

Regional Plan Instructions

Only *planning regions* are required to provide a regional plan, and subsequent modification, that incorporates each prompt listed in these instructions.

WIOA requires a broad strategic approach to planning focused on the overarching vision, goals, alignment, and shared responsibilities within a designated region. Regional plans are broader in scope than the plan developed for the respective local area(s) within a planning region. Regional plan drafters are encouraged to include data samples, streamlined graphics, and tables to support any narrative instead of large volumes of data, tables, and graphs.

The Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry (L&I) includes a sub-section for most prompts. This sub-section provides planners with practical concepts for developing narrative and creating a basis for discussion. Concepts are not all-inclusive but provide a foundation for building narrative. L&I will use each prompt's general contextual meaning and *expectation* to evaluate narrative when reviewing each submitted regional plan.

Note: The local board must cite the source(s) used to collect all or part of the regional labor market data (e.g., Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA)).

Regional plan drafters must include, verbatim, any plan prompts and related text that is highlighted yellow into their own regional plan (e.g., 1.1 Identification of the region) in the chronological order listed throughout these instructions.

1.1. Identification of the region.

[Reviewed by PPCS and Grants]

Factors being considered include, but are not limited to:

- A reference name for the region;
- Identification of the LWDAs that comprise the region;
- Identification of the key region committee members charged with drafting the regional plan to include organizational affiliation;
- A list of key region committee meeting dates; and
- The regional plan's effective date.

Note: When adding the initial reference of the local workforce development board into plan narrative, the legal name must be used at least once, before adding an alternative Doing Business As (DBA) moniker.

1.2. Regional Analysis. - Based on the analysis of the regional labor market and economic conditions, describe the region's workforce and economic development-oriented vision and goals. Describe the collection and analysis of regional labor market data (in conjunction with the Commonwealth).

[WIOA Sec. 106(c)(1)(D); 20 CFR 679.510(a)(1)(iv); 20 CFR 679.560(a)(1)(i) and (ii). Reviewed by CWIA]

Expectation: Narrative must describe and analyze regional labor market data to articulate the region's economic conditions and employers' employment needs.

Factors being considered include, but are not limited to:

- Describing the state of the regional economy and key positive and negative economic conditions (e.g., on-going business cycle impact, business community vitality, unemployment trends; demographic information; key legal-political-social conditions; technological changes; natural forces);
- Identifying key industry cluster(s);
- Identifying existing and emerging in-demand industry sector(s);
- Identifying existing and emerging in-demand occupations;
- Providing data describing the industry location quotients (LQ) of the region and local area(s); and
- Identifying the employment needs of employers in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

The regional area may support the narrative by:

- Additional narrative may include similarities and differences of associated local areas: specifically, the economic conditions and competitive strengths and weaknesses of business market factors found in each local area.

1.3. Regional Strategy. - Based on the analysis of regional labor market and economic conditions, describe the regional service delivery strategies for addressing the identified conditions through the coordination of appropriate services in the region.

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[WIOA Sec. 106(c)(1)(D); 20 CFR 679.510(a)(1)(vii). Reviewed by PA WDB, CWIA, DCED, and ATO]

Expectation: The narrative must speak to the regional strategy for service delivery, coordination of economic development, and discuss alignment with the state plan initiatives.

Factors being considered include, but are not limited to:

- Discuss the strategy to meet the identified employment needs of regional employers and business;
- How the region's strategy will impact operational levels of services for regional employers and business (i.e., local area Business Service Teams, (BST));
- Discuss the strategy to coordinate services with regional economic development services, organizations, and providers.
- Discuss any cooperative service delivery agreements that have been established for the region; and
- How the local boards will demonstrate Engage! linkage between workforce and economic development throughout the region.

1.4. Describe the regional service strategies aimed at achieving the vision and goals established for the region.

[WIOA Sec. 106(c)(1)(B); 20 CFR 679.510(a)(1)(ii). Reviewed by PA WDB and ATO]

Factors being considered include, but are not limited to:

- Broad-based, overarching sector and industry strategies, including an apprenticeship strategy;
- Coordination of services with regional economic development services and providers in the region;
- Any cooperative service delivery agreements that have been established for the region;
- How the region will connect targeted populations, especially youth and individuals with barriers to employment, to career services and training activities offered on a regional level, such as YouthBuild, Job Corps, and AmeriCorps programs. Data measuring the number of youth, and specifically opportunity youth, enrolled in these programs must be provided to support the narrative, as appropriate;
- How will regional business service strategies be employed, as well as, how coordination of these strategies will impact the operational level of services (i.e., local area Business Service Teams, or BST); and
- How the region will coordinate with secondary and postsecondary institutions (including programs authorized by the Perkins V Act) to align strategies, enhance services and avoid duplication of services (include specific reference to adult education, community colleges and community education councils).

1.5. Describe the development and implementation of sector initiatives for in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the region.

[WIOA Sec. 106(c)(1)(C); 20 CFR 679.510(a)(1)(iii). Reviewed by CWIA, PA WDB, and ATO]

Expectation: The narrative response must capture any sector or industry initiatives, partnerships, industry partnerships, and any other sector-based initiatives that support all or part of the region (including economic development partners).

Factors being considered include, but are not limited to:

- The identity and description of key sector or industry initiatives, partnerships, registered apprenticeship ecosystems, industry partnerships, and any other sector-based initiatives that support all or part of the region;
- Discuss the region's strategy to expand the use of an apprenticeship model to help meet in-demand industry needs.
- How the region will coordinate initiatives with secondary and postsecondary institutions (including programs authorized by the Perkins V Act) to align strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services (include specific reference to adult education, community colleges and community education councils).
- An explanation why the region targeted select sectors, partnerships, and other initiatives; and
- A description of, and reasoning for, the current in-demand occupation(s) that are expected to change status as well as occupations that may change to become an in-demand occupation.

1.6. Describe how the region will connect employer labor force requirements and occupational demands with the region's labor force, including individuals with barriers to employment.

[Reviewed by PA WDB and ATO]

Expectation: Regional plans must incorporate strategies that reflect local leaders and boards considering how to optimize the available opportunities and minimize the structural weakness presented by the current workforce system environment for the betterment of regional employers and the labor force.

The regional area may support the narrative by:

- Including how the region will connect targeted populations, especially youth and individuals with barriers to employment to career services and training activities offered at a regional level (YouthBuild, Job Corps and AmeriCorps programs), and in-demand occupations and Registered Apprenticeships;

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- Including descriptions of when leaders, board members, and stakeholders met and any subjects or resolutions that came to fruition; and
- Including summaries of any number of reports commissioned to research and determine recommended actions that are of concern to the local and regional workforce system leaders and stakeholders; examples include studies that indicate strategies and tactics that will increase the ability of employers to attract, hire and maintain regional labor force participants in gainful employment, or evaluations of best practices for serving the various classes of individuals with barriers to employment.

Note: While it is important that the drafters understand the data and connect the labor force requirements with occupational demands, it is also important to connect with actual employers who will verify that need.

1.7. Describe the coordination of transportation and other supportive services for the region.

[WIOA Sec. 106(c)(1)(F); 20 CFR 679.510(a)(1)(vi) Reviewed by CWIA]

Expectation 1: The region must describe the role transportation plays in the relationship of the labor force and employment opportunities, display the commuting data such as inflow and outflow and other patterns, articulate available transportation modes' strengths and weaknesses, and indicate how the region may help bridge the transportation gap between labor force and employment locations. Describe transportation availability for workforce members who are unable to benefit from personal transportation.

Expectation 2: The region must describe any regional and inter-governmental agreements that allows the coordination of identified regionwide supportive services and resources in such a manner as to permit customers to participate.

1.8. Describe the region's strategy to increase engagement on the statewide eligible training provider list.

[Reviewed by PA WDB and BWPO]

Expectation: Regional plans must articulate strategies to increase and improve the overall quality of eligible training provider participation in the statewide eligible training provider list.

1.9. Describe how the region established administrative cost arrangements, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate, for the region.

[WIOA Sec. 106(c)(1)(E); 20 CFR 679.510(a)(1)(v) Reviewed by Fiscal]

Expectation: This narrative must provide a description of the regional activities (e.g., regional planning), how such activities were determined and what funds will be used to pay for those activities. The narrative must include the entity that will serve as the fiscal agent. Finally, the description must include how such regional cost arrangements will be handled for the region, including administrative costs, as appropriate.

1.10. Describe the agreement between the local boards that describes how the planning region will collectively negotiate and reach agreement with L&I on local levels of performance for, and report on, the performance accountability measures described in section 116(c), for each of the local areas within the planning region.

[WIOA Sec. 106(c)(1)(H); 20 CFR 679.510(a)(1)(viii) Reviewed by CWIA]

Expectation: WIOA sec. 107(d)(9) requires that local areas negotiate performance and 20 CFR § 679.510(a)(1)(viii) requires an agreement between local boards and chief elected officials for how a planning region will collectively negotiate and reach agreement with the governor on local levels of performance for, and report on, the performance accountability measures as required by WIOA sec. 116(c)(1)(H) and §679.510(a)(1)(viii). The representatives of each local area in a planning region are collectively responsible for the process. The narrative in the local area plan must provide a description similar to the agreement reached between the local boards and chief elected officials. The answer may simply be that each local area will negotiate individually with the state.

1.11. Describe the region's process to ensure the public (including representatives of business, labor organizations, and education) had 30 days to review and comment on the contents of the proposed Regional Plan, and subsequent modification, if applicable, prior to Commonwealth submission.

[20 CFR 679.510(b)(1),(2),(3) and (4). Reviewed by PPCS]

Expectation: Narrative will describe how the planning region collaborated to draft the regional plan and the process that was developed to ensure public review of the drafted regional plan.

Factors being considered include, but are not limited to:

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- Specify the beginning and end date (i.e., 30-day timeframe) of the posted regional plan.
- How the general public was notified of the public comment period.
- Any public comments received must be submitted along with the Regional Plan and subsequent modification, if applicable.
- Any comments made by the planning region in response to public comments received, must be included in this narrative.

Note: According to plan guidance, planning regions are required to post the entire regional plan for public comment in each of the local areas that make up the planning region.