARD for July 1, (program year) Approved Contractor begins Delivering Staff Services Codes of Conduct and Conflict of interest issues will be followed. Outcome based system shall be applied to procurement. Procurement should meet a qualitative goal such as "moving unemployed customers into employment" and meet established local area performance measures.

See Attachment 9.

22. Duplicative Costs and Services

a. Eliminating Duplicative Administrative Costs
Describe how the Board is working toward eliminating duplicative administrative costs to enable increased training investments.

The Jefferson/Franklin Region through local MOU's will work with local partners to provide comprehensive services to WIOA participants. Uniform Guidance 2 CFR 200 will be referenced in working toward eliminating any duplicative administrative costs to enable increased training investments. Currently the One-Stop operator and service providers are jointly determined by a cost sharing review with partner agencies of all costs. Overhead, office supplies, postage, space,

etc. Sharing cost for efficiency with partners will continue to be reviewed to eliminate all duplicative costs. This allows the Board to increase its training investments in participants and eliminates duplicative administrative costs. The Jefferson/Franklin Region continually reviews administrative functions to determine less administrative/overhead costs required

b. Eliminating Duplicative Services

Identify how the Board ensures that services are not duplicated.

The One-Stop delivery system has reduced duplication of services through its integrated service delivery model which allows staff to deliver state funded services to adults and dislocated workers through Wagner-Peyser and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The One-Stop delivery system has consolidated labor exchange and allowable WIOA services and team members utilize an integrated set of reportable services in MoJobs which provides smooth customer flow and an accountability process for enrolling customers. All team members work with the universal population of customers and access MoJobs to determine the services that have been provided and the next steps that are needed to engage the customer in accessing the product box. The region's One-Stop Partner MOU promotes coordinated service delivery, integrated customer interviews between programs, and interagency communication to avoid duplication of services. These partnerships are necessary to provide job seekers with highquality streamlined career services, training, and supportive services to become employed and to help businesses find skilled workers.

23. Planning Budget Summaries (PBSs)

Include the Planning Budget Summaries for the upcoming Program Year and Fiscal Year in **Attachment 7** to the Plan. (Instruction for this planning item will be sent after the locally negotiated performance goals are finalized.)

See Attachment 7.

24. Complaint and Grievance Policy / EEO Policy

Establish and define the local policy and procedure for Complaint and Grievance Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions of WIOA. Both policies should be incorporated into the MOU and disseminated throughout the LWDA for all workforce development professionals to understand and implement. This should adhere to federal and state complaint and grievance guidance and policy. Include either a statement that the Board will follow the state policy or develop a local policy and include a copy as **Attachment 10** to the Plan. (See the State of Missouri Non-discrimination Plan.)

See Attachment 10.

25. Planning Process and Partners

The expectation is that the Board will involve business, organized labor, local public officials, community-based organizations, WIOA service providers, and other stakeholders in the development and review of this Plan. Describe the local plan development process, including how input for the Local Plan was obtained by all the partners involved in the MOU. Also, see **Attachment 57** - **Statement of Assurances.**

The LWDB has involved business, organized labor, local public officials, community-based organizations, WIOA service providers, and other stakeholders in the preparation of this PLAN through meetings and electronic interaction. A review of the completed PLAN has been shared with all

stakeholders. Board staff, WIOA services providers, MOU partners, and other stakeholders attended various virtual meetings to discuss this Plan and MOU updates. Partners were kept informed via electronic interactions. Those partners not in attendance were contacted electronically for updates, if any. The Board approved the updates in April 2024.

26. Performance Negotiations

Identify the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and CEO to be used to measure the performance of the Board and to be used by the Board for measuring the performance of the Local Fiscal Agent (where appropriate), eligible providers, and the One-Stop Delivery System in the LWDA.

WIOA ADULT	Latest Negoiated Rate:
Employment Rate Q-2	74.50%
Employment Rate Q-4	71.00%
Credential Rate	68.75%
Measurable Skills Gain	52.00%
Median Earnings	$7,150.00
WIOA DISLOCATED WORKER	**Local WDB Plan**
Employment Rate Q-2	76.00%
Employment Rate Q-4	72.00%
Credential Rate	67.50%
Measurable Skills Gain	55.00%
Median Earnings	$8,000.00
WIOA YOUTH	**Local WDB Plan**
Youth Placement Rate Q-2	75.00%
Youth Placement Rate Q-4	76.00%
Credential Rate	60.00%
Measurable Skills Gain	50.00%
Median Earnings	$3,800.00
WAGNER PEYSER	**Local WDB Plan**
Employment Rate Q-2	67.00%
Employment Rate Q-4	70.00%
Median Earnings	$6,000.00

27. Public Comment

Describe the process used by the Board to provide an opportunity for public comment, including comment by representatives of businesses and labor organizations, and input into the development of the Plan, prior to submission of the Plan. Provide an affidavit of proof of this public announcement for comment. See **Attachment 57** - **Statement of Assurances**

The Jefferson/Franklin Local Plan submission notification was made available for Public Comment including representatives of businesses and labor organizations through local meetings, website publication and newspapers for at least 14 days not to exceed a 30-day public comment period in April 2024. No public comments were received.

28. Assurances

Complete and sign the **"Statement of Assurances Certification" form** located in this guidance and include this as **Attachment 57** to the Plan.

See Attachment 57.

PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Service Delivery

29. One-Stop Service Delivery

Describe how the LWDA is assisting customers in making informed choices based on quality workforce information and accessing quality training providers. Provide a list of one-stop partner products and services available at each Missouri Job Center.

The local WIOA system is customer-focused to help customers access the tools they need to make informed choices and access quality training providers. Customers who are interested in a career change or skills upgrade training are offered a variety of assessment tools to assist in determining the appropriate training. Online resources are available for customers to access additional assessment tools and labor market information such as Missouri Connections, KeyTrain, and ONET. The Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC) offers assessment and career exploration to match customers with Missouri-specific occupational and educational information. Other resources for career and occupational information are offered through the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the U.S. Department of Labor's Career One-Stop.

Adult and Dislocated Workers

30. Title I - Employment and Training Products and Services

Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of all Adult and Dislocated Worker employment and training activities in the LWDA. Please include how the Board uses products and services, such as workshops, assessment products (Key Train, WorkKeys /National Career Readiness Certificate [NCRC], Talify, etc.) and jobseeker products (such as Résumé Builder, etc.), to engage customers and assist with their re-employment efforts.

Eligible adults and dislocated workers can use Individual Training Accounts at qualified educational institutions. Through the Training Provider Search Tool on www.jobs.mo.gov, customers may comparatively evaluate costs, location, and performance of individual programs offered by education providers. The advice and guidance available through the one-stop system provide the assistance customers need in making informed choices when choosing a training provider. Job Center Staff members will utilize the region's services to assist customers with quality workforce information and accessing quality training providers. Team members will utilize a variety of products as appropriate from Education and Training, Occupational Information, Training Assistance and Providers, and Financial Assistance to allow customers the opportunity to make a customer centered informed choice in choosing a training provider. Following is a list of the services consistently offered through the Arnold and Washington Job Centers:

- WIOA Adult, Dislocated Workers, and Youth Programs provides services to assist with obtaining/retaining employment and provides training opportunities that allow individuals to obtain higher wages.
- Basic and Individualized services offered by WIOA Title I and the Wagner-Peyser Programs. All individuals enrolled into WP receive resume assistance which prepares them for applying for job openings. Staff assisted resume help is available upon request.
- Veterans Programs Service
- Trade Adjustment Assistance

• On-the-Job Training Programs allow individuals to find obtain employment they might otherwise not be qualified for by off-setting initial employment expenses related to training for the employer.
• Financial Assistance for Post-Secondary Programs (WIOA eligible) is available to reduce financial burden.
• National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) scores are used by area employers to assess candidates. NCRC WorkKeys are used by individuals to assess skills and aptitudes.
• Workshops (Individual & Groups) are used to skill individuals up to obtain new employment.
• Assessments such as My Next Move, Talify, various aptitude assessments, and approved standardized BSD assessments may be used to provide targeted case-management services that promote successful participant outcomes.
• Referrals to partner programs/services are also used to promote a holistic approach to improve success rates.

31. Unemployment Insurance Claimant Services (UI)

Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs. Provide a description of how Unemployment Insurance claimants will be provided reemployment services. Include how Worker Profiling and Re-employment Services (WPRS) will be delivered on a weekly basis between the Office of Workforce Development and partner staff.

The Office of Workforce Development assists unemployment insurance (UI) claimants with Worker Profile Reemployment Services in the Arnold and Washington Job Centers. The Division of Employment Security notifies the UI profile customer that they are required to report to the Job Center. UI claimants complete the career services registration and receive a profile orientation, assessment, and the reemployment services appropriate to the claimant's needs. An employment plan is developed with a Job Center staff member and the customer is referred to applicable Job Center services. The Wagner Peyser Reemployment services include staff assisted job search, workshops, assessment, resume development assistance, National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) and labor market information through the Product Box. Individuals may be enrolled in the WIOA Adult, Youth or Dislocated Worker program for individualized career services and/or training services to upgrade skills, attain credentials and develop a career pathway. UI claimants needing a high school equivalency or basic skills remediation may be referred for Adult Education & Literacy services. Individuals may be referred and connected with Career and Technical education or veteran's programs to enhance service delivery. Supportive service needs will be addressed through referrals to partners such as TANF, Jefferson Franklin Community Action Corporation (HUD, utility assistance, etc.) or senior community services.

32. On-the-Job Training (OJT)

Describe the Board's on-going strategies for promoting and increasing the number of participants in work-based learning and On-the-Job Training (OJT). Provide a summary of the results.

The Jefferson/Franklin region's Business Services Team works collaboratively to promote training and hiring incentives such as On-the-Job Training (OJT) to employers and job seekers. Team members engage employers to identify skills and the current and future hiring needs that will allow individuals to engage in productive work. The business team informs small and medium-sized businesses about industry and occupational trends, wages, and the enhancements to their business such as cutting waste, helping with training employees, reducing turnover and increasing profits. Real time labor market information is used to acquire workforce information such as job openings and employment projections data to identify employer partners and guide job seekers. Marketing efforts are accomplished on a daily basis through face-to-face meetings with employers, chamber of commerce meetings, civic organizations, mailings,

press releases and networking with One-Stop partner agencies. Job seekers are informed of employment and training opportunities during career services enrollment/orientation and through contact with One-Stop partners who provide training and employment support. The MoJobs system is utilized as a common database to record employer and job seeker contacts and the services provided allowing efficiency of marketing and recruitment efforts of the team and avoiding duplication of outreach efforts.

33. Credential Attainment / WorkKeys Assessment

Explain the Board's strategies for increasing the attainment of credentials, degrees, and certificates by participants in your LWDA and any accommodations you have made to make attainment easier (i.e., collocation of AEL centers, extended hours, etc.). In addition, please describe the Board's approach to ensuring every Missouri Job Center customer has the opportunity to take the WorkKeys assessments and obtain a NCRC. This should include how the Board collaborates with the local community college(s) in the LWDA to provide space and/or proctoring services for WorkKeys assessments on an as-needed basis. The LWDB continually strives to increase the number of credentials, degrees, and certificate attainment by all Job Center customers. WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWG) and Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) programs offer participants the opportunity to earn a certificate through vocational and technical education, community colleges, proprietary schools, and all other institutions of higher education. These educational institutions offer short-term training to include stackable credentials and/or degrees with an emphasis in industry-recognized credentials. Job center staff educate customers on labor market needs to guide job seekers to training opportunities that will lead to the attainment of marketable credentials in the labor market area. Jefferson College and East Central College offer short term occupational skill certifications in Welding, Machining Technology, and Industrial Engineering Technology. These programs accelerate learning to shorten classroom time and allow individuals to develop opportunities for work-based learning and paid internships. The college's training programs offer short term industry certification which enhances completion rates by partnering with employers and other community entities. Pre-apprenticeship and registered apprenticeship work-based training programs provide credentials in industry identified occupational skill sets. The apprentice earns a "completion of registered apprenticeship" certificate, an industry issued, nationally recognized credential that validates proficiency in an occupation. The Arnold and Washington Job Centers have established co-enrollment processes with Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) programs to assist customers with preparation for the HISET/high school equivalency. The AEL classes are offered on-site through Jefferson College and East Central College or through MOLearns online study program. AEL program services have been a strong partner of the job center, and their programs are marketed to customers allowing individuals to obtain their HISET credential. Job Center team members are knowledgeable of the Work Keys assessment and the benefits it provides to both job seekers and employers. Job Center team members will promote the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) as a tool to assist customers in skill improvement and skill attainment. Referral mechanisms are in place for staff to refer customers for Work Keys testing and NCRC attainment. The Work Ready Community initiative in Jefferson and Franklin counties continues to increase the number of credentials obtained as the goals for NCRC attainment are being met in all of the customer categories.

34. ETT Services / Layoff Aversion

Describe how the Board coordinates with the OWD's Community Development Team to ensure that information and services are delivered in a seamless fashion, including how pre-layoff services are coordinated and provided. In addition, please provide a description of the proactive measures that are taken to identify potential layoffs in the LWDA, how information is shared, and how layoff aversion strategies are coordinated. See current OWD Issuance Statewide Employment Transition Team Policy.
Include as <u>Attachment 29</u> the DW Employment Transition Team Policy. *See Attachment 29.*

Youth

35. Youth Standing Committee Requirements

WIOA allows for a Youth Standing Committee if its membership and expertise meets the WIOA requirements [(WIOA sec. 107(b)(4)(C)]. Please document whether the Board will designate a Youth Standing Committee. If a Youth Standing Committee is not designated, then the Plan needs to state that the Board is not using a Youth Standing Committee. Whether the Board retains responsibility and oversight of Youth services or a Standing Committee is established, the Board should describe how the Board or Youth Standing Committee will meet the requirements of 20 CFR §681.100 and §681.120.

The Jefferson/Franklin Region Youth Committee under the authority of the LWDB play a lead role in guiding youth policy as required under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Members are appointed to the Youth Committee by the LWDB with input and consultation of the local elected official(s). Youth Committee members have a special interest or expertise relating to programs for youth. The standing Youth Committee include: Members of the LWDB representing business and education, local juvenile justice agency, community-based organizations/public housing authority, parent(s) of eligible WIOA youth, former youth participant(s), Adult Education and Literacy, Vocational Rehabilitation, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families representation. The Youth Committee planned meetings are held bi-annually with other meetings called as necessary. The core agenda items direct how WIOA youth services are to be delivered within the region to ensure the fourteen elements are a part of the planned services. The Youth Committee provides input for the development of the local plan and members are notified of the review and comment period prior to the submission to the Office of Workforce Development. The members of the Youth Committee are involved in the procurement of youth service providers and concur with eligible WIOA youth providers approved by the WDB. Conducting oversight of youth providers, youth activities and youth service providers will continue to be a major role for the Youth Committee in the Jefferson/Franklin Region. Meetings consist of multiple reporting mechanisms by WIOA youth providers, community youth agencies and core program partner staff to keep the Youth Committee members informed of all youth activities that are occurring within the region and assist in the direction of helping in-school and out-of- school youth prepare meaningful career pathways for successful entry into the workforce.

36. YSC Composition / Services / Procurement of Providers / Meeting Schedule & Agenda items

a. Describe the composition of the Youth Standing Committee (if designated) and its participation in the design of Youth services in the LWDA.

   The standing Youth Committee includes members of the LWDB representing business and education, local juvenile justice agency, community-based organizations/public housing authority, parent(s) of eligible WIOA youth, former youth participant(s), Adult Education and Literacy, Vocational Rehabilitation, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families representation. The members of the Youth Committee are involved in the procurement of youth service providers and concur with eligible WIOA youth providers approved by the LWDB. Conducting oversight of youth providers, youth activities and youth service providers will continue to be a major role for the Youth Committee in the Jefferson/Franklin Region. Meetings consist of multiple reporting mechanisms by WIOA youth providers, community youth agencies and core program partner staff to keep the Youth Committee members informed of all youth activities that are occurring within the region and assist in the direction of helping in-school and out-of-school youth prepare meaningful career pathways for successful entry into the workforce.

b. Describe the development of the Plan relating to Youth services.

The Youth Committee provides input for the development of the local plan and members are notified of the review and comment period prior to the submission to the Office of Workforce Development. The Youth Committee provides input on the 14 youth elements and their implementation in the region. The Youth Committee members have varying experiences when it comes to working with a wide range of youth in the area and this ensures that all youth are represented.

c. Provide an explanation of the YSC role in the procurement of Youth service providers, and recommending eligible Youth providers to the Board, ensuring the 14 elements are a part of the services planned and conducting oversight with respect to eligible Youth providers of Youth activities and the procurement of Youth service providers. See current OWD Issuance WIOA Standing Youth Committees Requirements.

The region has a competitive bid/procurement process for the selection of service providers for youth programs under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. MERS Goodwill is the youth service provider for the Jefferson/Franklin Region. Evaluation of program activities/services and performance outcomes are reviewed quarterly by the LWDB and staff to the LWDB for compliance with the contractual scope of work. Youth Program design emphasizes services in career exploration and guidance, support for education and credential attainment, occupational skills training opportunities in in-demand industries, and entering employment along a career path. Strategies include preparation for post-secondary educational opportunities, linkages between academic and occupational learning, work readiness/preparation for employment, and connections to intermediary organizations that provide strong linkages to the job market and employers. A youth applicant will participate in pre-enrollment activities such as initial assessment to determine if the WIOA youth services are suitable for the individual. The determination is made to enroll youth into the WIOA program when the youth's need for employment and training services match the WIOA services available. An out-of-school youth (OSY) applicant is determined eligible for WIOA when not attending school at the time of enrollment and meeting one of the following conditions: School dropout, within age of compulsory school attendance, recipient of secondary school diploma, who is low-income and basic skills deficient or an English language learner, subject to the juvenile or adult justice system, homeless, runaway, in foster care or has aged out of the foster care system, pregnant or parenting, an individual with a disability or a low-income youth who needs additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment. An in-school youth (ISY) applicant is eligible based on low income and documentation of at least one of the following: Basic skills deficient, English language learner, offender, homeless, runaway, in foster care or has aged out of the foster care system, pregnant or parenting disabled or needs additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment. Every youth completes an objective assessment to evaluate the basic skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests, aptitudes, supportive service needs and developmental needs of the participant. The objective assessment identifies the career pathway for the youth participant. The objective assessment results are used to develop a corresponding individual service strategy (ISS). The ISS is a plan to meet the youth's specific training and employment goals. The youth participant works with the youth service provider staff to identify the short-term and long-term employment goals, achievement objectives, including educational goals and appropriate services for the participant. The ISS will address all youth needs and barriers that were identified during the completion of the objective assessment. The ISS is regularly reviewed and updated as appropriate when the youth participant's educational and career goals have changed or have

been achieved. During ISS review, case managers document the youth's progress, activities completed, and any other accomplishments. After the completion of participation, the youth shall receive follow-up services for not less than 12 months. The purpose of follow-up services will be to provide support and guidance to assist youth in retaining employment and educational achievements, advancement opportunities, and personal development. Year-round case management services are provided to out-of-school youth or in-school 14-24 years of age by utilizing the fourteen program elements of the WIOA Youth program. To increase a youth's employability skills, the fourteen elements are grouped around four major themes presented in the Department of Labor's Youth Program Guidance.

d. Also, provide information regarding the Youth Standing Committee meetings, such as any core agenda items that would be included, and the planned meeting schedule (i.e., the first Tuesday of every quarter, etc.).

   The core agenda items direct how WIOA youth services are to be delivered within the region to ensure the fourteen elements are a part of the planned services. The Youth Committee planned meetings are held bi-annually with other meetings called as necessary. Meetings are held in April and September.

37. Youth Activities

Provide a description and assessment of the types and availability of Youth activities in the LWDA, including an identification of successful providers of such activities. This description should include:

a. How the Youth activities in the LWDA are developed to ensure the 14 program elements are available within the LWDA;

   The 14 WIOA Youth Service Program elements are implemented by LWDB Service Providers. Activities associated with the elements are developed and reviewed by the Service Provider, LWDB and the Youth Committee to validate that all are available and utilized within the Region.

b. The actual services provided by the LWDA for Youth, the element they represent, and how they fit within DOL's themes (see TEGL 05-12) for the emphasis on serving Youth within a comprehensive Youth development approach;

   Fourteen program elements: The region has a competitive bid/procurement process for the selection of service providers for youth programs under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act as detailed in Attachment 10 – Financial Procurement Policy. MERS Goodwill is the youth service provider for the Jefferson/Franklin Region. Year-round services are provided through work experience and/or Summer Youth Programs. Evaluation of program activities/services and performance outcomes are reviewed quarterly by the LWDB and staff to the LWDB for compliance with the contractual scope of work. MERS Goodwill provides the 14 Elements as required. Services meet DOL's themes for the emphasis on serving youth in a comprehensive approach. Youth Program design emphasizes services in career exploration and guidance, support for education and credential attainment, occupational skills training opportunities in in-demand industries, and entering employment along a career path. Strategies include preparation for post-secondary educational opportunities, linkages between academic and occupational learning, work readiness/preparation for employment, and connections to intermediary organizations that provide strong linkages to the job market and employers. A youth applicant will participate in pre-enrollment activities such as initial

assessment to determine if the WIOA youth services are suitable for the individual. The determination is made to enroll youth into the WIOA program when the youth's need for employment and training services match the WIOA services available. An out-of-school youth (OSY) applicant is determined eligible for WIOA when not attending school at the time of enrollment and meeting one of the following conditions: School dropout, within age of compulsory school attendance, recipient of secondary school diploma, who is low-income and basic skills deficient or an English language learner, subject to the juvenile or adult justice system, homeless, runaway, in foster care or has aged out of the foster care system, pregnant or parenting, an individual with a disability or a low-income youth who needs additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment. An in-school youth (ISY) applicant is eligible based on low income and documentation of at least one of the following: Basic skills deficient, English language learner, offender, homeless, runaway, in foster care or has aged out of the foster care system, pregnant or parenting disabled or needs additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment. Every youth completes an objective assessment to evaluate the basic skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests, aptitudes, supportive service needs and developmental needs of the participant. The objective assessment identifies the career pathway for the youth participant. The objective assessment results are used to develop a corresponding individual service strategy (ISS). The ISS is a plan to meet the Youth's specific training and employment goals. The youth participant works with the youth service provider staff to identify the short-term and long-term employment goals, achievement objectives, including educational goals and appropriate services for the participant. The ISS will address all youth needs and barriers that were identified during the completion of the objective assessment. The ISS is regularly reviewed and updated as appropriate when the youth participant's educational and career goals have changed or have been achieved. During ISS review, case managers document the youth's progress, activities completed, and any other accomplishments. After the completion of participation, the youth shall receive follow-up services for not less than 12 months. The purpose of follow-up services will be to provide support and guidance to assist youth in retaining employment and educational achievements, advancement opportunities, and personal development. Year-round case management services are provided to out-of-school youth or in-school 14-24 years of age by utilizing the fourteen program elements of the WIOA Youth program. To increase a youth's employability skills, the fourteen elements are grouped around four major themes presented in the Department of Labor's Youth Program Guidance.

Improving Educational Achievement

• Tutoring, Study Skills Training, Instruction, and Dropout Prevention activities that lead to completion of a high school diploma or recognized equivalent We work with partner agencies that offer individualized instruction, literacy development and tutoring. Partners include Project Success at Jefferson College, Academic Support Lab at Jefferson College, local high school administrators as well as counselors to identify those at risk for drop-out – and assist with options instead of dropping out. (Missouri Options, Alternative High School, Adult Education/Literacy)

• Alternative Secondary School and Dropout Recovery Services assist youth who haves struggled in traditional secondary education or who have dropped out of school Our partnership with local Alternative Secondary Schools assists with identifying youth in need of WIOA services and offer WorkKeys Testing to youth.

Preparing for and Succeeding in Employment

• Paid and Unpaid Work Experience is a structured learning experience in a workplace and provides opportunities for career exploration and skill development We currently have work a experience program set up in not for profit/non-profit work sites that offer work-based learning experiences with onsite mentoring by professional staff. Participants develop work skills and behaviors to assist with success in competitive employment.

•Occupational Skills Training is an organized program of study that provides specific skills and leads to proficiency in an occupational field. Youth are assisted with identifying in-demand occupational goals and needed credentials to obtain those goals. Youth are assisted with completing applications, financial aid awards, scholarships, and comparing training providers and programs that best fit youth needs.

• Education Offered Concurrently with Workforce Preparation is an integrated education and training model combining workforce preparation, basic academic skills, and occupational skills Training programs are identified at the local community colleges that offer credential-based training along with adult education and literacy. Staff work with youth in need of a high school equivalency and assist them in enrolling in training program that may be concurrent with adult education and literacy classes.

• Leadership Development Opportunities encourage responsibility, confidence, employability, self-determination, and other positive social behaviors We partner with the Jefferson/Franklin Community Action Corp in their “Step Up to Leadership” classes and recruit/refer youth to actively participate in their community.

Providing Adequate Support in Completing Learning and Employment Goals

•Supportive Services enable an individual to participate in WIOA activities Costs associated with obtaining high school equivalency are paid for youth. In addition, and as needed, uniforms, transportation and other training-related or work-related costs are paid.

• Adult Mentoring is a formal relationship between a youth and an adult mentor with structured activities where the mentor offers guidance, support, and encouragement MERS Goodwill will develop community-based mentors that can support youth with their goals.

• Follow-up Services are provided following program exit to help ensure youth succeed in employment or education We provide youth with job referrals, resume assistance, help in researching postsecondary training options, financial aid, and scholarships available.

•Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling provides individualized counseling to participants, including drug/alcohol and mental health counseling. Staff refer youth to agencies that provide comprehensive mental health care. Including: Comtrea, BJC Behavioral Health, Youth-In-Need, etc.

• Financial Literacy Education provides youth with the knowledge and skills they need to achieve long-term financial stability Youth are assisted in opening checking/savings account; and are referred to bank agencies that provide workshops on financial literacy education.

• Entrepreneurial Skills Training provides the basics of starting and operating a small business and develops entrepreneurial skills Youth are referred to agencies that offer entrepreneurial skills workshops and help in researching post-secondary training programs emphasizing on entrepreneurship.

• Services that Provide Labor Market Information offer employment and labor market information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations. Staff work with youth to use online tools such as MERIC, ONET Online to review labor market with participant. Tools are also included include MYNEXTMOVE to determine in-demand occupations that relate to the participant's interests.

Developing the Potential of Youth as Citizens and Leaders

• Postsecondary Preparation and Transition Activities help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training Youth are assisted with identifying in-demand occupational goals and needed credentials to obtain those goals. They are also involved in completing applications, financial aid awards, scholarships, and comparing training providers and programs that best fit youth needs. Identified training programs at the local community colleges that offer credential-based training along with adult education and literacy. Work with youth that need high school equivalency and assist them in enrolling in training programs that is concurrent with adult education and literacy classes.

c. The process for identification of Youth service providers;

The region has a competitive bid/procurement process for the selection of service providers for youth programs under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act as detailed in Attachment 10 – Financial Procurement Policy. MERS Goodwill, Inc. is the youth service provider for the Jefferson/Franklin Region

See Attachment 9.

d. The evaluation of service providers for performance and impact (please provide details on frequency and criteria);

Evaluation of program activities/services and performance outcomes are reviewed quarterly by the LWDB and staff to the LWDB for compliance with the contractual scope of work. The quarterly contract and performance reviews. These reviews help identify weaknesses that need to be addressed. The reviews are submitted to the service providers.

e. The providers of the Youth services in the LWDA, including the areas and elements they provide;

The role and responsibility for providing youth services is delivered by MERS Goodwill. Youth Program design emphasizes services in career exploration and guidance, support for education and credential attainment, occupational skills training opportunities in indemand industries, and entering employment along a career path. Strategies include preparation for post-secondary educational opportunities, linkages between academic and occupational learning, work readiness/preparation for employment, and connections to intermediary organizations that provide strong linkages to the job market and employers. How the system works: A youth

applicant will participate in pre-enrollment activities such as initial assessment to determine if the WIOA youth services are suitable for the individual. Every youth completes an objective assessment to evaluate the basic skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests, aptitudes, supportive service needs and developmental needs of the participant. The objective assessment identifies the career pathway for the youth participant. The objective assessment results are used to develop a corresponding individual service strategy (ISS). The ISS is a plan to meet the Youth's specific training and employment goals. The youth participant works with the youth service provider staff to identify the short-term and long-term employment goals, achievement objectives, including educational goals and appropriate services for the participant. The ISS will address all youth needs and barriers that were identified during the completion of the objective assessment. The ISS is regularly reviewed and updated as appropriate when the youth participant's educational and career goals have changed or have been achieved.

Year-round case management services are provided to out-of-school youth or in-school 14-24 years of age by utilizing the fourteen program elements of the WIOA Youth program. To increase a youth's employability skills, the fourteen elements are grouped around four major themes presented in the Department of Labor's Youth Program Guidance. Other than with the sub-recipient and as may become needed to meet the 14 data elements.

Improving Educational Achievement

• Tutoring, Study Skills Training, Instruction, and Dropout Prevention activities that lead to completion of a high school diploma or recognized equivalent. We work with partner agencies that offer individualized instruction, literacy development and tutoring. Partners include Project Success at Jefferson College, Academic Support Lab at Jefferson College, local high school administrators as well as counselors to identify those at risk for drop-out – and assist with options instead of dropping out. (Missouri Options, Alternative High School, Adult Education/Literacy)

• Alternative Secondary School and Dropout Recovery Services assist youth who have struggled in traditional secondary education or who have dropped out of school. Our partnership with local Alternative Secondary Schools assists with identifying youth in need of WIOA services and offer WorkKeys Testing to youth.

Preparing for and Succeeding in Employment

• Paid and Unpaid Work Experience is a structured learning experience in a workplace and provides opportunities for career exploration and skill development. We currently have a work experience program set up in not for profit/non-profit work sites that offer work-based learning experiences with onsite mentoring by professional staff. Participants develop work skills and behaviors to assist with success in competitive employment.

•Occupational Skills Training is an organized program of study that provides specific skills and leads to proficiency in an occupational field. Youth are assisted with identifying in-demand occupational goals and needed credentials to obtain those goals. Youth are assisted with completing applications, financial aid awards, scholarships, and comparing training providers and programs that best fit youth needs.

• Education Offered Concurrently with Workforce Preparation is an integrated education and training model combining workforce preparation, basic academic skills, and occupational skills Training programs are identified at the local community colleges that offer credential-based training along with adult education and literacy. We work with youth in need of the high school equivalency and assist them in enrolling in training program that may be concurrent with adult education and literacy classes.

• Leadership Development Opportunities encourage responsibility, confidence, employability, self-determination, and other positive social behaviors. We partner with the Jefferson/Franklin Community Action Corp in their "Step Up to Leadership" classes and recruit/refer youth to actively participate in their community.
• Supportive Services enable an individual to participate in WIOA activities. Costs associated with obtaining high school equivalency are paid for youth. In addition, and as needed, uniforms, transportation and other training-related or work-related costs are paid.

Providing Adequate Support in Completing Learning and Employment Goals
• Adult Mentoring is a formal relationship between a youth and an adult mentor with structured activities where the mentor offers guidance, support, and encouragement MERS Goodwill will develop community-based mentors that can support youth with their goals.
• Follow-up Services are provided following program exit to help ensure youth succeed in employment or education. We provide youth with job referrals, resume assistance, help in researching postsecondary training options, financial aid, and scholarships available.
•Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling provides individualized counseling to participants, including drug/alcohol and mental health counseling. We refer youth to agencies that provide comprehensive mental healthcare including: Comtrea, BJC Behavioral Health, Youth-in-Need, etc.
• Financial Literacy Education provides youth with the knowledge and skills they need to achieve long-term financial stability. Youth are assisted in opening checking/savings account; and are referred to bank agencies that provide workshops on financial literacy education.
• Entrepreneurial Skills Training provides the basics of starting and operating a small business and develops entrepreneurial skills Youth are referred to agencies that offer entrepreneurial skills workshops and help in researching post-secondary training programs emphasizing on entrepreneurship.
• Services that Provide Labor Market Information offer employment and labor market information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations. We work with youth to use online tools such as MERIC, ONET Online to review labor market with participant. Tools are also included include MYNEXTMOVE to determine in-demand occupations that relate to the participant's interests.

Developing the Potential of Youth as Citizens and Leaders

• Postsecondary Preparation and Transition Activities help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training. Youth are assisted with identifying in-demand occupational goals and needed credentials to obtain those goals. They are also involved in completing applications, financial aid awards, scholarships, and comparing training providers and programs that best fit youth needs.

The Jefferson/Franklin region values the partnerships with core programs and local agencies to leverage resources and opportunities to serve the region's "most in need" youth. The WIOA youth program encourages youth aged eighteen and older to register with the job center (Wagner Peyser) for access to valuable services to provide support in completing education. and occupational goals. Adult Education & Literacy programs serve the out of school youth participants to improve educational achievement in basic skills and earning a high school equivalency. WIOA provides AEL students with support in developing a career pathway to post-secondary education (Perkins Career & Technical Education) or employment that leads to opportunities for advancement. Out of School youth are provided opportunities to enter Job Corps to learn occupational skills and prepare for succeeding in employment. WIOA youth

programs work in cooperation with the job center to provide job search assistance, labor market information, and career guidance. Supportive services are coordinated through referrals to partners such as TANF, Community Action (HUD, utility assistance) as well as other community-based organizations including services for Veteran's or individuals with disabilities. WIOA youth programs partner with Vocational Rehabilitation to assist in school youth with transitioning to post-secondary education or on the job training programs and employment. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) has been signed between the Jefferson/Franklin Consortium Workforce Development Board and the One-Stop Partners of the One-Stop delivery system in recognition of the importance of agency linkage, coordination, and cooperation in effectively providing services through an integrated system to better serve youth in need of services.

f. How year-round services are provided to Youth 14–24 years of age that are still in high school or out of school;

Workshops, activities, and meetings are conducted year-round. Outreach to schools, and other locations youth frequent, are intensified as summer draws closer to promote WIOA youth services to in and out of school youth year-round. For the past few years case managers have also had the privilege of promoting the Jobs League program, offering employment opportunities for eligible youth, both in and out of school. Jobs League provides short-term employment in a field the youth has expressed interest in, to provide the youth with work experience and soft skills. This has been a successful partnership with our local employers and has given much needed summer employment opportunities to rural youth.

g. An example of the flow of services for a Youth in the LWDA (please include all aspects, including intake, objective assessment process, assessment, coordination of services, follow-up, etc.)

A youth applicant will participate in pre-enrollment activities such as initial assessment to determine if the WIOA youth services are suitable for the individual. The determination is made to enroll youth into the WIOA program when the youth's need for employment and training services match the WIOA services available. Every youth completes an objective assessment to evaluate the basic skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests, aptitudes, supportive service needs and developmental needs of the participant. The objective assessment identifies the career pathway for the youth participant. The objective assessment results are used to develop a corresponding individual service strategy (ISS). The ISS is a plan to meet the Youth's specific training and employment goals. The youth participant works with the youth service provider staff to identify the short-term and long-term employment goals, achievement objectives, including educational goals and appropriate services for the participant. The ISS will address all youth needs and barriers that were identified during the completion of the objective assessment. The ISS is regularly reviewed and updated as appropriate when the youth participant's educational and career goals have changed or have been achieved. During ISS review, case managers document the youth's progress, activities completed, and any other accomplishments. After the completion of participation, the youth shall receive follow-up services for not less than 12 months. The purpose of follow-up services will be to provide support and guidance to assist youth in retaining employment and educational achievements, advancement opportunities, and personal development. Year-round case-management services are provided to out-of-school youth or in-school 14-24 years of age by utilizing the fourteen program elements of the WIOA Youth program. To increase a youth's employability skills, the fourteen elements are grouped around four major themes presented in the Department of Labor's Youth Program Guidance.

h. The procedures for serving Youth that are most in need (homeless, disabled, offenders, etc.);

The Jefferson/Franklin Region partners with many local agencies and addresses at- risk youth (most in need) through referrals. WIOA services are provided to youth who are homeless, disabled, juvenile or adult justice system offenders, pregnant and or parenting. For services not approved through WIOA youth are referred to appropriate partner agencies.

i. The identification of the partnerships and describe the coordination of services with other agencies within the LWDA.

The Jefferson/Franklin Region partners with many local agencies and addresses at- risk youth (most in need) through referrals. WIOA services are provided to approved youth who are subject to the juvenile or adult justice system, homeless youth, pregnant or parenting youth. For services not approved through WIOA youth are referred to appropriate partner agencies.

38. Innovative Service-Delivery Projects for OSY

Provide a description of any innovative service-delivery projects for OSY currently operating in the LWDA or a project the Board is planning to implement. Describe the Board's involvement in the projects, and the Board's efforts to continue involvement and funding for the continuation of these projects.

Staff use all available allowable services of the Workforce System, Partner Agencies, Education Providers, Employers, and other training programs to provide comprehensive services and advance successful outcomes for out of school youth. Additional details can be found in the Memorandum of Understanding between partners, WIOA Regulations, and collective regulatory guidance regarding WIOA programing. The Board is directly involved in funding and managing the delivery of youth services and plans to continue supporting youth services.

Agricultural Employment Services (AES)

39. Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers / Agricultural Employment Services

WIOA section 167 provides the framework for agricultural services delivery. National Farmworkers Jobs Program (NFJP) services and grants are implemented at 20 CFR Part 685, as proposed. The current Section 167 Grantee, UMOS—United Migrant Opportunity Services, must be included in the MOU as the NFJP partner. The Plan should address how the LWDB will cooperate with UMOS and the State Agricultural Employment Services office to provide employment and training services to this population.

Jefferson/Franklin Region through a local MOU will cooperate with UMOS and the State Agricultural Employment Service office as appropriate to provide employment and training services to this population. WIOA section 167 provides the framework for agricultural services delivery. National Farmworkers Jobs Program (NFJP) services and grants are implemented at 20 CFR Part 685, as proposed. The current Section 167 Grantee, UMOS—United Migrant Opportunity Services, must be included in the MOU as the NFJP partner. The LWDA agrees to cooperate with UMOS and the State Agricultural Employment Services office to provide employment and training services to this population. Any information or program flyers obtained through UMOS will be shared with staff and copies will be available in the Jefferson/Franklin career centers for customers.

Business Services

40. Employer Engagement

Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the LWDA facilitate engagement of employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

The Business Services Team will engage local businesses by attending various industry-related meetings/events. In addition, the LWDB participates in community college business and industry meetings throughout the year. Services to be offered include but are not limited to:

- ► National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC)
- ► On-the-Job Training
- ► Employment Transition (Business Services Team)
- ► Job Matching
- ► Apprenticeships
- ► Work Opportunity Tax Credits (WOTC)
- ► Incumbent Worker Training
- ► Veterans Programs

41. Services to Meet the Workforce Needs of Employers

Describe how the Board coordinates and provides comprehensive and integrated workforce system services to businesses, including the development and delivery of innovative workforce services and strategies to meet the needs of area employers. Explain the collaboration with Missouri Job Center Jobs Teams to facilitate recruitment and meet business demand.

Partnerships with K-12, community colleges/career and technical education, adult education and literacy, and Missouri job centers support the alignment of customers and a bridge from secondary and post-secondary education to raise skill levels, credential attainment, employment, and career advancement. Working relationships with community-based organizations reach populations that are currently underrepresented and may have barriers to employment that require adequate support services. Title I WIOA Youth Adult and Dislocated worker programs outreach to diverse populations and assess skills needs and skill gaps to explore opportunities in sector industries. The use of labor market information indicating number and types of available jobs, future demand, job characteristics, training and skills requirements assist customers in making informed career and training decisions that result in pathways that result in a job. Sector strategies allow the region to build a talent pipeline, address skill shortages and create meaningful career pathways for a range of workers in advanced manufacturing. The Jefferson/Franklin region collaborates and aligns resources of all partners; advanced manufacturing employers, workforce development, economic development, education, labor, and community organizations to focus on workforce needs and align education and training resources, program, and services around shared goals to build talent pipelines. Jefferson College and East Central College have workforce development centers for business and industry and have mechanisms in place to solicit ongoing feedback from industry partners, not just during periodic meetings and surveys. The community colleges hold community events to convene a network of large and small employers within the advanced manufacturing sector. Industry partners help define the necessary skills, competencies and commit resources to support education by providing internships and hiring qualified students who complete programs. Unions and industry associations have advice on curriculum and program design and utilize the community colleges for the education components needed for pre-apprenticeship or apprenticeship programs. The Jefferson/Franklin region is certified as WorkReady Communities with manufacturing companies endorsing the initiative for building and maintaining a skilled workforce. Jefferson and Franklin counties have economic development organizations and chambers with established working relationships with the local board, workforce development and education. These entities have a

common focus, but defined roles in order to serve industry and workers and to jointly address regional growth strategies, including education and training issues.

42. Economic Development

Describe how the Board will better coordinate workforce development programs with economic development including how the LWDB will promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.

Economic Development is represented on the Workforce Development Board. Our respective services are made available to employers and job seekers. The WDB will promote services delivered by economic agencies including entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.

43. Sector Strategy Initiative / Career Pathways

Describe the Board's sector-strategy initiative. Describe how the Board will be collaborating and aligning resources of all partners, public and private, toward developing a talent pipeline, and how that alignment will create meaningful career pathways for workers possessing skill levels serving important regional industries. Indicate how system services will be framed by industry sectors that are data driven, regionally designed, and guided by employers and how these strategies will be sustained. Include the methods the Board will be using to inform and engage key public and private stakeholders in the development of sector strategies and career pathways.

The LWDB will collaborate and align resources of all partners, public and private, toward developing a talent pipeline, and how that alignment will create meaningful career pathways for workers possessing skill levels serving important regional industries. System services will be framed by industry sectors that are data driven, regionally designed, and guided by employers and how these strategies will be sustained. The LWDB works closely with Jefferson College, East Central College, and Four Rivers Career Center to develop sector-strategies and career pathways. Data obtained from employers drives post-secondary education and training needs. These strategies are sustained through frequent employer input and are critical to offering current and future employer needs. LWDBs are required to align their public workforce, education, and social and human services systems. At the same time, the LWDBs continue to take steps to incorporate career pathways approaches into a wide range of program investments, evaluation and research activities, and technical assistance efforts. Career pathways can offer an efficient and customer-centered approach to training and education by connecting the necessary adult basic education, occupational training, postsecondary education, career and academic advising, and supportive services for students to prepare for, obtain, and progress in a career. WIOA defines a career pathway as "a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services that:

- **a)** aligns with the 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 registered apprenticeships;
- **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 l 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." [Section 3(7) of WIOA]

44. Business Services Plan

Boards shall maintain a Business Services Plan, outlining team members, including WIOA core and combined partners, and the marketing and outreach roles and expectations of team members. The Business Services Plan also should outline the team's purpose, goals, and policies and procedures to ensure seamless delivery of services, avoid duplication, and ensure feedback to the Board's Job centers. The plan should explain how the services provided by business service staff will be recorded in the client case management system for the calculation of two types of Effectiveness in Serving Employers Measure. (1-number of businesses served and 2-market penetration of businesses in the area). Include the **Business Services Plan as Attachment 30**.

See Attachment 30.

Innovative Service Delivery Strategies

45. Missouri Re-entry Process /Ex-offender Initiative

Describe how the LWDB will support the Missouri re-entry process / ex-offender initiative. Include the services to be provided for ex-offenders and the process to be used to identify employers willing to hire ex-offenders.

The Missouri Career Centers in Arnold and Washington support the Missouri Re-Entry Process (MRP) ex-offender initiative. Job Center staff assists the customer with completing the WIOA career services registration which includes a complete jobs.mo.gov registration, initial assessment, orientation, and labor market information. Customers may be referred to the Staff to discuss training opportunities that may be beneficial for upgrading skills and re-entering the labor market. Employment team members review potential barriers to employment and assist in developing a plan to overcome identified barriers. Referrals and linkages to partner programs, services, and sources of assistance within the community are also provided. The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) program and the federal bonding program provide incentives to assist customers in getting hired. Job Center staff encourages ex-offenders to be engaged with the job center and to continue using the services throughout their job search efforts. During employer outreach the business team members will explain the benefits of hiring ex- offenders and the incentives available. Team members may also help businesses hire with confidence when providing assistance with job matching, counseling and outreach. The Missouri Veterans Reentry Program (MOVRP) assists veterans facing legal issues to prevent or shorten the length of incarceration and will provide the skills and knowledge needed to transition a veteran who is incarcerated back into the workforce. The DVOP representatives from the Arnold and Washington job centers provide employment services to veterans who are unemployed and underemployed and conduct outreach at the Department of Corrections facility to provide regular workshops, case-management services and transition services to Veterans who are within six months of their release date through the MOVRP program.

46. Work-based Learning / Transitional Jobs

Describe the Board's innovative strategies for promoting and increasing enrollments in the work-based learning programs, such as Registered Apprenticeship, On-the-Job Training (OJT), Work Experience, Internships, Incumbent Worker Training, Transitional Jobs, and Customized Training. Include processes

to target and encourage employer participation.

These programs are promoted to local employers by Job Center staff in the Arnold and Washington career centers and the region's business team members. Employers are encouraged to participate in the program and receive pre-screened eligible trainees at no cost and have the option to hire a good candidate at the end of the training period. Outreach strategies include targeting employers in high growth industries and determining specific labor needs in advance of making an employer contact. Business team members market these programs through face-to-face contacts, meetings with employers, chamber of commerce groups, civic organizations, emails, press releases and networking with One-Stop partner agencies. Program representatives provide assistance with the required paperwork to minimize the employer's time spent in the process. Staff help connect eligible participants with these opportunities. Additionally, Unemployment Insurance recipients are served by team members; they are informed of program benefits of acquiring additional occupational skills, including job-specific work experience and an opportunity to become hired as a full-time employee.

47. Trade Adjustment Assistance

Describe the Board's strategies for ensuring customers are aware of the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program and are co-enrolled into both WIOA Dislocated Worker and TAA, except in extenuating circumstances? (**Integration of Services or Co-enrollment Policy should be Attachment 24**)

See Attachment 24.

48. Missouri Community Colleges

Describe how the Board will coordinate with the local community colleges. Please describe in depth the referral process of participants between the Community Colleges and Job Centers. Please include the **MOU (cooperative agreement) between the Board and Community Colleges** if your LWDA has any as **Attachment 31** to the Plan.

The Board coordinates with the local community colleges via in-person and virtual meetings that are held throughout the year. Various staff from all levels attend these meetings to improve communication and to ensure timely services to the participants. Staff from East Central College, Jefferson College, and Four Rivers Career Center attend quarterly Board meetings, bi-annual Youth Committee meetings, and Business Service Team meetings. Regular communication is conducted via email and telephone. The referral process consists of WIOA staff reviewing the online Community College information with the prospective student. Staff then assist the student with either applying online or calling the community college to schedule an appointment to enroll. Regular contact is maintained with the registrar, student services, and the financial aid/billing department to ensure seamless services.

49. Incumbent Worker Policy

If the LWDB has an **Incumbent Worker Policy**, please include it as **Attachment 32**. If not please include a statement that the LWDB does not have an Incumbent Worker Policy.

See Attachment 32.

Strategies for Faith-based and Community-based Organizations

50. Faith-based Strategies

Describe those activities to be undertaken to:

(1) Increase the opportunities for participation of faith-based and community organizations as committed and active partners in the One-Stop Delivery System; and

Through our partnership network, faith-based organizations are involved in meeting periodically in Jefferson and Franklin Counties. Each organization in attendance presents an informational presentation which includes the services offered, access to service locations, eligibility criteria, and funding levels/donations. Active partners in the one-stop delivery system also serve on a number of local committees and board of directors, allowing further participation to address gaps in services and reducing duplication of services within the region.

(2) Expand the access of faith-based and community-based organizations' customers to the services offered by the One-Stops in the LWDA.

WIOA Title I funding may be used to employ or train participants in religious activities through indirect financial assistance. Participants will be given the opportunity to make an informed customer choice among training providers.

Outline efforts for conducting outreach campaigns to educate faith-based and community organizations about the attributes and objectives of the demand-driven workforce development system. Indicate how these resources can be strategically and effectively leveraged in the LWDA to help meet the objectives of WIOA.

Outreach and campaigns to educate faith-based and community organizations about the attributes and objectives of the demand-driven workforce development system are provided by active One-Stop partners through their interaction with these groups.

REGIONAL PLANS

Regional Planning Guidance

51. Regional Plans

Missouri has designated 13 Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs). In accordance with WIOA sec. 106(c)(2), each of the LWDAs establish a Plan; however, collaboration must exist among the Kansas City and St. Louis Economic Regions for the creation of Regional Plans composed of the following:

1) For the Kansas City Region, one Regional Plan for the local planning areas of Kansas City and Vicinity Region and the East Jackson County Region; and

2) For the St. Louis Region, one Regional Plan for the local planning areas of: The City of St. Louis Region, the County of Saint Louis Region, the County of St. Charles Region, and the Jefferson/Franklin County Consortium Region.

While this establishes 13 Boards that are encouraged to collaborate, cooperate, and plan across common needs, they will not explicitly submit a Regional Plan. This establishes two Boards within the Kansas City Region that must contribute to a Regional Economic Plan for the Kansas City regional

economy and four Boards within the St. Louis Region that must contribute to a Regional Economic Plan for the St. Louis regional economy.

Boards within the Kansas City and St. Louis regional economic planning areas must complete a regional planning requirement by including within each original LWDB Plan a Regional Economic Plan that is identically shared by all Boards in each economic region.

Include the **Regional Plan as Attachment 33**. Copies of Local Plans from other LWDAs in the region are not required for your Local Plan. Please submit the combined portion of the Regional Plan with signatures of the CEOs, Chairs and LWDB Directors.

NOTE:
Following approval of the Local Plan and Regional Plan, plans will be required to be posted on the LWDB website. Any updates or plan modifications will be required to be posted by the LWDB after approval. Please keep a current Local Plan and Regional Plan, if applicable, available on your website at all times.

See Attachment 33.

REQUIRED POLICIES AND ATTACHMENTS

All local policies relating to WIOA are required to be approved by OWD and listed as part of the required attachments to the local plan regardless of whether or not they are required by the LWDB, state or federal guidelines. The below list is not an all-inclusive list of federal regulations. At any time the LWDB, state, or federal guidelines may require additional policies beyond the list below.

1. List of Comprehensive, Affiliate, Specialized and Other Centers and One Stop Operators
2. Memorandum of Understanding with IFA and Cost Sharing Budgets with All Partner Signatures
3. Chief Elected Officials Consortium Agreement and Bylaws
4. Local Workforce Development Board Membership List, Standing Committees, & Certification Letter
5. Local Workforce Development Board By-Laws and Attestation Form - **Form provided**
6. Local Fiscal Agent
7. Planning Budget Summaries (PBS)
8. Conflict of Interest Policy - Local Workforce Development Board, Staff, and Contracted Staff
9. Financial Procurement Policy / Financial (General) Policy
10. Complaints and Grievance Policy – Nondiscrimination, Programmatic
11. Sub-state Monitoring Plan and Policy
12. Supportive Services Policy – General, Needs Related Payments Policy for ADLT and DW
13. Adult Priority of Service Policy
14. Expenditure Rates Policy
15. Training Criteria Policy (AD & DW)
16. Youth Barriers Eligibility Policy – OSY ISY additional assistance barrier
17. Youth Incentive Payment Policy
18. Veterans Priority of Service Policy
19. Basic Skills Assessments (Testing) Policy
20. Individual Training Account (ITA) Policy
21. Eligibility Policy (Individualized Career Services)
22. Accessibility Policy – Persons with Disabilities
23. Accessibility Policy - Persons with Limited English Proficiency

24. Co-enrollment Policy
25. Adult Education and Literacy Policy (AEL Policy)
26. VR/RSB Coordination Policy
27. Youth Apprenticeships Policy
28. ETPL Policy
29. Employment Transition Team Policy
30. Business Services Plan and Policy
31. MOU (Cooperative Agreement) between the Community College & LWDB
32. Incumbent Worker Policy
33. Regional Plans (St. Louis / KC)
34. Accommodation Policy
35. Confidentiality Policy
36. Customized Training Policy (if applicable)
37. Facilities
38. Cost Allocation Policy
39. Cost Accounting Policy
40. Financial Reporting/Cash Draw Request Deadlines
41. Fraud, Waste, Abuse, and Criminal Activity Policy
42. Internal Accounting Policy
43. Local Bonding Policy
44. Payments to Employers Policy
45. Follow-up Policy Adults and Dislocated Workers
46. Follow-up Policy Youth
47. Harassment and discrimination Policy
48. Nondiscrimination Policy
49. On-the-Job Training Policy (including employer disputes, nepotism, and modifications)
50. Personnel Policies (leave, travel, facilities closing)
51. Records Policy (access, Sunshine, retention, and destruction)
52. Transitional Jobs Policy (if applicable)
53. Work Experience Policy – Adult
54. Work Experience Policy – Youth
55. Apprenticeship Policy
56. Selective Service Policy
57. Statement of Assurances - **Form provided**