



Essex County Workforce Development Board



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County of Essex New Jersey

2016 – 2020



ESSEX COUNTY



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act was signed into law on July 22, 2014 and became effective July 1, 2015. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 supersedes the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and amends the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, the Wagner-Peyser Act, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act is designed to help youth, job seekers and businesses. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requires each Local Workforce Development Area to develop and submit to the Governor a comprehensive four-year local plan, in partnership with the Chief Elected Officials. The local plan serves as a four-year action plan to develop, align, and integrate local area service delivery strategies with those that support the State's strategic and operational goals.

The Essex County Workforce Development Area is a single county Local Workforce Development Area with the administrative office located in East Orange, New Jersey.

Essex County is a county in the northeastern part of the U.S. state of New Jersey. As of 2015, Essex County's Census-estimated population was 797,434, an increase of 1.7% from the 2010 United States Census, when its population was enumerated at 783,969, in turn a decrease of 1.2% (9,664 fewer residents) from the 793,633 enumerated in the 2000 Census and making it the state's third-most populous county, having dropped behind Middlesex County, and one of only two counties in the state to see a decline between 2000 and 2010 (Cape May County being the other). Its county seat is Newark. It is part of the New York Metropolitan Area. The Bureau of Economic Analysis ranked the county as having the 94th-highest per capita income of all 3,113 counties in the United States (and the seventh-highest in New Jersey) as of 2009. According to the Census Bureau, Essex County had a per capita income in 2015 of \$32,708 and 16.7% of the population lived in poverty.

The Essex County Workforce Development Board (Workforce Board) is a division under the Department of Economic Development, Training and Employment. The Workforce Board is charged with providing oversight of programs and services for the Division of Training and Employment and the Essex County Job Center. The Chief Elected Official for Essex County is the Essex County Executive.

The Workforce Board supports the State of New Jersey's Strategic Talent Development Strategy and has aligned its plan with the key elements and themes. The State's talent development system includes:

- New partnerships with employers across the state's seven key industries;
- Strong collaboration between workforce programs, education and higher education;



- The use of technology to better connect jobseekers and employers;
- Better labor market intelligence to inform workforce investments; and,
- Innovative partnerships between the state, local governments, community and faith-based organizations and educational institutions.

The Essex County Workforce Development Board’s strategic vision for preparing an educated and skilled workforce inclusive of youth and individuals with barriers to employment in order to support the local area economic growth and economic self-sufficiency is ***to guide the Essex County workforce delivery system in developing a skilled workforce that meets the needs of businesses and strengthens the local economy.***

Strategic Goals:

1. Create a workforce system that is relevant to business customers.
2. Establish a sector partnership and career pathway model to grow the talent pipeline of new and emerging in-demand industries and occupations.
3. Embrace a customer-centric methodology that serves diverse populations and informs improved processes and procedures including the use of technology.
4. Identify industries that have sustainable wage and career opportunities by embracing labor market intelligence.
5. Support dynamic public and private partner alignment and integration to better serve business customers and jobseeker clients.
6. Document evidence-based return on investment through a performance management dashboard to track employment, retention, wages, and educational attainment.

Sector partnerships will be an important strategy in the Essex County Workforce Development Area and within our collaborative region known as the North Jersey Partners Regional WDB/One Stop Consortium (NJP). NJP has identified six (6) in-demand industries to focus on including **Advanced Manufacturing, Finance, Health Care, Information Technology, Retail/Hospitality/Tourism, and Transportation/Logistics/Distribution**. Essex County will prioritize three (3) of the industries: Health Care, Transportation/Logistics/Distribution, and Retail/Hospitality/Tourism. Each of these in-demand occupations provides opportunities for training to achieve a living wage with perhaps the exception of Retail/Hospitality/Tourism. In terms of having a comprehensive career pathways approach to building a talent pipeline for the in-demand occupations, retail, particularly as it relates to hospitality, is an existing in-demand industry that will provide a stepping-stone for upward movement into middle skill in-demand industries and occupations.



SECTION I: Strategic Planning Elements

- *An analysis of the local and regional economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and the employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations.*

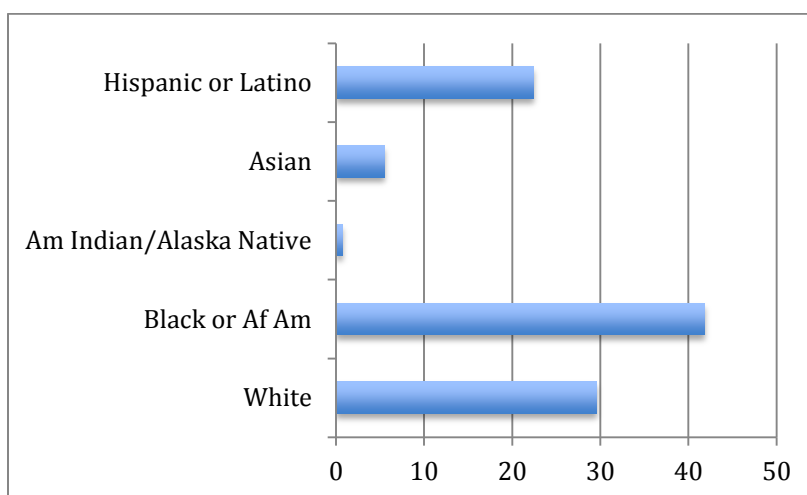
Data in this section of the plan was obtained from a variety of sources including U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, MIT Living Wage Calculator, and the Regional Data Analysis.

Please refer to Section II of the Regional Data Analysis of the North Regional Plan submitted to the Stat of New Jersey on October 3, 2016 for an initial analysis responding to this element.

The three (3) in-demand industries that Essex County will focus on include: Health Care, Transportation/Logistics/Distribution, and Retail/Hospitality/Tourism. Data for these three and the remaining state and regional in-demand industries can be found in the North Jersey Partnership Regional Plan and the State's Combined Plan.

According to the MIT Living Wage Calculator, Essex County's living wage for 1 adult is \$13.04. With 1 Adult/2 Children it is \$29.23. With 2 Adults (1 working) and 2 children it is \$25.52. Two adults both working and 2 children it is \$15.91.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics as of July 1, 2015, Essex County had the following percentages in regard to race.



Essex County 2012 – 2022 Projected Employment Change by Industry			
Industry	2012 Jobs	2022 Jobs	Percent Change
Healthcare	49,950	56,900	+13.9%
Transportation and Warehousing	29,300	32,300	+10.1%
Accommodations/ Food Services/ Retail	47,300	49,750	+5.2%

Health Care

Health is the only industry that has added jobs in New Jersey every year since 1990. From 2012 through 2020, it is projected that nearly 6,950 jobs will be added, an increase of 13.9 percent. It is projected that through 2020, 10 of the 20 fastest growing occupations will be in healthcare.

Transportation/Logistics/Distribution

Essex County lies at the heart of the New York/New Jersey metropolitan area industrial economy and is increasingly coming to rely on its strategic location at the center of air, sea, road, and rail transportation networks for economic growth with seven major highways, railway routes, a world-class shipping terminal, and a busy international airport make Newark a major mid-Atlantic distribution and retail trade center.

By sea: Thirteen miles of waterfront along Newark Bay and the Essex River. Newark is part of the nation’s largest containership port –the Port of New York and New Jersey. With a main channel of 7,000 feet long, the 930-acre Port of Newark can berth 34 ships. Rail freight service is provided by Amtrak and Conrail.

By air: Newark Liberty national Airport is located just south of the city center, providing passenger and cargo service to all points of the globe. Several cargo-specific businesses and structures exist at the airport, including the FedEx Complex (a regional hub), the United Parcel Service package handling and distribution center, and the 250,000 square foot Air Cargo Center. Cargo processing is state-of-the-art, with capacity to handle sophisticated and delicate materials with a high level of efficiency. The Port Authority maintains an administration building near the Air Cargo Center; both the Port of New York and New Jersey and the Newark Liberty International Airport reside within Foreign Trade Zone #49.

By land: Businesses have a wide choice of ground transportation vendors for cargo shipping purposes, from well-established family trucking companies to nationally-known experts such as FedEx and UPS due to the highway system in New Jersey is



the most dense in the nation with ample routes into, out of, and around Essex County with Interstates 280,80, 78,278, and 95 link.

The North Jersey Partners WIRED initiative has led to Talent Development Networks that support career pathways within the Transportation/Logistics/Distribution industry – on the State level. In support of that project, they have been conducting research into the industry and gathering information on needs and issues.

As with other industries, technology is having a major impact on how is done within this industry. Warehousing and distribution centers are using automated goods moving systems that require workers to input and review computer data. Radio frequency identification is being used to track and move most goods and sophisticated software packages manage warehousing and transportation. These changes require workers at all levels to have technology skills, including in those jobs (truck driver, floor worker) in which technology was not traditionally a job requirement. Employers also report difficulty in hiring and retaining skilled material handler supervisors, mechanics, and repair technicians.

Retail/Hospitality/Tourism

The expected net gain of jobs for this sector between 2012 and 2020 is 2,450 in Essex County that is an increase of 5.2%. Although typically not a “living wage” job, this sector will be a critical step in a career pathways model where we are meeting jobseekers where they are and helping them progress on to a career path toward self-sufficiency.

Occupations:

In order to prepare jobseekers with the skills demanded by growing industries, it is necessary to assess the major occupational groups driving employment in Essex County. Employees performing similar tasks are considered to work in the same occupation, regardless of whether they are employed in the same industry. Occupational data for Essex County is available at the sub-regional level, which includes Essex, Hunterdon, Morris, Somerset, and Union Counties. In this area, the top five occupations in terms of total employment include: Retail Salespersons; Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand; Cashiers; Office Clerks, General; and Customer Services Representatives. Of these occupations, none pay higher than the average salary of \$58,520 across these counties. Additionally, of these occupations, only Office Clerks, General and Customer Service Representatives earn higher than \$15 per hour. However, of the top 10 occupations in the area by total employment, six pay higher than \$15 per hour. Additionally, of these top 10 occupations, Registered Nurses (\$81,900) and Sales Representatives, Wholesale and



Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products (\$77,330) earn above the area's average wage. This table depicts the top 10 occupations in Essex County and the surrounding counties (Essex, Hunterdon, Morris, Somerset, and Union), providing the average salary across the area for each.

Occupation	Employment	Annual Salary
Retail Salespersons	34,080	\$26,920
Laborers and Freight, Stock and Material Movers, Hand	23,420	\$28,650
Cashiers	23,790	\$21,410
Office Clerks, General	22,860	\$33,530
Customer Service Representatives	18,810	\$40,410
Registered Nurses	21,930	\$81,900
Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	18,250	\$26,140
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids of Housekeeping Cleaners	20,700	\$30,120
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	11,710	\$77,330
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical	16,860	\$41,710

Data is also available for occupational groups at the sub-regional level, which combines occupations requiring similar skills under a single category. Occupational analysis at this level allows enables the identification of skillsets that may be versatile across numerous individual occupations. In Essex County and the surrounding area, the top five occupational groups in terms of total employment are: Office and Administrative Support Occupations; Sales and Related Occupations; Transportation and Material Moving Occupations; Education, Training, and Library Occupations; and Food Preparation and Serving-Related Occupations. Of these occupational groups, none except Education, Training, and Library Occupations (\$58,940) pay higher than the average annual salary in the area (\$58,520). However, all of the top five occupational groups except Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations pay more than \$15/hour. The following table below depicts the top 10 occupational groups in Essex County and the surrounding counties (Essex, Hunterdon, Morris, Somerset, and Union) and provides the average salary across the area for each.

Occupation	Employment	Annual Salary
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	188,150	\$40,140
Sales and Related Occupations	111,260	\$46,240
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	89,430	\$36,370
Education, Training, and Library Occupations	88,050	\$58,940
Food Preparation and Serving-Related Occupations	74,660	\$25,260
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	73,500	\$83,190
Management Occupations	70,190	\$151,030
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	62,420	\$90,310
Production Occupations	55,690	\$38,350
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	42,210	\$96,400



- *An analysis of the knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, including employment needs in in-demand industry and occupations.*

Occupational postings in the region provide information on baseline skills employers were looking for in the job market across diverse industries and occupational groups. 2015 job postings indicate that employers are looking for soft skills such as communication, problem solving, and team work. Hard skills were required including Microsoft Excel and project management.

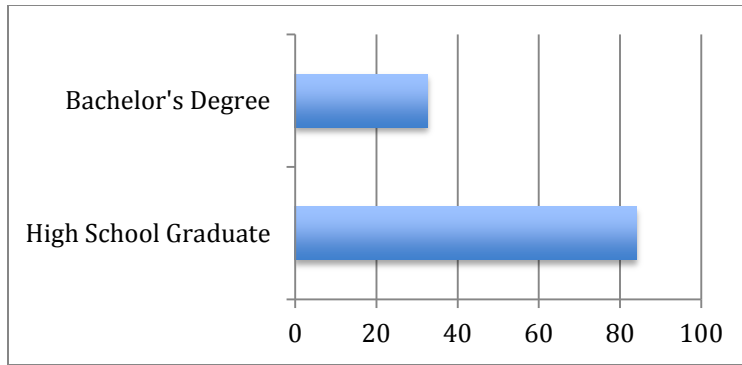
Certification requirements posted in 2015 included:

- Registered Nurse
 - Project Management Certification
 - Certified Public Accountant
 - Certified Information Systems
 - CDL Class A
 - First Aid CPR AED
 - Series 7
 - Commercial Drivers License
 - Certified Information Security
 - Investment Advisor
 - Nurse Practitioner
 - SANS/GIAC Certification
 - CISCO Certified Network Associate
 - Certified Nursing Assistant
 - Home Health Aide
 - Automotive Service Excellence
 - Emergency Medical Technician
- *An analysis of the current workforce in the region, including employment and unemployment data, labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment.*

Employment and Unemployment Labor Force

According to the United States Census, 84.2% of Essex County residents 25 years and older graduated from high school with 32.7% achieving a bachelor's degree.





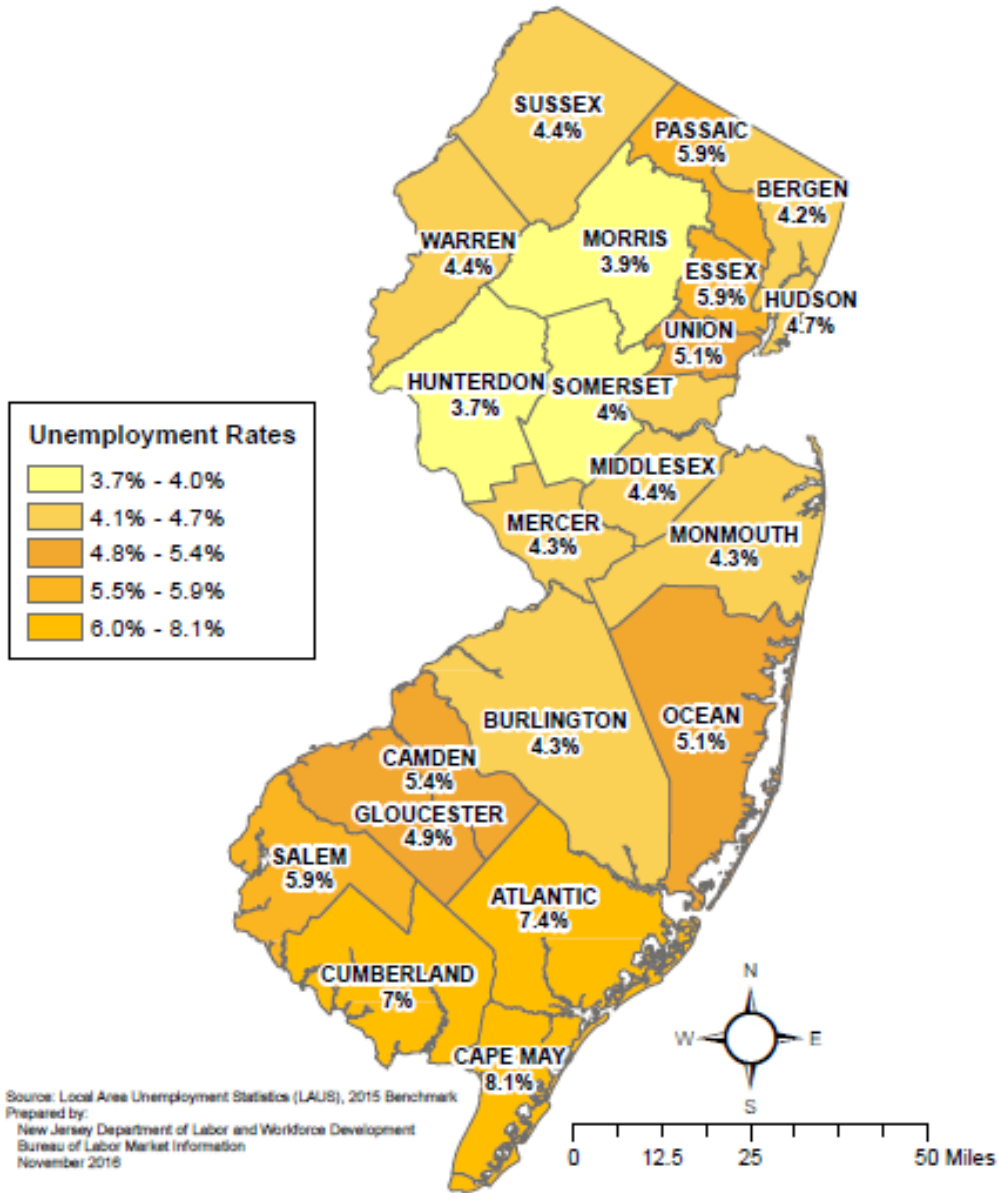
An important component of the economy is the labor force in New Jersey.

By definition, the labor force measures people at their resident location and equals the sum of the employed and the unemployed.

The unemployment rate is the percent of the labor force that is unemployed. In Essex County. Noted on the following chart the unemployment rate as of October 2016 for Essex County is 5.9% and among the highest in the state, with only Cape May, Cumberland, and Atlantic exceeding that figure. Essex County has the highest unemployment rate in the northern and central areas of New Jersey.



New Jersey Counties Unemployment Rates - October 2016 *(Preliminary, Not Seasonally Adjusted)*



- *An analysis of workforce development activities in the region, including available education and training opportunities. This analysis must indicate the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities necessary to address the education and skill needs of job seekers, including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of employers in the region.*

New Jersey's workforce is diverse. Different population groups often face varying challenges and barriers and may need more specific or dedicated services to meet their employment and training needs. There are many programs and services that address the needs of individuals with barriers to employment. Additionally measures are being taken at the state and local levels to further improve programmatic and physical accessibility for LEP individuals and individuals with disabilities, and to improve overall education and employment outcomes for all individuals, but especially individuals with significant barriers to employment.

All core and required partners that provide services in the Essex County Workforce Development Area are part of the local workforce system.

Essex County Division of Training and Employment administers a wide range of Work First New Jersey (WFNJ) activities focused on Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, General Assistance, and Able Body Adult Without Dependent clients. The Division provides essential services and opportunities to clients to form a coordinated One-Stop System with support from the Division of Welfare, and the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

Activities of the Essex County Division of Employment and Training include:

- Assessment and Training Referrals
- Job Search
- Job Readiness Preparation
- Administers Community Work Experience Program
- Supported Assistance to Individuals and Families
- Adult Basic Education Services
- Transportation Assistance to Clients
- Job Placement Assistance
- Career Resource Center
- GED Testing Center
- Program for Parents

The Essex County Department of Housing and Community Development offers housing development assistance and community development block grant opportunities to qualified organizations in various towns and municipalities, First



Time Homebuyer Program, and Home Improvement Program.

The Essex County Department of Citizen Services includes the Division of Family Assistance Benefits, Division of Senior Services, Division of Community Action, Human Services Advisory Council, Youth Services, and Mobile Citizens Services Office.

Essex Community College provides enrollments and trainings for occupational programs, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act programming at the College, Title II literacy services, summer youth program, and Training, Inc.

- *A description of the Local Board's strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment), including goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance in order to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. Describe how this supports the regional plan efforts and potential for shared cost. Describe how the local plan may differ from the regional plan, with a justification for the variance.*

The Essex County Workforce Development Board's strategic vision for preparing an educated and skilled workforce inclusive of youth and individuals with barriers to employment in order to support the local area economic growth and economic self-sufficiency is **to guide the Essex County workforce delivery system in developing a skilled workforce that meets the needs of businesses and strengthens the local economy.**

Strategic Goals:

1. Create a workforce system that is relevant to business customers.
2. Establish a sector partnership and career pathway model to grow the talent pipeline of new and emerging in-demand industries and occupations.
3. Embrace a customer-centric methodology that serves diverse populations and informs improved processes and procedures including the use of technology.
4. Identify industries that have sustainable wage and career opportunities by embracing labor market intelligence.
5. Support dynamic public and private partner alignment and integration to better serve business customers and jobseeker clients.
6. Document evidence-based return on investment through a performance management dashboard to track employment, retention, wages, and educational attainment.

These goals support the overall vision of the workforce development region, which is to



create an inclusive regional workforce system that proactively adapts to the needs of businesses and residents while sustaining the region's competitiveness and stimulating growth in an ever-changing socioeconomic environment." This regional alignment will provide Essex County Local Workforce Area the opportunity to share costs, whenever appropriate and achievable, with the planning region to maximize the impact and effectiveness of the workforce system investments.

- ***Taking into account analyses described above, a strategy to work with the entities that carry out the core programs to align resources available to the local area, to achieve the area's strategic vision and goals.***

The Essex County Workforce Development Board is establishing a partner-convening group comprised of Core Program Partners to provide recommendations and advice on the local workforce system and to establish procedures for aligning resources. The partner-convening group will participate in aligning procedures that will enhance the Essex County Workforce Development Area's ability to carry out the vision and goals for the workforce system:

- Ensure that ALL jobseeker clients, regardless of where they first access the workforce system, will be registered in New Jersey workforce database.
- Establish initial screening questions to help in identifying potential partner engagement.
- Establish partner lists of typical characteristics for each program in regard to potential eligibility and suitability for enrollment to assist with targeted referrals.
- Create a referral process that kicks in based on the initial screening findings and if the initial screening is done at the One-Stop Center, basic and individualized services will be offered and provided.
- Create a service map of available basic and individualized career services, training, and supportive services.
- Create a system orientation to be used at all access points in the Essex County Workforce Development Area.
- Initiate a primary case management system where an individual maintains his or her case manager at the point of first enrollment to provide a single point of contact regardless of the subsequent funding streams he or she may be co-enrolled in. Subsequent funding streams will serve as a program contact that maintains appropriate recordkeeping to track progress and performance data.
- Establish a tracking form that will be used until such time a statewide electronic tracking is available via an integrated case management system.
- Core Program Partners will meet at least monthly to review referral listings, enrollments, co-enrollments, and exits. These meetings will serve as informational to help partners follow through on referrals, to provide opportunities for pitching co-enrollment possibilities, discuss performance strategies, and to coordinate exits.
- Core Program Partners that have a "job" as a planned outcome will be invited to participate on an integrated business service team including Adults, Dislocated Workers, Youth, Wagner-Peyser, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Temporary



Assistance for Needy Families. This team will support the state's Talent Development Strategy.

- Core Program Partners plus educational institutions and economic development representatives will assist in the creation and support of sector partnerships for the identified existing and emerging industries and occupations. The sector partnerships will incorporate career pathways into its responsibilities in terms of creating a flow of the career path options, analysis of the needs and expectations of business customers, analysis of the existing skills and knowledge of the talent pipeline, and work with education representatives to tap into existing training or create new credentialing or certification options. The educational institutional representatives will include Carl Perkins options in the equation to assist with credits for eligible participants.
- Core Program Partners will review and assist with existing and emerging in-demand industries and occupations that the Essex County Workforce Development Area has identified regarding business development and the building of a talent pipeline to meet business needs and expectations.



SECTION II: Local Workforce Development System

- *A description of the workforce development system in the local area, including Identification of the programs that are included in the system; and how the Local Board will support the strategies outlined in the State Plan to support service alignment among the entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs. Identify areas of weakness in service delivery or resources and discuss rather whether regional or local solutions are most appropriate.*

The Essex County Workforce Development Board is a division under the Department of Economic Development, Training and Employment. The Workforce Board is charged with providing oversight of programs and services for the Division of Training and Employment and the Essex County Job Center. These services include those to youth, adults, and dislocated workers, strategic planning and the development of performance management strategies and promising practices in the delivery of One-Stop Career Center Services.

The Workforce Board operates under the auspices of the County Executive, who is supported by a nine (9) member Freeholder Board. Although all of the County Departments and Divisions report up through the Freeholder Board, the Essex County Workforce Development Board functions as the oversight, evaluation, and policy making entity for various departments and divisions; more specifically, the Workforce Board is entrusted with the oversight of a department's operations that are directly related to workforce development and economic development.

The Essex County Workforce Development Board is a business-led body that is represented by a diverse group of stakeholders in the private and public sectors. The Workforce Board is responsible for developing strategies and policies to form a seamless, coordinated One-Stop System for an array of educational, employment and training programs that work to meet the current and future demands of Essex County employers. The Workforce Board operates in a shared effort with the Newark Workforce Development Board to maximize regional coordination.

The existing Workforce Board Committee structure consists of:

- Literacy Committee (joint with Newark WDB)
- Disabilities Committee (joint with Newark WDB)
- Business and Economic Development Committee (joint with Newark WDB)
- Welfare to Work Committee (joint with Newark WDB)
- One-Stop Partner/Welfare to Work operations Committee



- Youth Investment Council

To support its vision and mission, Essex County Workforce Development Board has identified the following core values:

- Driving Investment Based on Industry Need
- Increasing System Accountability
- Meeting Jobseekers Where They Are
- Equipping Workforce for Employment

Core program partners participate on the Essex County Workforce Development Board. In addition, Essex County will establish a partner convening group to strengthen the local workforce system that will foster inclusive and diverse approaches to service delivery.

Core program partners include:

- Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth
- Wagner-Peyser Labor Exchange
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Adult Education and Literacy

All core and required partners that provide services in the Essex County Workforce Development Area are part of the local workforce system. Funding streams that represent core and required partners include:

- Carl Perkins Career and Technical Education Act
 - *Services to individuals who are eligible to receive career and technical education at the secondary and post-secondary levels.*
- Community Services Block Grant
 - *Services low-income individuals to empower, educate, coordinate and assist with reducing poverty and building self-sufficiency.*
- Job Corps
 - *Services youth 16-24 who are low income to receive free education and training that helps young people learn a career, earn a high school diploma or GED, and find and keep a good job.*
- Older Americans Act
 - *Services older adults through Senior Community Service Employment Program with employment and training assistance.*
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
 - *Services individuals who have dependent children with cash assistance when available resources do not fully address the family's needs while preparing program participants for independence through work.*



- Title I Adult
 - *Services target individuals who are 18 and older and who have been chronically unemployed or underemployed, have barriers to getting and keeping a job, and need assistance with job search and/or training.*
- Title I Dislocated Worker
 - *Services target individuals who have lost their jobs due closure or downsizing with no fault of their own.*
- Title I Youth
 - *Services target older youth 18 years to 24 years of age who have barriers to getting and keeping a job and are in need of educational and employment services.*
- Title II Adult Education and Literacy
 - *Services target individuals in need of basic education classes with low basic skills and low educational attainment; English language acquisition for eligible learners to achieve competence in reading, writing, speaking and comprehension of the English language; and math skills needed to attain a high school credential and transition to post-secondary education and employment. These services are awarded through a competitive application process at the State level.*
- Title III Wagner Peyser
 - *Services target individuals who are in need of help with updating or developing a resume and labor exchange assistance that connects them to employment.*
- Title IV Rehabilitation Act
 - *Services target individuals with disabilities to assist in achieving competitive integrated employment.*
- Trade Act
 - *Services individuals who are eligible workers who lose their jobs, or whose hours of work and wages re reduced, as a result of increased imports or production transfers abroad.*
- Unemployment Compensation
 - *Services individuals who are unemployed and eligible to receive unemployment compensation.*
- Veterans Program
 - *Services individuals who are veterans with significant barriers to employment to receive tailored employment and training services.*

All of our identified weaknesses have a combination of local and regional solutions in that Essex County’s proximity to Newark influences the resources.

Weaknesses in the local workforce system include the lack of sufficient funding to assist with infrastructure costs. This includes the lack of funding for improved technology approaches to service delivery.

Of particular concern locally is the number of individuals who have significant



multiple barriers to employers and are not ready to enter training that will lead to a career pathway that meets the needs and expectations of our employers. The challenge created by the multiple barriers is to identify and access wrap-around services to assist individuals with soft skills, basic needs, and work readiness skills. The Workforce Board anticipates a challenge with engaging individuals in a career pathway model that, due to the multiple barriers, will require more staff and case management interaction and longer periods on the workforce programs to reach self-sufficiency. The extended involvement will require motivational tactics to keep individuals engaged and focused on achieving success.

Another challenge will be the communication and documentation of core program partner collaboration. Currently, the computer database systems for core program partners are not integrated which will require constant and detailed in-person communication to coordinate co-enrollments, exits, and referrals.



SECTION III: CORE PROGRAM COLLABORATION

- *Describe how the local board, working with the entities carrying out core programs, will: expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services to eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment; how the local board will facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs; and, improve access to activities leading to an industry valued credential, as made available through the Industry-Valued Credential list published by the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development. Highlight how the local area's education and occupational training programs will include employability skills (soft skills) training, experiential learning opportunities; including classroom training, on-the-job training, internships, externships, registered apprenticeship and any other training methods that are delivered.*

Expanding Access to Employment, Training, Education, and Support Services

The partnering convening group that is being formed will coordinate with each other to enhance referral processes, establish an initial screening process, and implement a no wrong door concept that will expand access to employment, training, education, and support services. The no wrong door concept involves coordinating with all partners to be an access point for jobseekers, particularly those with barriers. Regardless of whether a jobseeker enters the workforce system at the One-Stop Center or in a partner facility, the individual will register in the state database, undergo some initial screening questions, and be referred to appropriate partner services. Partners will provide basic career services when possible and refer appropriate jobseekers to the One-Stop Center for individualized career services and training services.

In addition, communicating the availability of services will be an important ingredient to expanding access. Outreach and recruitment materials will be created to entice individuals to visit a partner agency and public announcements will be increased to communicate the availability of workforce system activities.

Job fairs and other targeted recruitment events will be held in coordination with core and required partners.

Development of Career Pathways and Co-enrollments

Building career pathways with a focus on industry-valued credentials is a key theme of the New Jersey Combined State Plan for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. The Essex County Workforce Development Board will work to

develop and promote these opportunities. To achieve this, Essex County is actively engaged in State and regional initiatives, including the partnership with the Talent Networks, as well as working locally to strengthen relationships with training providers and the business community to develop well defined career pathways, particularly in the forecasted in-demand industries and occupations.

Essex County intends to develop pathways through employer-driven sector partnerships that will include educational institutions and economic development representation. Stackable and portable credentials will be encouraged to provide a progression from low skill to middle skill jobs.

The work of joint committees between the Newark Workforce Development Board and the Essex County Workforce Development Board will support this work, including the Education and Literacy Committee and the Welfare-to-Work Committee.

Improving Access to Activities Leading to an Industry Valued Credential

The attainment of industry-valued credentials is a priority for both the State of New Jersey and the North region. Essex County Workforce Development Board will work with business to learn about locally valued credentials and collaborate with employers to give priority to those jobseekers with those credentials. Essex County will ensure any such credentials are included in the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development list. Essex County will work with educational institutions and the State's Talent Development Centers to ensure these programs are available to Essex County residents and accessible via the training investments of the workforce system.

Information about the credentials that are in the highest demand by employers will be promoted among One-Stop staff so they can most effectively provide guidance to jobseekers. Jobseekers will be provided information to help them make informed decisions with respect to training opportunities they may want to pursue.

Training providers have accountability to prepare individuals to connect to employment and successfully perform in the workplace. Providers are required to deliver a blend of services that provide both occupational credentials as well as employability skills necessary to succeed. Essex County will provide the option of the full menu of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act services to eligible jobseekers.

Co-enrollments among core program partners will provide an opportunity for leveraged resources to assist individuals with barriers.



SECTION IV: Local Area Strategies and Services

- *Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the local area in order to: facilitate engagement of employers, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations, in workforce development programs; support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area; better coordinates workforce development programs and economic development; strengthen linkages between the One-Stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs; and, create linkages during program delivery between individual customers and employers.*

Engagement of Employers in In-demand Industry Sectors and Occupations

The Essex County Workforce Development Board recognizes business and industry as a primary customer to the workforce system. It is expected business needs and expectations in the existing and emerging in-demand industries and occupations will drive the workforce services provided in the Essex County Workforce Development Area. Employer needs and expectations will be established through the work of our sector partnerships along with recommended career pathways flow for each industry and occupation. Economic Development partners in the Essex County Workforce Development Area will assist in the formation of the sector partnerships and gather information on the needs and expectations of business and industry. Existing and emerging industries and occupations representatives who are Essex County Workforce Development Board Members will participate on the appropriate sector partnerships along with union representatives and educational institutions.

Meeting the Needs of Businesses in the Local Area

Successful workforce systems utilize both job development and business development methods in serving business and industry customers and assisting jobseekers in getting and keeping a job. It is understood that job development and business development are very different outreach and recruitment approaches to working with business and industry.

The Essex County Workforce Development Board sees job development as an approach that requires specific funding sources to reach out to small and family-owned businesses with a particular client in mind in an effort to place the individual with known barriers, strengths, and weaknesses in a work-based learning opportunity. Job development will remain the responsibility and role of individual partner programs.

Business development, on the other hand, is about outreach and recruitment of



business customers to request applicants when openings occur. Typically, business development is medium size to large businesses. Essex County Workforce Development Area through its core program partners, will form an Integrated Business Service Team to conduct business development.

As members of the Integrated Business Service Team, participating core program partners as well as economic development and educational institutions will align and integrate business development activities within the Essex County Workforce Development Area for the purpose of:

- Coordinating with New Jersey's Talent Development Strategy
- Creating a single point of contact for businesses
- Establishing a collaborative outreach and recruitment structure
- Coordinating workforce services and training options
- Leveraging resources
- Sharing performance outcomes
- Creating and managing a talent pipeline in existing and emerging in-demand industries and occupations
- Establishing an inventory of existing training options, particularly those that include a credential or certification in existing and emerging in-demand industries and occupations
- Identifying skill and knowledge gaps between what business needs and expects and what training options are available
- Working with Education to enhance or establish short-term training options for portable or stackable credential/certification opportunities

Coordinate Workforce Development and Economic Development

There is a Business Resource Center available to residents interested in starting or growing businesses. Currently there is no economic development entity in Essex County. The 501c3 that was handling those duties, called the Economic Development Corporation of Essex County, closed its doors due to lack of funding. The integrated business service team will work with the Talent Development Strategy initiative and with the sector partnerships to ensure economic development concepts intended to grow existing businesses and attract new businesses is supported through the outreach to business

Strengthen Linkages Between One-Stop System and Unemployment Insurance

The Essex County Workforce Development Board recognizes that Unemployment Insurance claimants are a reasonable and logical pool of workforce system participants that could benefit from other partner services and activities. Unemployment Insurance will be included in the system orientation. Unemployment



Insurance staff will be encouraged to have its claimants view the system orientation and provide each recipient with information on how to access other partner services. Coordination efforts will be negotiated in the Memorandum of Understanding process.

Linkages Between Individual Customers and Employers

Business services and strategies are a key ingredient to the Essex County Workforce Development Area. Initiatives related to helping business and industry get skilled workers will be a priority. Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Older Youth Title I training funds will only be expended on industries and occupations identified as in-demand during the life of this plan. Should a shift in forecasted growth industries occur, the local plan will be modified to reflect the new reality.

The Essex County Workforce Development Board will research and work with economic development, educational institutions, and labor unions to identify apprenticeship opportunities. The Essex County Workforce Development Board will request that a speaker from the State's Apprenticeship Unit present to the Board and partners at an Essex County Workforce Development Board meeting to assist in identifying specific strategies.

Partners will be apprised of the availability of Incumbent Worker Training, On-the-Job Training, and Customized Training that can assist eligible existing workers and eligible new hires in building the necessary skills and knowledge to benefit the employers and provide a career path for workers. The Integrated Business Services Team will include these initiatives in their outreach and recruitment packages that will be used for business development.

Sector Partnerships will play an intricate role in identifying career paths and the skills and knowledge needed to be proficient in the existing and emerging in-demand industries and occupations. The sector partnerships will inform the Integrated Business Services Team regarding career pathways and the skills and knowledge needed to establish the talent pipeline for the in-demand industries.



SECTION V: Workforce Development and Economic Development Partnerships

- *Describe how the local board will drive an effective partnership between workforce development activities and economic development activities in the local area and in the region. This will include a description of how the local board will coordinate local workforce investment activities with regional economic development activities that are carried out in the local area and how the local workforce board will promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.*

As indicated previously in this plan, Essex County does not have an economic development entity at this time. The integrated services team will work with the Talent Development Strategy initiative, sector partnerships, and the regional workforce team to promote growing and attracting business through workforce system opportunities. A Business Resource Center is available to residents interested in starting or growing businesses to include entrepreneurial opportunities.

The sector partnerships will play an essential role in coordinating business and economic development interests with the workforce system. Three sector partnerships will include: Health Care, Transportation/Logistics/Distribution, and Hospitality/Retail. Workforce Board Members from each of the forecasted in-demand industries will participate on the sector partnerships to identify the needs and expectations of business and get feedback on career paths for each of the industries that will include forecasted growth occupations.

From a regional perspective, Essex County is participating in a North Jersey Partnership called **Together North Jersey**. This is a coalition of over 100 diverse partners in the thirteen (13) county North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority region of New Jersey. The **Together North Jersey** Plan, developed over three (3) years with strong involvement of all of the Workforce Boards in north New Jersey, is a comprehensive economic development strategy that invests in the region's existing communities to make housing, jobs, educational, cultural, and recreational opportunities more easily accessible to most residents while reducing dependence on cars.

Essex County Workforce Development Board will dedicate financial resources to training and retraining through Essex County College in the forecasted in-demand industries and occupations.



SECTION VI: One-Stop Delivery System

- *Describe the one-stop delivery system in the local area including: describe how the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of one-stop operator/providers of service through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, and workers and jobseekers. Include in this description the local board's process for selecting and evaluating providers through solicitations (Request for Proposals) for services, process for utilizing the Eligible Training Provider List (setting of local standards of the Eligible Training Provider List), review of sub-grantee budgets and reports, and a description of the local area's monitoring and compliance unit and their activities.*

Essex County Workforce Development Board has an active One-Stop Committee that is integrated with the Newark Workforce Development Board. This Committee provides oversight and direction in a number of critical areas, including developing the Memoranda of Understanding, leveraging resources to meet unmet customer needs, monitoring system performance, and establishing continuous improvement goals.

The programs provided through Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act are tied to negotiated common performance measures. Continued success and funding are directly related to meeting or exceeding the negotiated performance levels.

The Essex County Workforce Development Board will establish balanced scorecard metrics that provide a format to analyze success ratios of each eligible training provider in terms of participant engagement including but not limited to:

- Receipt of a credential or certification in an in-demand industry and occupation
- Receipt of a job
- Receipt of a job in a training related in-demand industry and occupation
- Six Month Retention in a job
- Six Month Retention in a training related in-demand industry and occupation
- Median wage at job entry comparable to the local negotiated level
- Entry into a more advanced course of study to achieve progress towards a career path goal

Eligible training providers will be trained on the negotiated common performance measure requirements. Providers that do not meet or exceed the requirements will be asked to create a continuous improvement plan that will be approved and monitored by the Essex County Workforce Development Board for progress. Continued failure to meet negotiated requirements may result in discontinuing the



respective training option(s).

The One-Stop Committee will review employer placements. Business customers utilizing work-based learning opportunities that are intended to result in a job will be monitored according to the same criteria as eligible training providers. This will include on-the-job training, customized training, and incumbent worker training opportunities. An employer who has had three (3) or more placements in a program year and has a track record of not meeting the negotiated levels will not be able to participate for a period of six (6) months at which time the situation will be evaluated and a decision made by the One-Stop Committee.

- ***Describe how the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and through other means, such as distance learning.***

Access to services will be achieved through a variety of mechanisms starting with training all Core Program Partners providing workforce system initial screening questions, and offering the system-wide orientation that is being developed. This “no wrong door” concept allows multiple and varied access points.

Technology is encouraged throughout the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Information will be provided on all Core Program Partner websites on services that are available via the web. Information on how to access web resources will be provided via the system orientation and through outreach and recruitment materials.

- ***Describe how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners will comply with section 188 of the Act regarding non-discrimination, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.***

The Essex County Workforce Development Board supports and requires compliance as follows:

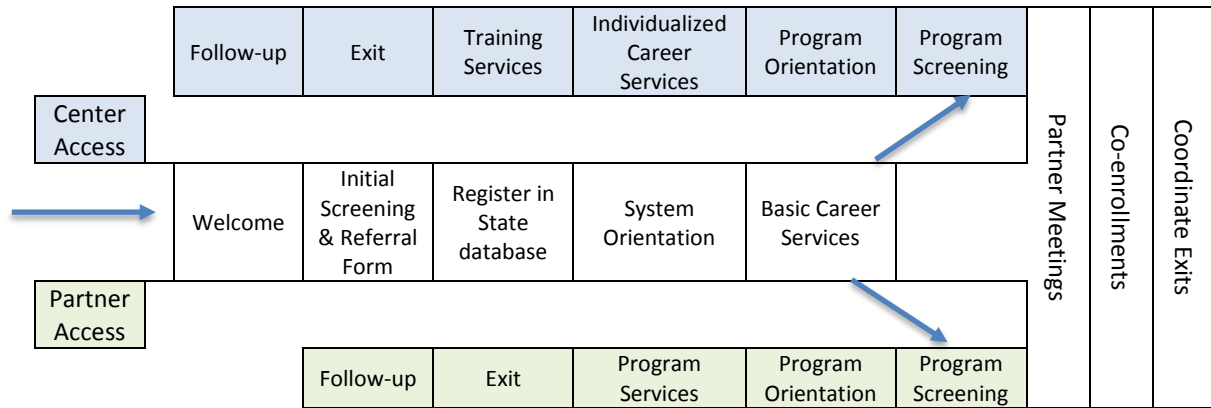
- Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act prohibiting discrimination on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief.
- Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requires reasonable accommodations be provided to qualified individuals with disabilities in certain circumstances.



All workforce system partners will post required notices to ensure all eligible individuals are aware of the system’s obligations to operate programs in a non-discriminatory manner. Equal Employment Opportunity is the Law notices will be posted in all partner facilities and will be reviewed with each program participant and documented in each client file. Equal Employment Opportunity language will be placed on all new and reprinted outreach and recruitment documents.

Monitoring will include a review of system compliance regarding all of the above.

- **Describe the flow of services delivered at the One-Stop centers, including a discussion of the utilization of state and local staff for each area, in compliance with federal and state law. A diagram of customer flow and services provision may be provided.**



Jobseekers, youth, and workers may access the workforce system at the comprehensive One-Stop Center. Partner agency offices will also serve as access points. A “no-wrong door” approach will be used by the partner agencies that will provide common steps regardless of the access point. The partners are establishing an initial screening tool that is comprised of some basic questions that provide an indication of whether the individual may be a potential candidate for another Core Program Partner. If the initial screening identifies a potential partner referral may be helpful, the referral process negotiated by each partner agency is triggered. Everyone entering each of the access points will then be provided a computer to register in the New Jersey state database. The partner convening group will create a system orientation that will be technology-based and individuals will watch the PowerPoint. The system orientation will provide information on the diverse array of options that may be available. Next, basic career services may be provided by the Center first accessed or a partner agency or an individual may be referred to a One-Stop Center to utilize the resource room if access is somewhere other than a One-Stop Center. Next, program screening is conducted by the respective partner



including assessments, and the individual is given the unique program orientation for the services he or she will be enrolled in. Funding streams provide appropriate program services. Partners will meet monthly to review enrollment information and discuss co-enrollment possibilities and procedures. During these meetings, if co-enrollments are in place, exit information will be coordinated. For Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth the Individualized Career Services will include an Individual Employment Plan or Individual Service Strategy. Case management begins at enrollment onto a partner program. The partners in the Essex County Workforce Development Area will follow State guidance on co-enrollment of Wagner-Peyser and Welfare customers in WIOA. Case management will be done by the primary partner, or in other words, the partner that enrolled the individual onto a program first. Subsequent co-enrollments will do secondary case-management and work with the primary case manager during the partner meetings to coordinate efforts. If a client leaves a partner program and is still co-enrolled in another, the partners may choose to transfer the primary case management to the active program. This approach does not violate any supervision requirements for State staff at any partner agency.

- ***Describe the roles and resource contribution of the one-stop partners. This should include a description of the local Workforce Development Board's partners and resource sharing agreements. Also include a description of the steps taken, any agreements reached with partners, regarding One-Stop infrastructure costs and shared cost.***

Essex County Local Workforce Area Partners will be negotiating and signing a Memorandum of Understanding that will include roles and resource contributions.

Fundamentally, partners have agreed to pay based on a partner's space utilization at the One-Stop Career Center. Each partner will provide its own materials and program specific equipment. Partners who will be "visiting" with regular office hours on a part-time basis may provide resources in the form of in-kind contributions such as shared staff for workshop trainers, resource room coverage, or front-desk coverage.

A service mapping exercise will be conducted to identify basic career services, individualized career services, and training services each partner offers. The exercise will include age group served, targeted populations, and eligibility requirements. This exercise provides an opportunity to coordinate like services and to tap into partner services through co-enrollments.

Essex County will work with the partners in the establishment of infrastructure costs once guidance is received from the State of New Jersey.





SECTION VII: Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Activities

- *Describe and assess the types and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area. Include a description of how your education and occupational training programs will include employability skills training content (soft skills) that prepares workers for a range of workplace activities under Title II in the local area, including a description of how the local board will carry out, consistent with subparagraphs (A) and (B)(i) of the section 107(d)(11) and section 232, the review of local applications submitted under Title II.*

The Essex County Workforce Development Board wants to make available as many options for Individualized Career Services and Training as possible to allow a tailored unique experience based on client needs. This supports our customer-centric model. The local workforce system will not prescribe to “a one size fits all” mentality. The toolbox of opportunities will be extensive providing front-line workers and integrated business service team members a chance to individualize the workforce system experience and create a meaningful plan of action.

The services will not all be the role of the title I Adult and Dislocated Worker provider. In some instances, the services are Basic Career Services that one or more partner agencies may be assisting with. In other instances, such as Adult Education and Literacy, a Core Program Partner will provide the service. Adults and Dislocated Workers may be co-enrolled across partner programs to leverage resources and expand the menu options. Soft skills, or employability skills, will be embedded within the training programs as well as discussed during case management interactions with the jobseekers.

Therefore, the Essex County Workforce Development Area will consider all Title I service possibilities on the options menu:

Basic Career Services

- Eligibility determination
- Outreach, intake, and orientation
- Initial assessment of skill levels, aptitudes, abilities, and supportive service needs
- Labor exchange services
- Referrals and coordination of activities
- Workforce and labor market employment statistics information
- Performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of training

- Local area performance regarding accountability measures
- Information on availability of supportive services and referrals
- Assistance in establishing eligibility for financial aid assistance for training and education programs
- Information and assistance regarding filing Unemployment Insurance claims.

Individualized Career Services

- Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers.
- Individual employment plan
- Group and/or individual counseling and mentoring
- Career planning (including case management)
- Short-term pre-vocational services
- Internships and work experiences
- Workforce preparation activities
- Financial literacy services
- Out-of-area job search assistance and relocation assistance
- English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs

Training Services

- Occupational Skills Training
- On-the-Job Training
- Programs that Combine Workplace Training with Related Instruction
- Apprenticeship Training
- Training Programs Operated by Private Sector
- Skill Upgrading and Retraining
- Entrepreneurial Training
- Customized Training
- Incumbent Worker Training
- Adult Education and Literacy Activities
- Job Readiness Training

The Adult Education and Literacy Providers expect a request for proposal package available in January of 2017. Prior to its submission, the Essex County Workforce



Development Board or its Executive Committee will review the proposals and provide letters of recommendation. The Executive Committee has the authority to conduct business between Essex County Workforce Development Board meetings. A special Executive Committee meeting will be held to accommodate the review process and allow the local providers the time they need to complete their proposals prior to the review.



SECTION VIII: Statewide Rapid Response Coordination

- *Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities.*

Rapid Response is designed to shorten or eliminate time between employment opportunities for an individual, reducing or eliminating the time an individual would receive Unemployment Insurance benefits. A Rapid Response team, which is comprised of State and Essex County Workforce Development Area employees, offers its services to small organizations and large companies alike. The Rapid Response Unit will disseminate essential information to individuals, ranging from how to file for and what to expect from Unemployment Insurance to local resources available for individuals seeking reemployment.

In the Essex County Workforce Development Area, Rapid Response is a collaborative effort that involves locally defined partnerships with staff from the State, Essex County Dislocated Worker Program, Essex County Workforce Development Area's Integrated Business Services Team and Division of Unemployment Insurance. Rapid Response teams work with both Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) and non-WARN businesses and employees to quickly maximize public and private resources that will minimize the disruptions on companies, affected workers, and communities associated with job loss. Generally, Rapid Response Teams provide customized services onsite at an affected company, accommodate work schedules, and assist companies and workers through the challenging transitions associated with job loss.

All Rapid Responses, irrespective of the size of the dislocation event and whether it is a WARN or non-WARN situation, involve: (1) an initial business consultation, which is employer-focused, and (2) an information session, which is employee focused. The State works collaboratively with Essex County, the Division of Unemployment Insurance, and other relevant stakeholders to ensure effective, customer-centric Rapid Response provision.

SECTION IX: Youth Activities

- *A description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce development activities in the Local Area, including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities, which description and assessment shall include an identification of successful models of such youth workforce investment activities.*

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requires that a minimum of 75% of Essex County Workforce Development Area Title I youth funds, minus administrative costs, must be spent on out-of-school youth. The Essex County Workforce Development Board has chosen to serve all out-of-school youth.

Also, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requires a minimum of 20% of the Essex County Workforce Development Area Title I youth funds, minus administrative costs, must be spent on work experiences.

- Academic and Occupational Education
- Summer Jobs
- Pre-Apprenticeship Programs
- On-the-Job Training
- Job Shadowing and Internships

Program expenditures on the work experience program element include wages as well as staffing costs for the development and management of the work experiences.

Examples of the 20% priority spending on work experiences:

- Youth wages including Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) tax;
- Staffing and travel costs for developing and providing work readiness training for youth participants;
- Staffing and travel costs to meet and work with employers to develop work experiences for youth participants; and,
- Staffing and travel costs for on-site monitoring and job coaching at the youth participants' work site.

Essex County's Title I Youth Program will include the fourteen (14) required program elements in our menu of services:

1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion of the requirements for a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (including a recognized certificate of attendance or similar document for individuals with disabilities) or for a recognized postsecondary credential.



2. Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate.
3. Paid and unpaid work experiences that have as a component academic and occupational education, which may include:
 - a. Summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year.
 - b. Pre-apprenticeship programs.
 - c. Internships and job shadowing; and,
 - d. On-the-job training opportunities.
4. Occupational skill training, which may include priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials that are aligned with in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area.
5. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster.
 - a. Adult education and literacy activities such as basic academic skills training, critical thinking skills, or digital literacy skills;
 - b. Workforce preparation activities such as self—management skills grooming for employment, or following directions, and
 - c. Workforce training such as occupational skills training, on-the-job training, job readiness training, or customized training.
6. Leadership development opportunities, which may include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors, as appropriate.
7. Supportive services.
8. Adult mentoring for the period of participation and a subsequent period, for a total of not less than 12 months.
9. Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation, as appropriate.
10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral, as appropriate.
11. Financial literacy education.
 - a. Support the ability of participants to create budgets, initiate checking and savings accounts at banks, and make informed financial decisions.
 - b. supporting participants in learning how to effectively manage spending, credit, and debt, including student loans, consumer credit and,
 - c. Supporting a participant’s ability to understand, evaluate and compare financial products and services.
12. Entrepreneurial skills training



- a. Entrepreneurial skills training provides the basics of starting and operating a small business. These trainings should develop the skills associated with entrepreneurship and may include but not limited to:
 - i. Taking initiative, creatively seeking out and identifying business opportunities, develop budgets and forecast resource needs, understand various options for acquiring capital and the trade-offs associated with each option; and,
 - ii. Communicate effectively and market oneself and one's ideas.
- 13. Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services.
- 14. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training.
 - a. Inform participants of legal responsibilities after turning 18, assess participant strengths/abilities/interests, help participants prepare and submit post-secondary education applications and financial aid, investigate and apply for scholarships, and develop portfolio that demonstrates accomplishments and competencies.

As with the Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs, all fourteen (14) elements will not necessarily be provided by the Title I Youth service provider. Youth may receive some services through coordination with Core Partner Programs including Adult Education and Literacy, Wagner-Peyser, Vocational Rehabilitation, or other Required Partner Programs. Youth with barriers will participate including individuals with disabilities.

When appropriate, youth will be co-enrolled in a Core Program Partner funding stream to leverage resources and maximize service options to youth.

- ***Describe how your area will satisfy the requirements for 75% of WIOA Title I Youth funds to be used for out-of-school youth, and 20% of total youth funds to be used for work experience activities.***

Essex County will maintain a line item budget that shows the breakout for the required 20% for work-based learning. As funds are obligated and/or expended on work-based learning the line item will reflect a running total of both obligated and expended. The Executive Committee of the Essex County Workforce Development Board will monitor the financial information on a quarterly basis to ensure compliance.

Essex County Workforce Development Board has chosen to only serve out-of-school youth. 100% of funds will be expended on out-of-school youth.



- ***Describe the design framework for youth programs in the local area, and how the 14 program elements required are to be made available within that framework.***

Essex County has a Youth Resource Center that provides many of the program elements. Intake, objective assessment, individual service strategy, case management and follow-up are done by Essex County as permitted in the Act due to the fact Essex County is the grant recipient and fiscal agent. Counseling is done in the case management interaction. Essex County College provides literacy. Educational institutions provide training.

Youth may receive some services through coordination with Core Partner Programs including Adult Education and Literacy, Wagner-Peyser, Vocational Rehabilitation, or other Required Partner Programs. Youth with barriers will participate including individuals with disabilities.

When appropriate, youth will be co-enrolled in a Core Program Partner funding stream to leverage resources and maximize service options to youth.

- ***Clarify how and if the area will be securing any youth program elements without the procurement of programs and services.***

As per the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, design framework services may be done by the grant recipient/fiscal agent. Design framework elements include intake, objective assessment, individual service strategy, case management, and follow-up services. Essex County, the grant recipient and fiscal agent for the Title I funds will do the design framework elements. Essex County College provides literacy options. Individuals Training Accounts are used to pay for classroom training.

Other youth services are provided through a referral process that does not provide payment to the provider.



SECTION X: Secondary and Postsecondary Education Coordination

- *Describe how the local board will coordinate education and workforce development activities carried out in the local area with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.*

The Essex County Workforce Development Board has established a Youth Investment Council to ensure that youth workforce activities are focused on the needs and expectations specific to out-of-school youth through 24 years of age. Postsecondary representatives are voting members of the Workforce Development Board. The engagement with secondary education includes recruitment efforts targeting individuals who have dropped out of school or who are graduating and need help with further education and training activities.

Educational institutions representatives will participate on the partner convening group to review strategies, enhance services, and coordinate activities to avoid duplication of service.



SECTION XI: Supportive Service Coordination

- *A description of how the Local Board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out under this title in the Local Area with the provision of transportation, including public transportation, and other appropriate supportive services in the Local Area.*

Essex County is fortunate to house many of the wrap-around supportive services needed by workforce system jobseekers including:

- Supported Assistance to Individuals and Families
- Transportation Assistance to Clients
- Program for Parents
- First Time Homebuyer Program
- Home Improvement Program
- Community Services Block Grant
- Senior Services

Additionally, the Disabilities Issues Committee of the Essex County Workforce Development Board (integrated with the Newark Workforce Development Board), has taken steps to ensure individuals with disabilities have full knowledge of an access to the supportive services available to them.



SECTION XII: Wagner Peyser Coordination

- *Describe plans and strategies for, and assurances concerning, maximizing coordination of services provided by the State employment service under the Wagner-Peyser Act and services provided in the local area through the one-stop delivery system, to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services.*

Wagner-Peyser is a Core Program Partner in the One-Stop delivery system. Wagner-Peyser is co-located full-time in the comprehensive One-Stop Center and shares in the facility costs.

Along with the other Core Program Partners, Wagner-Peyser will participate in the customer flow that provides for a “no wrong door” approach to serving clients in Essex County. The design has all Core Program Partner clients registering in the New Jersey State database and viewing a system orientation as well as receiving any basic career services available at the location they access. Wagner-Peyser will participate in the referral process and initial screening to identify potential services for all Center clients.

Wagner-Peyser will participate in the Memorandum of Understanding negotiations regarding front door services, resource room coverage, basic career services, and integrated business services team roles and responsibilities.



SECTION XIII: Adult Education and Literacy Coordination

- *A description of how the Local Board will coordinate the WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with adult education and literacy activities under the WIOA Title II, including how the Local Board will carry out the review of local applications submitted under Title II consistent with WIOA requirements.*

Adult Education and Literacy is a Core Program Partner.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act focuses on targeted populations with more barriers than previous legislations. The Essex County Workforce Development Area is expecting to “meet people where they are” and help individuals gain the skills and knowledge they need to get and keep a job. The Sector Partnership approach provides a blueprint for career pathways. Individuals will enter the system with the partner that they will most benefit from and begin a path toward self-sufficiency via career pathways. The career pathways model will create a talent pipeline to fill employment in industries and occupations that are forecasted to have growth and provide a self-sufficient wage over the next few years. The Essex County Workforce Development Board believes that many of the workforce system individuals will start with Adult Basic Education or English as a Second Language and build from there. The partnership with Adult Basic Education and Literacy is essential.

Along with the other Core Program Partners, Adult Education and Literacy will participate in the customer flow that provides for a “no wrong door” approach to serving individuals in the Essex County Workforce Development Area. The design has all Core Program Partner clients registering in the New Jersey state database and viewing a system orientation as well as receiving any basic career services available at the location they access. Adult Education and Literacy will also participate in the referral process and initial screening to identify potential services for all One-Stop Center jobseekers. An MOU between the Title II Grant Consortia and the Essex County WDB is in the process of being signed.

The Adult Education and Literacy Providers expect a request for proposal package available in January of 2017. Prior to its submission, the Essex County Workforce Development Board or its Executive Committee will review the proposals and provide letters of recommendation. The Executive Committee has the authority to conduct business between Essex County Workforce Development Board meetings. A special Executive Committee meeting will be held to accommodate the review process and allow the local providers the time they need to complete their proposals prior to the review.



SECTION XIV: Vocational Rehabilitation Coordination

- *Describe the replicated cooperative agreements (as defined in section 107(d)(11)) between the local board or other local entities described in section 101(a)(11)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 721(a)(11)(B)) and the local office of a designated State agency or designated State unit administering programs carried out under title I of such Act (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.) (other than section 112 or part C of that title (29 U.S.C. 732, 741) and subject to section 121(f)) in accordance with section 101(a)(11) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 721(a)(11)) with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination. Describe in this section what internal mechanisms will support these initiatives and how these technical assistance initiatives are coordinated with or supported by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visual Impaired.*

Essex County Workforce Development Board has an integrated Committee with the Newark Workforce Development Board that focuses on Disabilities and ensuring individuals with disabilities have access to the full range of services available to them. The Committee relies on its partnership with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to ensure individuals who are blind or visually impaired are connected to services available to them through the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

Vocational Rehabilitation will participate on the partner convening group regarding co-enrollments and service delivery.

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, in accordance with 29 U.S.C. 721(a)(11) will provide the following services to individuals with disabilities:

- Provide intake, orientation, and assessments for disabled job-seekers;
- Promote employment of persons with disabilities;
- Provide comprehensive assessments and an Individualized Plan for Employment for those who are both eligible to receive services and meet the Division's Order of Selection criteria;
- Provide guidance and counseling, physical restoration, and training to financially eligible persons with disabilities;
- Provide follow-up services to enhance job retention;
- Provide other services as may be available and appropriate;
- Provide Pre-Employment Transitioning Services for students with disabilities, as defined by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act;
- Provide Supported Employment Services for youth with disabilities as defined



- by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act;
- Provide independent living services older blind individuals to enhance the capacity of persons with disabilities to live unaided in the community;
 - Provide performance information as required by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act;
 - Provide cross training of Workforce staff on disability related issues;
 - Provide technical assistance on disability related issues and on assistive technology;
 - Engage employers through the Division's Business Liaisons;
 - Work in a collaborative manner to coordinate services among the Workforce Partners for individuals with disabilities.



SECTION XV: Disbursal of Grant Funds

- *Identify the entity responsible for the disbursal of grant funds described in section 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III), as determined by the chief elected official or the Governor under section 107(d)(12)(B)(i).*

Essex County Executive is the chief elected official and Essex County is the entity responsible for the disbursal of grant funds.



SECTION XVI: One-Stop Operator Procurement

- *Describe the competitive process to be used to competitively select the One-Stop Operator, and to award the sub-grants and contracts in the local area for activities carried out under WIOA Title I.*

Consistent with section 121(d) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, the Essex County Workforce Development Board, with the agreement of the Chief Elected Officials shall designate or certify one-stop operators and may terminate for cause the eligibility of the provider selected.

Selection of the One-Stop Operator will be through a competitive process and shall be a public, private, nonprofit, or consortium of entities comprised of three (3) or more American Job Center partners. The selected One-Stop Operator will have demonstrated effectiveness and will be located in the local area. Examples of organizations that may competitively apply include: institutions of higher education, employment service State Wagner-Peyser Act agencies, community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, private-for-profit entities, government agencies, local chambers of commerce, business organizations, labor organizations, career and technical education schools, and other interested organizations or entities. Elementary schools and secondary schools shall not be eligible for designation or certification as a One-Stop Operator.

Organizations applying for One-Stop Operator designation must disclose any potential conflicts of interest arising from the relationships with other service providers. The selected One-Stop Operator(s) may not establish practices that create disincentives to providing services to individuals with barriers to employment who may require longer-term services, such as intensive employment, training and education services. And, the selected One-Stop Operator(s) must comply with Federal regulations and procurement policies related to calculation and use of profits.

The Essex County Workforce Development Board will consider proposals that have direct costs associated with providing the One-Stop Operator roles and responsibilities, and proposals that have costs incorporated within other on-site service provider activities and no direct One-Stop Operator budget.

To ensure there is no conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest, the Essex County Workforce Development Board will contract with an independent consultant to facilitate the procurement process. The Executive Committee of the Essex County Workforce Development Board will work directly with the independent consultant to develop a request for proposal and evaluation tool. No workforce system service provider or potential service provider will be involved in the



development of the request for proposal or the selection process. In the event only one proposal is received, the Essex County Workforce Development Board will proceed with sole source procurement with the approval of the Chief Elected Official.

The One-Stop Operator procurement will be completed by July 1, 2017 with the option to renew annually for four (4) years.



SECTION XVII: Performance Measures

- *Describe how the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official pursuant to section 116(c), will be used to measure the performance of the local area and will be used by the local board for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under subtitle B, and the one-stop delivery system, in the local area. Describe any additional performance measures developed or used locally.*

The Essex County Workforce Development Board and Essex County negotiate with the NJ Department of Labor, on behalf of the Governor, to reach an agreement on local performance levels as outlined in the *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act*. Adjustments will be made during negotiations in order to account for expected economic conditions and characteristics of individuals to be served in the local area. Performance report templates developed by the Secretary of Education will be the principal vehicle by which Essex County Workforce Development Board will report on the performance of core programs.

In conjunction with state partners, the Essex County Workforce Development Board will report on customer feedback, outcome, and process measures analyses in order to evaluate these programs.

Negotiated levels of performance are targeted to meet or exceed 80% of State benchmarks with regard to the percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized unemployment following the fourth quarter after leaving the program.

With regard to WIOA performance measures, primary indicators include:

- The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
- The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program;
- The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
- The percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program;
- The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary



credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment; and

- The indicators of effectiveness in serving employers.

In their performance reports, training vendors are required to report on the levels of performance achieved with respect to the primary indicators outlined above for all customers. This information will be used to inform customers about the performance of training vendors and their outcomes.



SECTION XVIII: Local Board

- *Membership: provide a list of members, and indicate alignment with new requirements per SETC policy #2015-01 and WIOA. Include description of how membership aligns with New Jersey key industries and local area priorities.*

Last Name	First Name	Committee	Title	Business / Organization
Other: Additional members may be appointed as appropriate				
Bryant	Joyce	Business	Owner	Private School - Quality Dental School of Tech Inc.
Eastwick	Thomas M.	Welfare to Work	President	Private School-East Education Inc
Monaco	Louis	Welfare to Work	Dir. Human Resources	Private School - NJCRI
Olagbegi	Joy Adesumola	YIC	Owner	Private School-Joy School of Hair Design
Pagano	Gerald	Literacy	NA	Public Member
Economic Development: 1 member required, counted as business member				
Collins	Deborah	Business	Director	E.C.Office of Small Business & Affirm. Action
Organized Labor and Community-Based Organizations: Must comprise 20% of membership				
Bonet	Addy	Literacy	Executive Director	Jewish Vocational School
Melendez	Rosalina	Literacy	Division Director	La Casa Don Pedro
Holland	Vann	Welfare to Work	Dir. Workforce Operations	Urban League
Cubano	Wendy	YIC	Dir. Graduate Services	YouthBuild
Smith	Mark	Welfare to Work	Executive Director	Joi's Angels
Weiner	David	Welfare to Work	President	CWA Local 1081
Fuentes	Hector	Welfare to Work	Bus. Manager	Laborers Local 55
Kilgo	Everett L.	Welfare to Work	Sr. Program Coordinator	NYC District Council of Carpenters
Education Representatives				
Vieira	Elvy	Literacy	Dean Cont. Ed & WF Dev.	Essex County College
Pedersen	Dr. James	Literacy	Superintendant	Essex County Vocational & Tech.Schools
Government Partners				
Ramos	Anibal	One-Stop	Dir. Dept. DEDTE	One-Stop Operator
Davis	Elizabeth	Disability	DVR Local Office Mgr.	NJ Division of Vocational Rehab. Services
Wiggins	Gwen	One-Stop	ES Local Office Mgr.	NJ Dept. of Labor & Workforce Development
Business Members: Must comprise 51% of membership				
Anelle	Barbara	Business	Owner	Broadmoor Business Forms
Robinson	Suzette	Welfare to Work	AP External Affairs	East Orange General Hospital
Casella	Thomas	Business	General Manager	Nanina's In The Park
Cifelli	Arthur	Business	Senior Partner	The Venn Group
Ferguson	Lisa	Business	Manager	New Jersey Transit
Knox	Sylvester	Business	Sales Associate	Merrill Lynch
Freedman	Eric	Business	Owner	Elegant Stucco & Stone Co.
Graham	Ryan D	Business	Senior Sales Director	Fairview Insurance Agency
Hashemi	Amir	Welfare to Work	President	Capricorn Enterprises, Inc
Ferreira	Linda	Business	Owner	Ideal Data Inc
Tolbert	Willie	Business	President	Willie Tolbert & Associates
Longo	Diana M.	Business	Owner	Next Financial



Vichness	Sharlene	Business	President	Language Directions
Patterson	Kylie N.	Welfare to Work	Program Associate	BCT Partners
Uzoka	Chike	YIC	President	Valentine Global
LaFaso	Kristin	Disability	Human Resource Mgr.	Wells Fargo Bank
Frederick	Joseph Malik	Welfare to Work	Attorney	Verizon
Simmons	Sonja	Business	Financial Advisor	Prudential
DelVecchio	David	Business	Director Business Dev.	DCO-Jingoli & Energenic

Business members represent in-demand industries either locally, regionally, or statewide as indicated in the representation column.

- *Discuss any recruitment plans to address any deficiencies*

The Essex County Workforce Development Board is in compliance with New Jersey Employment and Training Commission Policy #2015-01: Local Workforce Development Board Member Appointments and Process.

- *Describe development/training programs with board members*

Board members are provided an orientation regarding roles and responsibilities when they are appointed, along with a workforce system overview. Further orientation is received in each Committee for its members. Starting in 2015, the Essex County Workforce Development Board holds an annual retreat in conjunction with the Newark Workforce Development Board to deepen board member knowledge and engage them in annual strategic planning.

- *Describe the actions the local board will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing workforce development board, consistent with the factors developed by the state.*

Essex County Workforce Development Board looks forward to New Jersey’s formal release of high-performing board criteria. Meanwhile, consistent with New Jersey’s Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Combined Plan, the Board is aligning its efforts both locally and regionally with the statewide Talent Development Strategy as evidenced in the goals of the Board. The Talent Development Strategy elements are:

- New partnerships with employers across the state’s key industry sectors.
- Strong collaborations between workforce programs, education, and higher education.
- Better labor market intelligence to inform workforce investments.
- Innovative partnerships between the state, local governments, community



and faith-based organizations, and educational institutions.

Related to how we deliver services, New Jersey has identified five (5) themes, which the Essex County Workforce Development Board has embraced and are reflected in the Board's goals and throughout this plan:

- Building career pathways with a focus on industry-valued credentials.
- Expanding high-quality employer-driven partnerships.
- Strengthening career navigation assistance through one-stop career centers and broad partnerships.
- Strengthening governance through effective workforce development boards and regional collaborations.
- Ensuring system integrity through metrics and greater transparency.

Along with Essex County Workforce Development Board goals and strategies, the North Jersey Partners Regional Plan for the Innovation and Opportunity Act provides information on Essex County's approach to accomplishing this work.



SECTION XIX: STAFF AND PARTNER DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING EFFORTS

- *Describe staff and partner development and training efforts. Provide plans/timelines for such trainings, include both local partner staff efforts.*

Ensuring that the individuals charged with carrying out the customer-centric model are informed and knowledgeable about both the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and the fundamentals associated with exemplary service to jobseekers and business customers is an essential ingredient to a high-performing workforce system in Essex County.

In November 2016, Essex County Workforce Development Board partnered with the Newark Workforce Development Board to provide sixteen (16) hours of training as part of a national WIOA Operations Certification and Job Seeker Services Certification. This start to documenting training to achieve a national certification included:

- Fundamentals of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
- WIOA Career and Training Services
- WIOA Case Management, Assessment and Referral
- Team Dynamics and Developing Seamless, Integrated Teams
- Problem Solving for Customers
- Job Development
- Document of Compliance (Data Validation, Case Notes, Fiscal)
- Serving Difficult Clients

Essex County anticipates continuing the certification series and including regional and local partners to assist in everyone hearing and understanding the same concepts that will move the area toward sustained high-performance. Staff training sessions will be planned at least quarterly to engage and grow all levels of the workforce system



SECTION XX: TRAINING SERVICES

- *Describe how training services under chapter 3 of subtitle B will be provided in accordance with section 134(c)(3)(G), including, if contracts for the training services will be used, how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of individual training accounts under that chapter and how the local board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided. Within this section, be sure to address how training will lead to industry-valued credentials.*

Training services for Essex County Workforce Development Area will be provided in accordance with 134(c)(3)(G) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Training services provided will maximize customer choice in the selection of an eligible provider of such services.

As required in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, in the Essex County Workforce Development Area, training services shall be directly linked to an in-demand industry sector or occupation or related entry-level career path course of study. Input from economic development, employers, core program partners, and labor market information resulted in the Essex County Workforce Development Board selecting Health Care, Transportation/Logistics/Distribution, and Hospitality/Retail as the forecasted new and emerging industry sectors or occupations. In addition, to support career pathways and meet clients where they are, the Essex County Workforce Development Board has embraced four additional sectors identified at the state level and identified by the region including: Advanced Manufacturing, Life Sciences, Financial Services, and Technology. Occupational skills training will be industry specific and will result in industry-valued credentials.

Labor market data and local economic conditions can change with little warning. As a result, the Essex County Workforce Development Board may decide to approve training services for occupations determined by the Board to be in sectors of the economy that have a high potential for sustained demand or growth in the Essex County Workforce Development Area. If this occurs, the Essex County Workforce Development Board will document the decision in Board meeting minutes along with the justification for the decision.

Training services will be done through the Individual Training Account process for educational institution training services and through a contract process for other training services including on-the-job training, customized training, incumbent worker training, or transitional employment. Essex County will not directly provide



training services.

Line item tracking will be done for Individual Training Account funds versus Training Contract funds.

Customer choice can be achieved through a comprehensive case management strategy that involves an assessment and the development of an Individual Employment Plan that leads to training and self-sufficiency. The case manager's role is to help the customer make an informed choice after looking at the State's list, program and cost information, and taking into considerations the dollar amount of the training and the Board policy on expenditures.



SECTION XXI: LOCAL PLAN DEVELOPMENT

- *List and describe any meetings of workgroups, taskforces or similar efforts. Documentation of these meetings, including minutes and attendees, must be maintained locally. Include a list of the participants and their organizations. (This should include local elected officials, local public entities, regional and local economic development partners, WIOA system partners such as Adult Education and Literacy providers, community colleges, Talent Networks, Talent Development Centers and other entities with a stake in the local workforce system and plan.)*

The Essex County Executive, as Chief Elected Official, and other key County personnel have participated in the planning process via strategic discussions in partnership with the Essex County Workforce Development Board. The planning process began in 2015 with a kickoff strategic retreat held in conjunction with the Newark Workforce Development Board. A second retreat was held in 2016 to refine and solidify the regional and local strategies. Ongoing discussions have occurred at Workforce Board meetings and committee meetings.

This plan was also shaped by Essex County's engagement, since 2008, with the North Jersey Partners (NJP) Regional WDB/One-Stop Consortium, which is an innovative and strategic regional partnership of public, private, and government organizations collaborating to ensure that a talented and skilled workforce will help drive economic growth in northern New Jersey. The NJP service area encompasses the counties of: Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union, and Warren. Bordering the Delaware River, New York City, and the Atlantic Ocean, this region includes more than 4.2 million people and over half of New Jersey's private sector jobs. It is a national economic powerhouse, and home to many global corporate leaders. It is an attractive, diverse region that also hosts some of the richest and poorest communities in our nation. Essex County is also part of a three-county sub-region of NJP (Essex, Hudson, and Passaic) to address needs specific to the unique demographics of that region.

All partners are represented on the Board, Committees, and regional planning.

- *Describe the process used by the local board to make available copies of the proposed local plan to the public, through electronic and other means such as public hearings and local news media; ensuring that the document was made available in accessible formats.*

The Essex County Workforce Development Board will promote the availability of this plan to the public. The plan will be posted with a request for public comment on the website. A public notice will be placed in the newspaper notifying the public of



the plan and directing them to the website. A link to the plan will be distributed to all Workforce Board Members, partners and stakeholders with a request that it be forwarded to any and all interested parties.

- *Describe the process used to provide an opportunity for public comment, including comment by representatives of businesses, representatives of labor organizations, and representatives of education and input into the development of the local plan, prior to submission of the plan. Describe any additional local requirements or processes for local public comments. Provide a list of stakeholders who were notified of the opportunity for public comment. Include as an attachment to the Local Plan any such comments including those that represent disagreement with the plan.*

Following the thirty-day comment period, the Essex County Workforce Development Board Executive Committee and the Workforce Board staff will discuss comments and respond with changing the plan or indicating reasons for not making a change.

Verification of postings and public comment information will be included in this Plan and submitted to the State of New Jersey to include in their copy.



SECTION XXII: Integrated Technology-Enabled Intake and Case Management Information System

- *Describe how one-stop centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under this Act and programs carried out by one-stop partners.*

As per the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, technology is an essential tool in the workforce system. Essex County Workforce Development Board, in conjunction with the Newark Workforce Development Board, is exploring opportunities to use technology to enhance service delivery and provide diverse access opportunities.

Essex County Workforce Development Board is reviewing web-based training options for soft skills and employability skills training. In addition, partner and stakeholder communication will rely on technology to engage and discuss customer services, referrals, and exit coordination as described earlier in this plan in relation to the partner convening group.



SECTION XXIII: Priority of Service

- *Describe how the local board will ensure priority for adult career and training services will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient consistent with WIOA sec. 134(c)(3)(E) and § 680.600.*

The Essex County Workforce Development Board will spend adult funds according to our priority of service policy that includes:

Priority of service status is established at the time of eligibility determination and does not change during the period of participation.

1 st Priority	Veterans and eligible spouses who are also low-income, recipients of public assistance and/or basic skills deficient
2 nd Priority	Individuals who are not veterans or eligible spouses, are recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient
3 rd Priority	Veterans and eligible spouses who did not meet "first priority" conditions
4 th Priority	Individuals who are residents of the Essex County Local Area and who are not veterans and do not meet criteria to be considered a target population

The Essex County Workforce Development Board will ensure that at least seventy percent (70%) of participants enrolled since July 1, 2016 will be low income or basic skills deficient. The balance will be adults with other barriers to employment such as homeless, ex-offenders and individuals with disabilities.

- *Veterans Services: Each local area must develop and describe its policy for providing Veterans services and maintaining the Priority of Service as required by USDOL.*

The Title I adult funding priority of service does not affect or negate the priority of service provided to veterans and eligible spouses. A Veteran is a person who served at least one day in the military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable. Veterans and eligible spouses continue to receive priority of service among all eligible individuals; however, they must meet the State of New Jersey’s Veteran’s Priority of Service criteria. Thus, for adult services, the program’s eligibility determination must be made first, and then veteran’s priority applied.

The Essex County Workforce Development Board adopts the following priority of service



chart:

1 st Priority	Veterans and eligible spouses who are also low-income, recipients of public assistance and/or basic skills deficient
2 nd Priority	Individuals who are not veterans or eligible spouses, are recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient
3 rd Priority	Veterans and eligible spouses who did not meet "first priority" conditions
4 th Priority	Individuals who are residents of the Essex County Local Area and who are not veterans and do not meet criteria to be considered a target population



SECTION XXIV: Additional Local Elements

- *Local boards may include any additional elements to the local plan that they believe are relevant that do not fit within the framework outlined above. In order to retain formatting and order of elements, all additional sections should begin with this item number and be placed here at the end of the plan.*

Essex County does not have any additional local elements to add at this time.

