

SOUTHWESTERN AREA
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
PY2024-PY2027
LOCAL WORKFORCE PLAN
MODIFICATIONS

AmericasJobCenter
NEW MEXICO

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Southwestern Area
Workforce Development Board

Local Four-Year Plan **Modifications**

July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2027
PY2024 – PY2027

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INTRODUCTION

The Southwestern Area workforce system comprises the following counties: Catron, Doña Ana, Grant, Hidalgo, Luna, Sierra, and Socorro. Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board (SAWDB or Board) must adhere to WIOA Sections 106 through 108 in preparing and submitting a Local Four-Year Plan (Local Plan). This Local Plan addresses the changing economic conditions, advances in automation, and evolving opportunities for remote work. It outlines how the SAWDB and its workforce partners will devise actionable strategies to meet the needs of employers, job seekers, youth, and other targeted groups, including individuals with disabilities, veterans, older adults, low literacy, and low-income individuals. The WIOA Program Years 2024-2027 Local Plan, covering July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2027, provides current information and includes all local policies. The Local Plan supports aligning with the goals and strategies contained in the New Mexico WIOA Combined State Plan Program Years 2024-2027.

The SAWDB supports a relevant and efficient workforce development system. This system, designed to cultivate adaptable, work-ready, and skilled talent, aligns to meet the current and future demands of workers and businesses in our region. Our ultimate aim is to achieve and sustain economic prosperity, ensuring that Southwestern New Mexicans are well-equipped for the jobs of today and the evolving opportunities of tomorrow.

Performance management fosters a culture of accountability, transparency, and continuous improvement, ensuring that the SAWDB and WIOA Administrator effectively drive the vision of the Local Plan through the One-Stop Operator and WIOA providers. The SAWDB will develop a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) directly tied to the goals and objectives of the Local Plan. These KPIs will be communicated to the One-Stop Operator and WIOA providers and measured regularly, ensuring everyone aligns with the SAWDB's vision.

To realize this vision, we will foster dynamic collaboration with local industry sectors and engage closely with workforce and industry partners to deliver the skilled workforce our local industries require. Throughout the Local Plan, we refer to "stakeholders" and "workforce partners." Stakeholders encompass individuals or organizations with a vested interest in or those potentially affected by our policies, regulations, initiatives, or projects. Workforce partners comprise the WIOA mandatory core partners under Title I and other essential partners specified in the Act. CFR 678.400 lists the following partners:

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1. Programs authorized under Title I of WIOA, including:
 - (i.) Adults;
 - (ii.) Dislocated workers;
 - (iii.) Youth;
 - (iv.) Job Corps;
 - (v.) YouthBuild;
 - (vi.) Native American programs; and
 - (vii.) Migrant and seasonal farmworker programs;
2. The Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service program authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.), as amended by WIOA Title III;
3. The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) program authorized under Title II of WIOA;
4. The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program authorized under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.), as amended by WIOA Title IV;
5. The Senior Community Service Employment Program authorized under Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056 et seq.);
6. Career and technical education programs at the postsecondary level authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.);
7. Trade Adjustment Assistance activities authorized under chapter 2 of Title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.);
8. Jobs for Veterans State Grants programs authorized under chapter 41 of Title 38, U.S.C.;
9. Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (42 U.S.C. 9901 et seq.);
10. Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development;
11. Programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws (in accordance with applicable Federal law);
12. Programs authorized under sec. 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17532); and
13. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) authorized under part A of Title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.), unless exempted by the Governor under § 678.405(b).

As regional collaborations expand, the SAWDB will focus on fostering strong partnerships across all workforce sectors. By working closely with all workforce partners, the SAWDB is committed to creating a cohesive and dynamic regional workforce system that effectively addresses the needs of job seekers, employers, and

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communities. Over the next four years, the priority will be to strengthen and grow industry sector partnerships, ensuring deeper collaboration with business leaders to align workforce development efforts with the evolving demands of key industries in the Southwestern region.

Priority Industries

The SAWDB has identified aerospace, agriculture, education, healthcare, hospitality and tourism, information technology, logistics and warehousing, manufacturing, and mining as its priority industries. Many of the Board's priorities align with the State's priority sectors, which are advanced manufacturing, aerospace, biosciences, broadband expansion, construction industries, early childhood education and care, energy transition and climate resilience, first responders, healthcare, including behavioral health, natural resource management, and sustainable and value-added agriculture.

Career pathways remain an important component of SAWDB's strategy to connect individuals to education, training, work-based learning, employment, and opportunities for career advancement. Career pathways are developed through collaboration among workforce partners, education and training providers, employers, economic development organizations, community partners, and other stakeholders to ensure that services are responsive to both participant needs and regional workforce demand.

The SAWDB supports career pathway opportunities through America's Job Center offices. These offices assess individual needs and develop personalized employment plans, guiding individuals through steps leading to credential attainment and career opportunities. Individuals can also use the online career exploration tools available at employnm.com. These tools assist individuals in making informed career decisions based on their work interests and values. They also include a budget tool, "Why I Work," which helps users understand the earnings needed to support their desired lifestyle. Users can explore various career paths, job outlooks, education requirements, and more with the assistance of a case manager at America's Job Center to finalize their personal employment plans.

Funding

WIOA provides state Governors with funding that supports the needs of employers, job seekers, and youth through various funding streams. As per 20 CFR § 683.710, the local Chief Elected Officials (CEOs) in the Southwestern area of New Mexico are the grant recipients of the funds and work with the SAWDB to allocate funds for use within the region.

The SAWDB's Local Plan describes the goals and service delivery strategies for adults, dislocated workers, and youth supported by the funding. The SAWDB invests the funds

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Deleted: The Career Pathways Plan is a strategic initiative designed to build a robust, adaptable workforce that meets the evolving needs of our region's industries. This plan follows the Department of Labor's Career Pathways Tool Kit and includes the following critical phases:¶

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Identify Industry Sectors and Engage Employers¶
Design Education and Training Programs¶
Identify Funding Needs and Resources¶
Align Policies and Programs¶
Measure System Change and Reporting¶
The SAWDB has identified healthcare and education as the primary sectors for initial engagement, employing a sector partnership strategy that brings together employers, training providers, and workforce partners. This targeted approach began years ago when the SAWDB's administrative entity partnered with the Centers for Health Innovation to initiate collaborations with rural healthcare employers. The SAWDB continues to focus on the healthcare sector, convening stakeholders to analyze existing career pathways and develop plans to strengthen and expand them. The exact process will be applied to the education sector in collaboration with public schools and educational entities, ensuring alignment with the Career Pathways Plan. This plan is accessible on the employnm.com website.¶

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in career services, tuition assistance, on-the-job training, transitional jobs training, customized training, youth services, and supportive services.

The U.S. Department of Labor provides funding to the State of New Mexico, which allocates funds to the four local regions using a formula. The increases and decreases from one program year to another are solely based on the formula methodology.

Funding by Program Year					
PROGRAM ALLOCATION	PY22/FY23	PY23/FY24	PY24/FY25	PY25/FY26	PY26/FY27
Administration (10% of Total)	\$439,601	\$510,373	\$472,139	\$429,063	\$396,664
Adult	\$952,829	\$1,143,028	\$1,035,554	\$936,664	\$864,444
Dislocated Worker	\$1,543,938	\$1,855,275	\$1,868,436	\$1,701,444	\$1,555,222
Youth	\$1,459,648	\$1,595,050	\$1,345,255	\$1,223,463	\$1,150,333
TOTAL ALLOCATION	\$4,396,016	\$5,103,726	\$4,721,384	\$4,290,634	\$3,966,664

Funds are allocated to each of the four local workforce boards by a formula based on factors described in the U.S. Department of Labor's Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 16-19 for the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Allocations. New Mexico TEGL 16-19 requirements use prior-year data from the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions' (NMDWS) Economic Research & Analysis Bureau.

In the following graph, the Percentage Change Y-axis shows changes in funding from one year to the next. In PY25, there is a -9.1% change from PY24, indicating a decrease in funding, and a -7.6% decrease in PY26 from PY25.

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Program Allocation	PY20/FY21
Administration (10% of Total)	\$ 551,
Adult	\$ 1,232,
Dislocated Worker	\$ 1,890,
Youth	\$ 1,839,
Deleted: Total Allocation	\$ 5,514,

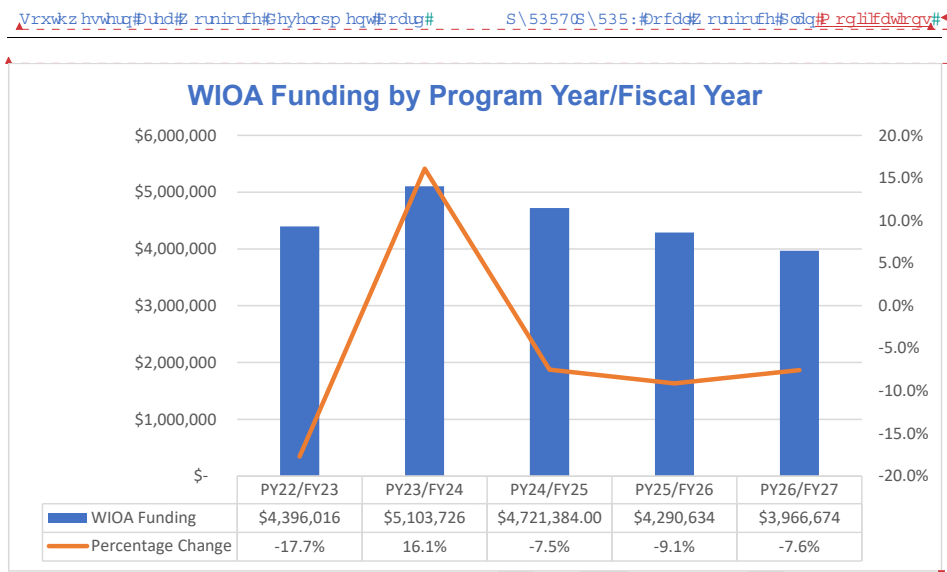
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WIOA Funding by F

	PY20/FY21	PY21/FY22
WIOA Funding	\$5,515,020	\$5,340,926
Percentage Change	1.1%	-3.2%

STRATEGIC PLANNING ELEMENTS

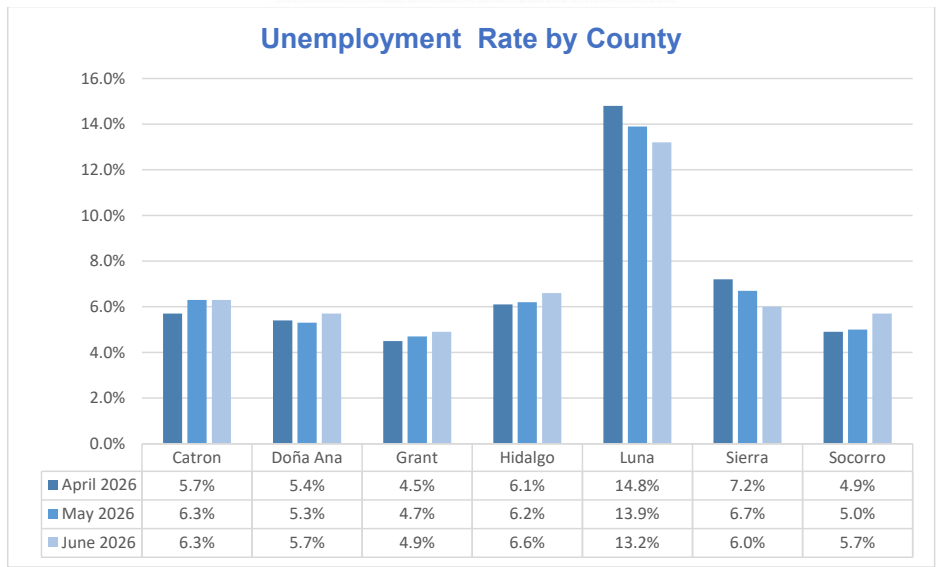
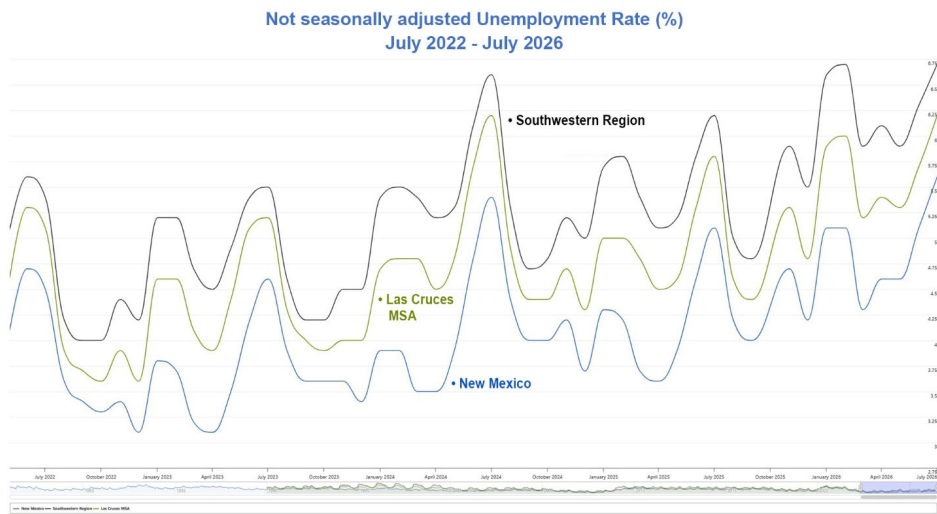
A. Economic and Workforce Analysis

§679.560(a)(1)(i) Economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

In July 2022, the unemployment rate was 4.5% in New Mexico, 5.4% in the Southwestern Region, and 5.1% in the Las Cruces MSA. Unemployment rates declined during the latter part of 2022 and reached their lowest levels during the period in late 2022 and early 2023, with New Mexico reaching 3.1%, the Southwestern Region 4.0%, and the Las Cruces MSA 3.6%. Following these lows, unemployment rates generally increased, with the Southwestern Region reaching a high of 6.7% in February and July 2026. The Las Cruces MSA reached a high of 6.2% in July 2024 and again in July 2026, while New Mexico reached 5.6% in July 2026. As of July 2026, the

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unemployment rate was 6.7% in the Southwestern Region, compared with 6.2% in the Las Cruces MSA and 5.6% statewide.



At 14.8 percent in April 2026, Luna County had the Southwestern Region's highest (not seasonally adjusted) unemployment rate. Although the rate declined to 13.2 percent by June, it remained significantly higher than the other counties in the region. Luna County

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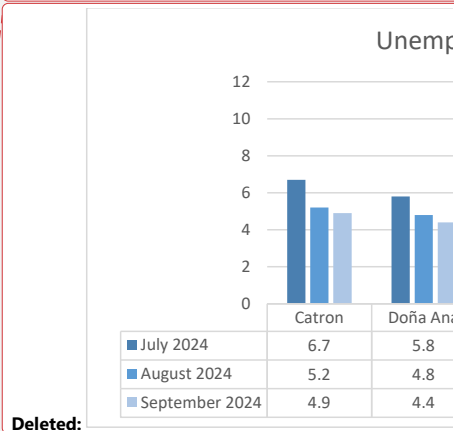
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Deleted: In July 2020, the total civilian labor force (not seasonally adjusted) for New Mexico was 924,282. Of the 924,282, 831,832 were employed, and 92,450 were unemployed, giving New Mexico an unemployment rate of 10.0%. In the Southwestern Region, the total civilian labor force (not seasonally adjusted) in July 2020 was 129,974, of which 116,768 New Mexicans were employed and 13,206 were unemployed. The region's unemployment rate was 10.2%, only 0.2% higher than the State. In the same month, the Las Cruces MSA had a total civilian labor force (not seasonally adjusted) of 94,808, with 85,716 individuals employed and 9,092 unemployed, resulting in an unemployment rate of 9.6%.¶

Two years later, in July 2022, New Mexico's unemployment rate dropped to 4.3%, the Southwestern Region's fell to 5.0%, and the Las Cruces MSA dipped to 5.2%. In July 2024, New Mexico reported a total civilian labor force (not seasonally adjusted) of 984,548 with an unemployment rate of 5.3%, 6.1% for the Southwestern Region, and 5.8% for the Las Cruces MSA. This trend shows that the Southwestern region's

Deleted: unemployment rate is consistently higher than that of the entire state of New Mexico but always within 1%. The Las Cruces MSA reports more active unemployment that began lower than the State's in 2020 (coming in under 10%), tied with the State in July 2021 at 7.9%, ending this four-year trend in the middle of the State and Southwestern region's numbers.



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faces unique challenges due to its proximity to the border and a high population of migrant seasonal farmworkers (MSFWs). This distinct location results in a confluence of factors contributing to its high unemployment rate. The county's economic landscape is shaped by its reliance on seasonal agricultural work and its status as a border community, which creates barriers to stable, year-round employment and impacts the availability of diverse job opportunities. Some factors contributing to Luna County's high unemployment rate include:

1. **Seasonal Nature of Employment:** The agricultural jobs that many MSFWs rely on are highly seasonal. Farmworkers may find it challenging to secure stable employment during off-seasons, contributing to higher unemployment rates.
2. **Limited Diversification of the Economy:** Luna County's economy may rely heavily on agriculture and other sectors, leading to limited job opportunities outside of the peak agricultural season. This lack of diversification can result in higher unemployment rates when there are downturns in those specific sectors.
3. **Lack of Access to Stable, Year-Round Employment:** MSFWs often face barriers to stable, year-round jobs due to limited education, language barriers, and lack of transferable skills outside of agriculture. These barriers create a cycle of dependence on seasonal work and leave them vulnerable to periods of unemployment.
4. **Rural and Isolated Location:** Luna County's rural and isolated location means fewer employers and less access to various job opportunities. Additionally, transportation barriers may limit residents' ability to travel to other areas for work.
5. **Barriers to Workforce Participation:** Many MSFWs face inadequate housing, healthcare, childcare, and education, affecting their ability to find and maintain employment. The high unemployment rate may reflect these systemic challenges that prevent individuals from fully participating in the workforce.
6. Work Authorization: Some MSFWs may have limited work authorization, which can restrict their employment options and contribute to reliance on seasonal or informal work.
7. **Impact of the Cliff Effect:** Workers transitioning from seasonal farm work to better-paying jobs may lose childcare or food assistance benefits. The fear of losing these benefits (the Cliff Effect) can discourage them from seeking year-round employment, contributing to the region's unemployment rate.
8. **Fluctuating Agricultural Market:** Changes in agricultural demand, pricing, and policies can affect the number of available jobs for MSFWs, leading to increased unemployment during periods of low demand.

Addressing these issues requires targeted interventions, such as workforce training programs, access to supportive services, and economic diversification strategies.

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Deleted: : Some MSFWs may be undocumented or have limited work authorization, restricting their employment options to the informal or seasonal job market. Such restrictions can skew official unemployment rates as many in this demographic may not qualify for unemployment benefits or are not considered part of the labor force.

▲ To address the high unemployment rate, the SAWDB can implement several realistic solutions:

1. Expand Access to Year-Round Employment Opportunities through Skills Training and Apprenticeships
 - Skills Training and Certification Programs: The one-stop system and its partners can focus on developing targeted skills training programs that align with year-round employment opportunities beyond agriculture. For example, training programs in healthcare, manufacturing, hospitality, and renewable energy would provide MSFWs with more stable employment. Courses could cover soft skills, language proficiency (ESL), digital literacy, and industry-specific skills.
 - Registered Apprenticeships and On-the-Job Training (OJT): Promoting apprenticeships and OJT programs can provide MSFWs, especially youth, with pathways to earn while they learn. Partnering with local businesses and employers in the manufacturing, logistics, construction, and healthcare sectors will help them gain credentials and experience, leading to more permanent employment.
2. Co-Enrollment and Resource Braiding for Comprehensive Support Services
 - Co-Enrollment with Core WIOA Partners: By co-enrolling MSFWs in WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, and other core partner programs (e.g., TANF, Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education), MSFWs can access a broader range of services, including skills training, job placement, and wraparound supports. This approach ensures a more integrated service delivery model tailored to their individual needs.
 - Wraparound Support Services: Addressing barriers like transportation, childcare, housing, and healthcare can ensure MSFWs can participate in training and employment. The WIOA system can braid resources from various funding streams to provide comprehensive support. For example, leveraging partnerships with the National Farmworker Jobs Program (NFJP) and Motivational Education and Training (METS), NMSU College Assistant Migrant Program (CAMP), community organizations, and state agencies to provide supportive services that reduce barriers to workforce participation.

By implementing these strategies within the WIOA system, Luna County can help MSFWs move into more stable, year-round employment, ultimately reducing the region's high unemployment rate.

Major Employers

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Major employers in the Southwestern Region include the State of New Mexico, White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico State University, the City of Las Cruces, Doña Ana County, federal and local government agencies, regional hospitals and health care providers, educational institutions, and employers in manufacturing, retail, logistics, and other industries.

Workforce trends continue to shape how employers in Southwestern New Mexico recruit, retain, and develop their workforce. Remote work, automation, digital transformation, and the growth of flexible work arrangements have changed how businesses operate and how workers engage with their jobs.

Remote work and hybrid work models have become more common, allowing employees to split their time between working from home and the office. This flexibility can increase job satisfaction and expand access to talent by enabling employers to recruit from a broader geographic area. However, it also presents challenges, particularly in rural areas where reliable broadband connectivity remains a concern. Addressing this digital divide is crucial for ensuring all residents can fully participate in the evolving workforce.

Automation and the adoption of advanced technologies have also increased. From manufacturing to healthcare, businesses across various sectors have increasingly adopted automated systems and other advanced technologies to enhance efficiency, reduce costs, and maintain operations during disruptions. In the Southwestern Region, industries such as agriculture, mining, and logistics are adopting or exploring automation to address labor shortages and improve productivity. While this shift opens new opportunities for high-tech jobs, it also necessitates upskilling the existing workforce to meet the demands of more technology-driven roles.

The rise of gig and freelance work continues to be a component of the changing workforce. Flexible, project-based work arrangements can provide workers with additional income or alternative employment options, while offering employers access to workers with specialized skills.

The workforce trends in Southwestern New Mexico underscore the need for targeted workforce development strategies. The region must focus on equipping its labor force with the skills required for remote work, digital literacy, and adapting to new technologies. Educational institutions and training providers are pivotal in this effort, offering programs that align with the needs of emerging industries and the demands of today's economy.

Industries by Projected Growth

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Deleted: The major employers in the Southwestern region of New Mexico are the State of New Mexico, White Sands Missile Range, the City of Las Cruces, New Mexico State University, federal and municipal government, regional hospitals, and the international US/Mexico border complex (Border Plex)

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Deleted: Remote work, once a niche option, has become a mainstream mode of employment. Many organizations in the Southwestern region have adopted hybrid work models, allowing employees to split their time between working from home and the office.

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Deleted: The rise of gig and freelance work is another trend gaining traction. Many workers in the Southwestern region have turned to gig economy platforms to supplement their income or as a primary source of employment. This shift reflects a broader trend toward more flexible, project-based work arrangements, which appeal to those seeking autonomy and work-life balance

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The following table shows the industries with the highest projected total employment change in the Southwestern Region of New Mexico from 2024–2034. Health Care and Social Assistance ranks highest, with an estimated employment of 21,357 and projected employment of 23,312, representing an increase of 1,955 jobs, or 9.15%. Accommodation and Food Services ranks second, with a projected increase of 1,151 jobs, or 10.60%. Educational Services ranks third, with an estimated increase of 829 jobs, or 5.45%.

Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services is projected to increase by 576 jobs, while Construction is projected to add 515 jobs over the ten-year period. Government, Retail Trade, and Other Services are also projected to experience employment growth. Although some industries have smaller total employment increases, several show relatively strong percentage growth, including Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services at 11.38%, Other Services at 10.43%, and Accommodation and Food Services at 10.60%.

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Industri

The table below shows the industries with the highest t

Rank	Industry
1	Health Care and Social Assistance
2	Educational Services
3	Total Government (Projections)
4	Retail Trade
5	Accommodation and Food Services
6	Construction
7	Manufacturing
8	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services
9	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
10	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting

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Industries with the Highest Projected Total Employment Change

The table below shows the industries with the largest projected employment increases in the Southwestern Region from 2024–2034

Rank	Industry	Estimated Employment	Projected Employment	Total Employment Change	Annual Percent Change	Total Percent Change
1	Health Care and Social Assistance	21,357	23,312	1,955	0.88%	9.15%
2	Accommodation and Food Services	10,856	12,007	1,151	1.01%	10.60%
3	Educational Services	15,201	16,030	829	0.53%	5.45%
4	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	5,061	5,637	576	1.08%	11.38%
5	Construction	5,555	6,070	515	0.89%	9.27%
6	Total Government (Projections)	13,388	13,831	443	0.33%	3.31%
7	Retail Trade	11,455	11,812	357	0.31%	3.12%

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8	Other Services (except Public Administration)	1,898	2,096	198	1.00%	10.43%
9	Manufacturing	4,199	4,343	144	0.34%	3.43%
10	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	1,382	1,462	80	0.56%	5.79%

Source: NMDWS, Employment Projections program

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Emerging In-Demand Industry Sectors

The projected employment data also highlights several industries that are expected to experience continued growth over the next ten years. In addition to the larger employment gains in Health Care and Social Assistance, Accommodation and Food Services, and Educational Services, several industries show notable percentage growth. Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services, Accommodation and Food Services, and Other Services are each projected to increase by more than 10% between 2024 and 2034. These industries may provide opportunities for workforce development and training as employers continue to seek workers with the skills needed to fill these positions.

Deleted: The table above shows the top ten industries with the highest total employment change. The Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation industry has an estimated employment projection of 1,272. It is not a significant enough number to make it to the top ten list. However, when looking at an estimated employment of 815 in 2022, that is an increase of 56% over ten years. This sector is rapidly growing, particularly with the film industry's rise in Southwestern New Mexico. Establishing a new film studio in Las Cruces and associated tax incentives have spurred job creation in film production, event coordination, and related fields. The arts and entertainment sector contributes significantly to the local economy, offering diverse career opportunities

Economic Conditions and In-Demand Industry Sectors in Southwestern New Mexico

Southwestern New Mexico's economic landscape continues to be influenced by existing and emerging industry trends. The region has strong demand in several key sectors, as reflected in current job postings and projected employment growth. Understanding these conditions is important for aligning workforce development strategies with current and future labor market needs.

Deleted: Southwestern New Mexico's economic landscape is experiencing significant shifts influenced by existing and emerging industry trends. The region sees substantial growth in several key sectors, driven by local and national economic factors. Understanding these conditions is crucial for aligning workforce development strategies with market needs

Existing In-Demand Industry Sectors

The Top Industries by Advertised Jobs table shows that Health Care and Social Assistance leads the region with 1,045 advertised job openings in June 2026. Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services follows with 547 openings, while Retail Trade and Educational Services have 327 and 317 openings, respectively. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services has 270 openings, followed by Public Administration with 190 openings. Accommodation and Food Services, Construction, and Manufacturing also show continued demand, with 140, 108, and 95 openings, respectively.

Deleted: The Top Industries by Advertised Jobs table shows that Health Care and Social Assistance leads with 1,642 job openings, followed by Educational Services at 882. Administrative and Support roles and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services have 790 and 726 openings, respectively, indicating strong demand

Deleted: Retail Trade of 416 and Public Administration of 351 also offer notable job opportunities. Accommodation and Food Services, Manufacturing, and Other Services show moderate demand, with 212, 170, and 119 positions each. Job in Wholesale Trade rounds out the list with 95 openings, illustrating a range of available roles across various sectors.

Top Industries by Advertised Jobs

The table below shows the industries with the largest number of job postings in NM JOBS for the Southwestern Region in June, 2026.

Rank	Industry	Job Openings
1	Health Care and Social Assistance	1,045
2	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	547
3	Retail Trade	327
4	Educational Services	317
5	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	270
6	Public Administration	190
7	Accommodation and Food Services	140
8	Construction	108
9	Manufacturing	95
10	Unclassified	1,684
-	-	-

Source: NMDWS, Employment Projections program

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Healthcare and Social Assistance: The healthcare sector remains an important part of Southwestern New Mexico's economy, with a continued demand for healthcare professionals and support occupations. Jobs in nursing, medical assisting, social work, and other healthcare-related occupations provide employment opportunities throughout the region. A network of healthcare facilities and educational institutions also supports employment and workforce development in this sector.

Deleted: driven by an aging population and increased healthcare needs. Jobs in nursing, medical assisting, and social work are prevalent and growing. A robust network of healthcare facilities and educational institutions provides stable employment opportunities

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Educational Services: Educational institutions, including schools and training providers, play a vital role in the local economy. The sector provides opportunities for educators, administrative staff, and educational support occupations while also helping prepare the region's future workforce and support lifelong learning.

Deleted: With a focus on academic attainment and skills development, there is a strong demand for educators, administrative staff,

Deleted: and educational support roles. This sector is crucial for preparing the future workforce and supporting lifelong learning initiatives

Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services: This sector includes businesses that provide routine support for other organizations' daily operations, often on a contract or fee basis. Services include office administration, personnel hiring, clerical work, security, cleaning, and waste disposal. These services

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are used across a variety of industries and contribute to the region's overall employment opportunities.

Aligning Workforce Development with Economic Trends

The local workforce system must align its strategies with these economic conditions to effectively support these growing sectors. By leveraging WIOA funds and collaborating with industry partners, the workforce system can provide targeted training programs and career pathways that meet the demands of these in-demand industries. Initiatives should focus on:

- (1) **Training and Certification Programs:** Developing and expanding training programs that align with the skills needed in these growing sectors, including healthcare certifications, hospitality management courses, and training aligned with other high-demand occupations and industries.
- (2) **Partnerships with Local Employers:** Establishing strong partnerships with local businesses and industry leaders to ensure that training programs are relevant and responsive to current job market needs.
- (3) **Supportive Services:** Providing supportive services such as childcare, transportation assistance, and financial aid to help individuals navigate career pathways and gain the necessary skills to thrive in these in-demand sectors.

By addressing these economic conditions and developing relevant skills, the Southwestern Region can enhance workforce readiness and support the growth of key industry sectors, ultimately driving regional economic development.

The SAWDB's Individual Training Account policy and guidance letter describe the criteria for an occupation in-demand within the seven-county area and participant eligibility. The Board defines an "occupation in demand" as those with annual openings of 4 or more or a yearly total percent change of 8% or more. Staff can find projections in the labor market information on the New Mexico Jobs Online System (NM JOBS) and upload them into the participant's online file. The Board may also approve training services for occupations determined in sectors of the economy that have a high potential for sustained demand or growth in the local area and/or those designated as priority industries within the region.

Occupations with the Fastest Growth in the Southwestern Region:

The following occupations show the fastest projected employment growth in the Southwestern Region for 2023–2033:

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Deleted: sector includes businesses that provide routine support for other organizations' daily operations, often on a contract or fee basis. Services offered include office administration, personnel hiring, clerical work, security, cleaning, and waste disposal. While these activities may also be done in-house, companies in this sector specialize in delivering these services across various industries. Establishments handling strategic planning for a company are classified under Sector 55, Management of Companies and Enterprises, while government program ... [2]

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Deleted: The following is a comprehensive overview of the economic conditions in the Southwestern region, highlighting both existing and emerging sectors w ... [3]

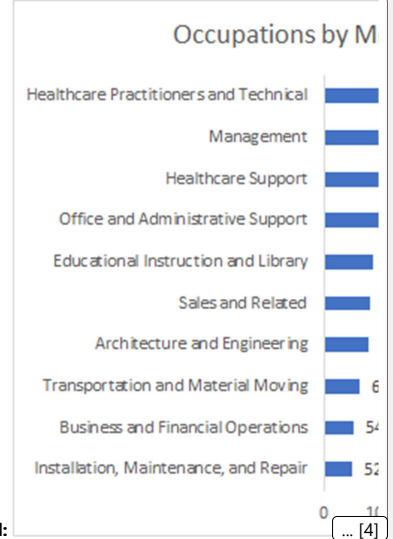
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Deleted: For 2024, employment projections for key sectors in the Southwestern Region of New Mexico indicate strong growth trends. Here's an updated breakdown based on the latest data



- Healthcare Support: Estimated employment in 2023 was 9,815, with projected employment of 12,022 in 2033. This represents a total employment change of 22%, with an annual change of 221 jobs.
- Food Preparation and Serving Related: Estimated employment in 2023 was 10,594, with projected employment of 12,641 in 2033. This represents a total employment change of 19%, with an annual change of 205 jobs.
- Healthcare Practitioners and Technical: Estimated employment in 2023 was 6,590, with projected employment of 7,520 in 2033. This represents a total employment change of 14%, with an annual change of 93 jobs.
- Transportation and Material Moving: Estimated employment in 2023 was 7,092, with projected employment of 7,986 in 2033. This represents a total employment change of 13%, with an annual change of 89 jobs.
- Management: Estimated employment in 2023 was 7,501, with projected employment of 8,142 in 2033. This represents a total employment change of 9%, with an annual change of 64 jobs.

These projections highlight the occupations with the greatest expected employment growth in the Southwestern Region and can help inform workforce development strategies, training priorities, and career pathway opportunities. The data can also assist the SAWDB and its partners in aligning WIOA services with occupations that are projected to have continued employment growth.

For more detailed projections and data, refer to NM [JOBS](#)'s occupational outlook and employment projections resources.

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Deleted: Healthcare Support: In 2024, the healthcare sector employed approximately 9,750 individuals in Healthcare Support roles. This number is expected to grow to about 14,450 by 2034, reflecting a robust annual growth rate of 3.95%. This sector remains critical in meeting the healthcare needs of a growing and aging population

Deleted: Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations: Employment in this sector is projected to rise from 6,650 in 2024 to around 8,950 by 2034, with an average annual growth rate of 2.70%. The increase highlights the growing demand for healthcare professionals in the region

Deleted: Community and Social Service Occupations: The sector employed 2,120 individuals in 2024 and is projected to grow to 2,590 by 2034, with an annual growth rate of 2.08%. This growth reflects the ongoing need for social services as communities focus on improving well-being

Deleted: Food Preparation and Serving-Related Occupations: The number of people employed in food preparation and serving-related roles was around 9,950 in 2024 and is projected to grow to approximately 11,850 by 2034, with an annual growth rate of 1.75%. As tourism and hospitality industries recover, this sector shows steady growth

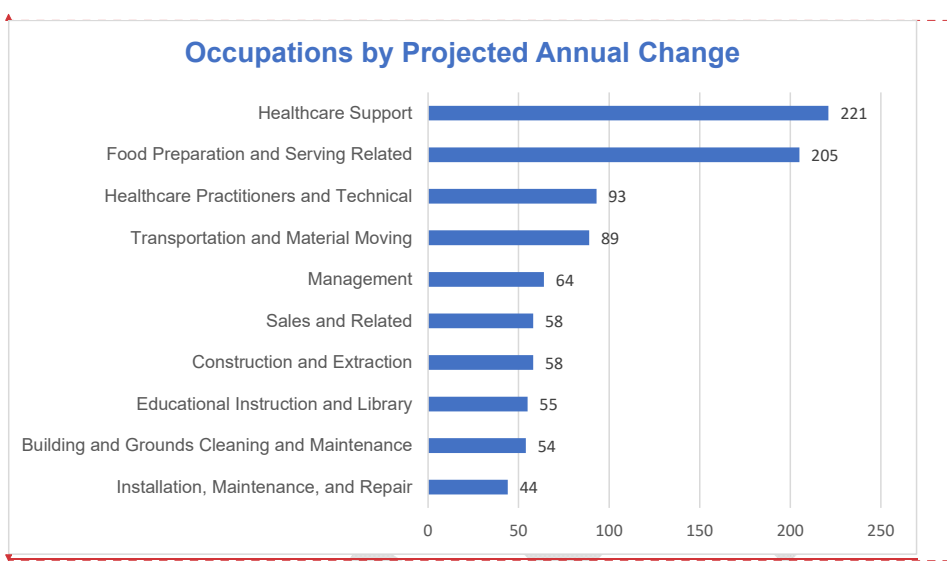
Deleted: Production Occupations: Employment in production roles is expected to increase from 3,880 in 2024 to 4,380 by 2034, with a more modest annual growth rate of 1.22%. This slower growth reflects the broader shift toward automation and technology in manufacturing

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Deleted: these projections underscore the continued importance of Healthcare Support and Practitioners while other sectors, such as Social Services and Food Preparation, maintain steady growth. For workforce development and WIOA strategies, this data can inform resource allocation and program development to prepare the workforce for the demands of these expanding sectors. This aligns with broader WIOA goals to equip workers with the necessary skills for in-demand industries and foster regional economic growth

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Occupations by Highest Pay:

A closer look at high-wage occupations in the Southwestern region shows that the highest-paying positions are concentrated primarily in healthcare, engineering, and other professional occupations. Physicians, All Other have the highest median wage at \$387,449, followed by Family Medicine Physicians at \$228,042 and Psychiatrists at \$220,253. Obstetricians and Gynecologists, Surgeons, All Other, and Dentists also have median wages above \$200,000. Other high-paying occupations include Architectural and Engineering Managers at \$165,738, Physician Assistants at \$141,347, Pharmacists at \$137,114, and Aerospace Engineers at \$136,857.

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Occupations by Fi

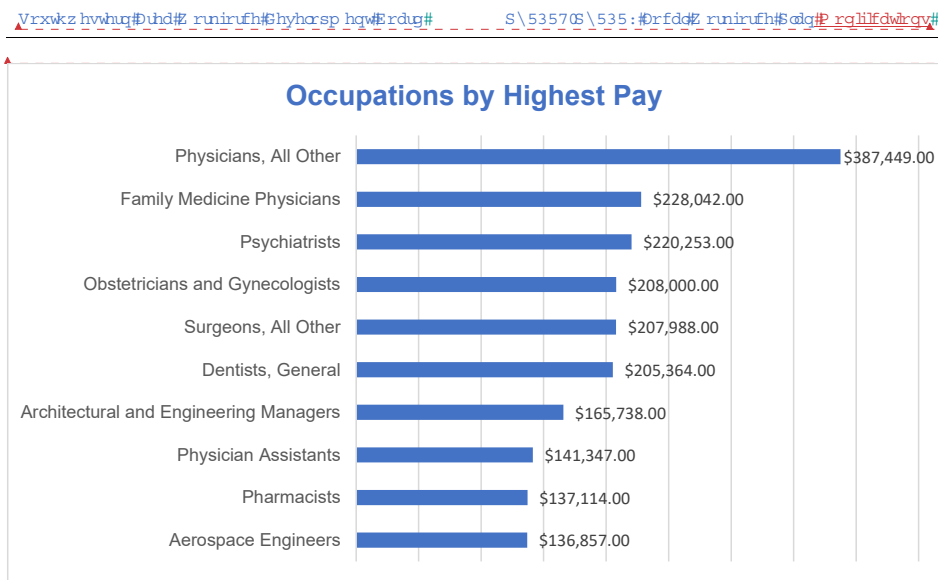
- Healthcare Suppo
- Healthcare Practitioner s Techni
- Community and Social Serv
- Food Preparation and Serving Relate
- Personal Care and Serv
- Computer and Mathematic
- Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenanc
- Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Med
- Transportation and Material Movir
- Productio

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Occupations by Most Job Openings

As reflected in the following graph, in July 2026, Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations led the Southwestern region with 3,262 job openings, significantly higher than all other occupational categories. Office and Administrative Support followed with 524 openings, while Management had 493 and Educational Instruction and Library had 471 openings. Healthcare Support accounted for 392 openings.

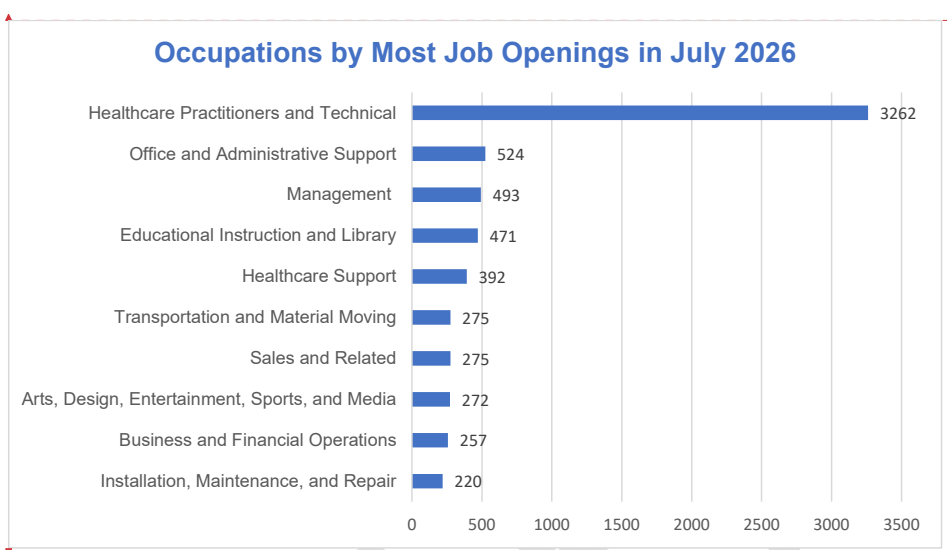
Other occupations with notable job openings included Transportation and Material Moving and Sales and Related, with 275 openings each. Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media had 272 openings, followed by Business and Financial Operations with 257 and Installation, Maintenance, and Repair with 220 openings.

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Deleted: As reflected in the following table, in July 2024, the Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations category led in new job postings with 870 openings, reflecting high demand for patient care roles. Management positions followed with 175 postings, supporting the need for leadership across industries. Healthcare Support had 114 openings, which is essential for assisting primary healthcare providers

Deleted: Other sectors with important job postings include Educational Instruction and Library with 89, Sales and Related Services with 84, and Architecture and Engineering with 81, each playing vital roles in education, sales, and infrastructure. Transportation and Material Moving had 64 job postings, Business and Financial Operations 54, and Installation, Maintenance, and Repair had 52 postings, highlighting operational and logistical needs across industries

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Economic Conditions—Unemployment Rates

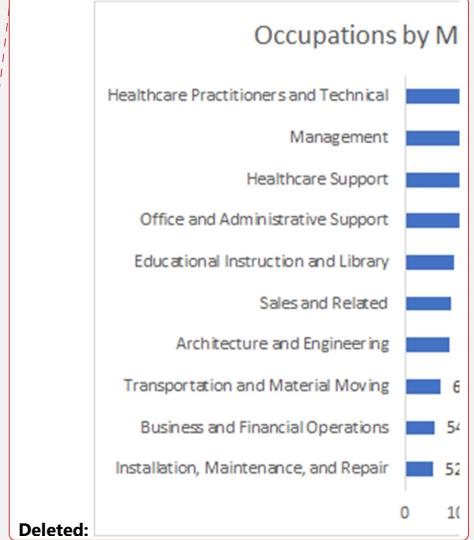
The data contained in the chart below shows the trend in the average unemployment rate for the Southwestern Region and New Mexico from 2020-2024. In 2020, the average unemployment rates were 8.7% in the Southwestern Region and 7.9% in New Mexico. The rates declined steadily through 2023, reaching 4.8% in the Southwestern Region and 3.7% in New Mexico. In 2024, unemployment increased slightly in both areas, with the Southwestern Region at 5.4% and New Mexico at 4.1%. Throughout the five-year period, the Southwestern Region's average unemployment rate remained higher than the statewide rate, with the difference ranging from 0.8 to 1.3 percentage points.

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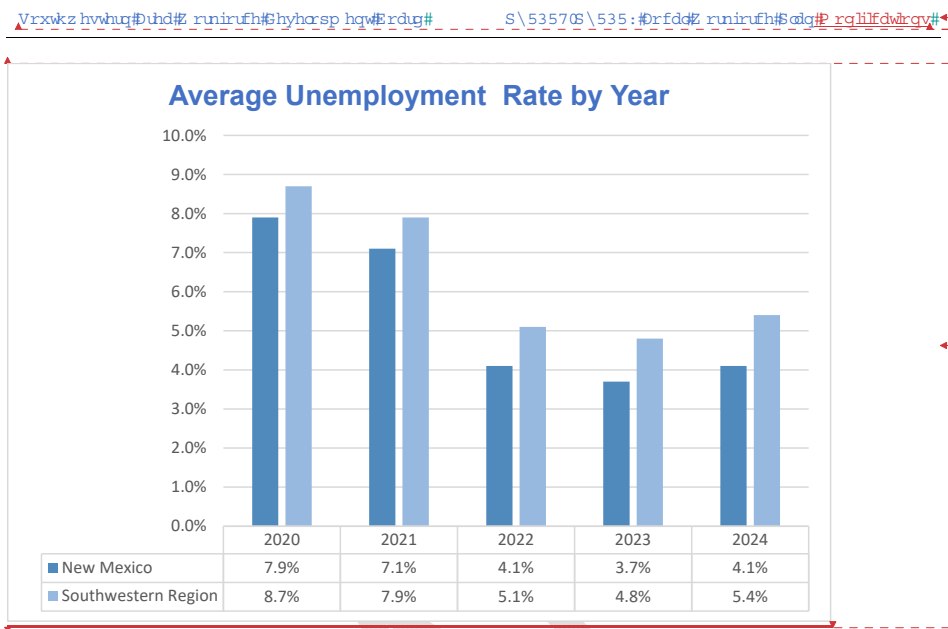
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Deleted: The data contained in the chart below shows the trend in the average unemployment rate for the SW Region and New Mexico from 2019-2023. In 2019, the rates of 6.2% regionally and 5.0% in New Mexico experienced significant shifts in 2020, mainly reflecting the impacts of the pandemic. As the economy started to recover, the unemployment rates began to fall in 2021. They continued to drop over the next two years, resulting in unemployment rates of 4.7% in the Southwestern region and 3.8% in New Mexico



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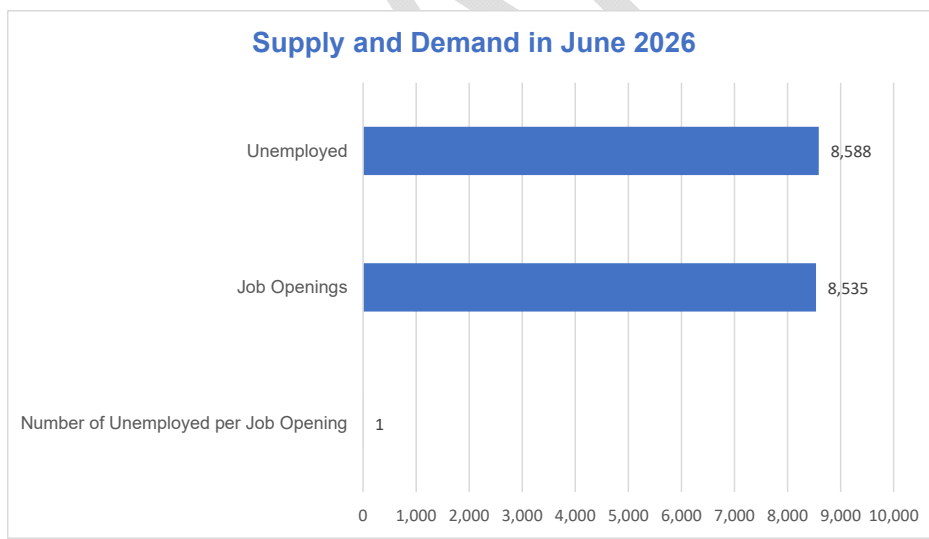
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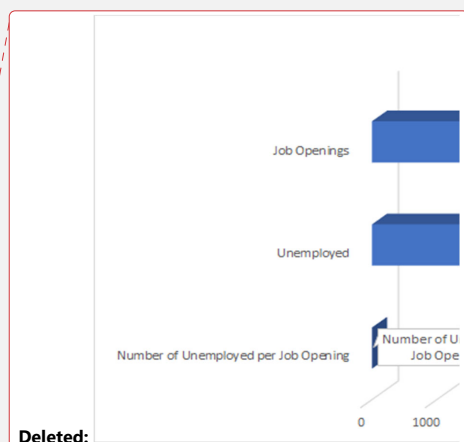


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In analyzing current labor market conditions in Southwestern New Mexico, recent data highlights a near balance between unemployed workers and available job opportunities.



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In June 2026, the region had 8,588 unemployed individuals and 8,535 job openings, resulting in a ratio of approximately 1.01 unemployed individuals per job opening.

This data is particularly significant for the Local Plan for workforce development and implementation of the WIOA one-stop system. The near parity between unemployed individuals and job openings indicates a relatively tight labor market, while also highlighting the continued importance of effective employment placement, job matching, and connecting job seekers with available opportunities.

Implications for the Local Four-Year Plan and WIOA System:

Enhanced Job Matching Services: The data indicates that job-matching efficiency could be improved while there are nearly as many job openings as unemployed individuals. The Board plans to improve job matching services within the WIOA one-stop system to better align job seekers with available opportunities, including leveraging data-driven tools and resources to ensure that job seekers are aware of and prepared for available positions.

Targeted Workforce Development: The near equilibrium between job openings and unemployment underscores the need for targeted workforce development programs. The Board will address skill gaps by ensuring that training programs closely align with the skills demanded by employers. In doing this, the Southwestern region can improve job seekers' employability and increase their chances of securing unoccupied positions.

Support for Job Seekers: The data highlights the importance of providing robust support services to job seekers, particularly those who may face additional barriers to employment. The Board will devise strategies to enhance access to career counseling, résumé building, interview preparation, and targeted support for individuals with disabilities and other challenges.

Employer Engagement: Engaging with employers to understand their specific needs and challenges can help bridge the gap between job openings and job seekers. The WIOA one-stop system will facilitate stronger partnerships with local businesses to tailor job training and placement services to meet the demands of the regional labor market.

The current labor market data underscores the need for a dynamic and responsive workforce development strategy. By focusing on job matching, targeted skills development, comprehensive supportive services, and employer engagement, the Local Plan can effectively address the employment needs of the Southwestern region and support a more balanced and efficient labor market.

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Deleted: In analyzing the current labor market conditions in Southwestern New Mexico, recent data highlights a critical aspect of our regional employment landscape. The graph shows that there are currently 8,937 job openings compared to 8,540 unemployed individuals in the region. This results in a ratio of approximately 0.96 unemployed individuals per job opening

Deleted: This data is particularly significant for the Local Plan for workforce development and implementing the WIOA one-stop system. The near parity between the number of job openings and the number of unemployed individuals suggests a tight labor market. However, the close ratio also indicates potential employment placement and job-matching challenges

Deleted: The current unemployment data underscores the need for a dynamic and responsive workforce development strategy

§679.560(a)(1)(ii) Include a regional analysis of employment needs of employers in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

Top Ten Industries

The table below lists the top ten industries with the largest number of advertised job openings in the Southwestern Region. Health Care and Social Assistance leads the region with 1,045 job openings, followed by Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services with 547 openings. Retail Trade and Educational Services follow with 327 and 317 openings, respectively. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services also shows significant demand with 270 openings.

Other industries represented among the top ten include Public Administration with 190 openings, Accommodation and Food Services with 140, Construction with 108, and Manufacturing with 95 openings. The table also includes 1,684 openings classified as Unclassified

Top Industries by Advertised Jobs		
The table below shows the industries with the largest number of job postings in NM JOBS for the Southwestern Region in June, 2026.		
Rank	Industry	Job Openings
1	Health Care and Social Assistance	1,045
2	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	547
3	Retail Trade	327
4	Educational Services	317
5	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	270
6	Public Administration	190
7	Accommodation and Food Services	140
8	Construction	108
9	Manufacturing	95
10	Unclassified	1,684
Source: NMDWS, Employment Projections program		

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Existing and Emerging In-Demand Industry Sectors

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Deleted: The table below lists the top ten industries posting jobs in the region. These industries are experiencing a shortage of skilled applicants for two significant reasons. First is the skills gap in healthcare and education, especially in rural areas. Second is the decline in the labor participation rate, currently at 57.4% in the region compared to 62.9% across the US

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Healthcare:

Current Needs: The healthcare sector remains a significant employer in the region, driven by facilities such as Memorial Medical Center and Gila Regional Medical Center. There is continued demand for positions in nursing, medical assisting, healthcare administration, mental health services, and other healthcare occupations.

Emerging Trends: Increasing use of telehealth and digital health technologies is creating additional demand for IT support, telemedicine operations, data management, and other technology-related skills within the healthcare sector.

Technology and Digital Infrastructure:

Current Needs: Technology-related occupations continue to expand throughout the region, including IT support, software development, cybersecurity, data management, and technical services. New Mexico State University and other regional institutions contribute to the technology workforce and training pipeline.

Emerging Trends: The growth of artificial intelligence and data-intensive industries is creating new opportunities in the region. The development of data centers and related digital infrastructure in Santa Teresa is expected to increase demand for workers in construction, electrical and mechanical trades, fiber and network technology, engineering, information technology, and other specialized occupations.

Manufacturing:

Current Needs: Manufacturing remains an important industry in the region, creating demand for skilled workers in production, operations, logistics, equipment maintenance, and related occupations.

Emerging Trends: Advanced manufacturing technologies, automation, robotics, and the development of digital infrastructure are increasing the need for workers with technical and specialized skills.

Agriculture:

Current Needs: Agriculture remains an important part of the regional economy, with continued demand for workers in crop production, livestock management, equipment operation, and related occupations.

Emerging Trends: The sector is seeing increased use of precision agriculture, automation, sustainability practices, and agricultural technology, creating opportunities for workers with technical skills.

Film and Media:

Current Needs: Film and media production continues to provide employment opportunities in Southwestern New Mexico, particularly in and around Las Cruces.

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Deleted: Increasing emphasis on telehealth and digital health technologies requires IT support, telemedicine operations, and data management skills

Deleted: Technology roles are expanding due to IT support, software development, and cybersecurity growth. Key players include institutions like New Mexico State University and tech startups

Deleted: Advancements in artificial intelligence, data analytics, and software development are driving demand for specialized skills in these areas

Deleted: Manufacturing is a core industry, with companies like Freeport-McMoRan Copper & Gold driving demand for skilled labor in operations, logistics, and equipment maintenance

Deleted: There is a growing need for workers skilled in advanced manufacturing technologies, including automation and robotics

Deleted: Agriculture remains vital, focusing on labor for crop production, livestock management, and agricultural technology

Deleted: The sector is seeing increased demand for skills in precision agriculture, sustainability practices, and agricultural technology integration

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Recent productions have employed local crew members and used local businesses and services.

Emerging Trends: New Mexico continues to maintain a strong film incentive structure and promote production throughout the state, including rural areas. The industry is also creating opportunities in digital media, production technology, and other specialized skills.

Top Ten Occupations

The table below illustrates the top ten occupations by advertised job openings in Southwestern New Mexico. Healthcare occupations continue to make up a significant portion of the region's most frequently advertised positions. Registered Nurses lead the list with 418 openings, followed by Physicians, All Other with 248 openings. Personal Care Aides, Nurse Practitioners, Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses, Radiologic Technologists and Technicians, Physical Therapists, and Cardiologists also appear among the top ten occupations.

Occupations by Advertised Jobs		
The table below shows the occupations with the highest number of job openings advertised online in the Southwestern Region, NM		
Rank	Occupation	Job Openings
1	Registered Nurses	418
2	Physicians, All Other	248
3	Customer Service Representatives	150
4	Personal Care Aides	130
5	Nurse Practitioners	121
6	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	109
7	Radiologic Technologists and Technicians	105
8	Physical Therapists	96
9	Cardiologists	83
10	Coaches and Scouts	79
Source: Online advertised jobs data		

Other occupations with significant numbers of advertised openings include Customer Service Representatives, with 150 openings, and Coaches and Scouts, with 79

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Deleted: The film industry is emerging as a significant sector, with growing interest in New Mexico as a filming location. Key roles include production assistants, set designers, and post-production technicians

Deleted: As the industry expands, there is an increasing need for specialized skills in digital media, animation, and film production technology

Deleted: The table below illustrates the top ten occupations within the industries mentioned on the previous page. In Southwestern New Mexico, as with the rest of the state, jobs in the healthcare industry are prevalent. Applicants from other states will mostly fill these jobs. Recruiting young professionals to move to rural locations has been a problem many organizations have been working on for decades. The lack of available transportation in most rural communities only exasperates the barrier to employing local talent and attracting a younger workforce from larger cities

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openings. The concentration of healthcare occupations among the top ten continues to demonstrate the importance of healthcare workforce development in the Southwestern region and the need to maintain a strong pipeline of qualified workers to meet employer demand.

Top Growing Occupations

The following table shows the occupations with the highest projected annual openings in the Southwestern region for 2024-2034. Fast Food and Counter Workers have the highest projected annual openings at 700, followed by Cashiers with 494 and Retail Salespersons with 436. Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive, are projected to have 353 annual openings, while Waiters and Waitresses have 336.

Other occupations with notable projected annual openings include Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners, with 323 openings; Stockers and Order Fillers, with 297; Food Preparation Workers and Customer Service Representatives, with 237 each; and Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary, with 203 annual openings.

Many of these occupations are entry-level positions that can provide opportunities for individuals to enter the workforce and begin a career pathway. The workforce region will continue to support entry-level skills training and career pathway opportunities that can help workers advance into occupations with greater opportunities for career growth and sustainable wages.

Occupations by Projected Growth (2024-2034 projections)

The table below shows the occupations with the highest annual openings in Southwestern Region, NM for the 2024-2034 time period.

Rank	Occupation	2024 Estimated Employment ↓	2034 Projected Employment ↓	2024-2034 Annual Avg. % Change	Annual Opening ↓
1	Fast Food and Counter Workers	2,726	3,131	1.39%	700
2	Cashiers	2,662	2,585	-0.29%	494
3	Retail Salespersons	2,912	3,046	0.45%	436
4	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	3,207	3,273	0.20%	353
5	Waiters and Waitresses	1,605	1,702	0.59%	336

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Deleted: Today's healthcare workers are starting to age out of the workforce system and are retiring, and fewer young people are seeking education to fill these positions. Also, more Americans are entering retirement. This elderly population will only increase the need for workers with the skills to care for them

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6	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	2,117	2,269	0.70%	323
7	Stockers and Order Fillers	1,678	1,883	1.16%	297
8	Food Preparation Workers	1,373	1,397	0.17%	237
9	Customer Service Representatives	1,900	1,836	-0.34%	237
10	Teaching Assistants, Except Postsecondary	1,576	1,640	0.40%	203
Source: NMDWS, Employment Projections program					

Career Pathways

Career pathways in Southwestern New Mexico help individuals progress from entry-level positions to higher-wage, sustainable careers. The workforce system supports these pathways through education and training, work-based learning, apprenticeships, and partnerships with employers and education and training providers.

Career pathways are designed to provide individuals with accessible routes to gain the skills and credentials needed to advance in their chosen industry. The SAWDB and its workforce partners support career pathway development in response to regional labor market needs and employer demand.

Career pathways may include flexible training options and supportive services that help individuals overcome barriers to career advancement and progress toward employment and career advancement.

Sample Career Pathway

The next page shows an example of a career pathway for an entry-level sales associate position. An entry-level employee only needs specific short-term training programs to move to the next level of employment, as most of the skills required will come with experience as the employee moves across the chart.

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Deleted: Career pathways in Southwestern New Mexico are essential for helping workers progress from entry-level positions to higher-wage, sustainable careers. The unique position of the workforce system facilitates this transition by offering training, education, and support services tailored to the needs of both workers and employers.¶

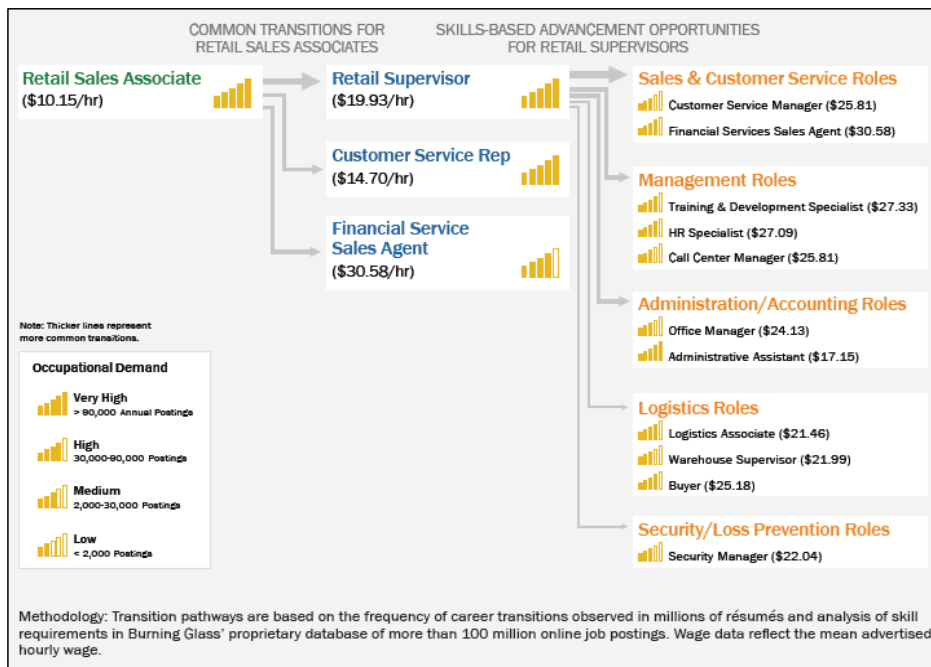
Deleted: Career pathways aim to create a clear, accessible route for individuals to gain the skills and credentials needed to advance in their chosen industry. Workers often begin in entry-level jobs, but with targeted interventions such as on-the-job training, apprenticeships, and partnerships with local educational institutions, they can develop the competencies required for higher-level positions. The SAWDB and its one-stop partners are committed to supporting these efforts through WIOA-funded programs tailored to meet the demands of local industries, such as healthcare, manufacturing, and the film industry.¶

Deleted: One challenge workers face on career pathways is the "Cliff Effect," where wage increases result in the loss of social benefits like childcare subsidies and housing assistance. Without these supportive services, workers may struggle to sustain higher earnings, leading to a potential return to poverty. This issue underscores the importance of developing local solutions, such as braiding WIOA funds with TANF resources to extend supportive services. Integrating the TANF program into the one-stop system presents an opportunity to mitigate the Cliff Effect by creating more robust support mechanisms for individuals transitioning from entry-level jobs to higher-paying careers, allowing for a more comprehensive approach to service delivery, ensuring that workers continue receiving essential supportive services even as their income rises

Deleted: ¶ Career pathways can be designed to include flexible training options that align with the schedules and needs of workers, helping them overcome barriers to career advancement while receiving continuous assistance through the one-stop system.¶ Through strong partnerships with local industries, educational institutions, and service providers, the workforce system in the Southwestern region can help workers successfully navigate these pathways. The result is a more resilient, well-trained workforce that meets the needs of the region's growing industries while providing workers with the opportunity for upward mobility.¶ Through strong partnerships with local industries, educational institutions, and service providers, the ... [8]

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Sample Career Pathway



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§679.560(a)(2) Knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of employers in the region, including employment needs in In-Demand industry sectors and occupations.

In Southwestern New Mexico, the demand for skilled workers across several in-demand sectors continues to evolve as employers adopt automation, artificial intelligence, remote work, and other technologies. Key sectors such as Healthcare and Social Assistance, Accommodation and Food Services, Educational Services, Manufacturing, Agriculture, and Technology and Digital Infrastructure require workers with both foundational and specialized skills to meet changing workplace demands.

Automation Trends

Automation is increasing the need for workers who are skilled in digital tools, data management, equipment operation, and technology maintenance across industries. In Healthcare, for example, medical coding and data management are increasingly supported by automated systems, requiring workers to have skills in health information technology and data management. In Manufacturing, robotics and automated systems

Deleted: In Southwestern New Mexico, the demand for skilled workers across several in-demand sectors rapidly evolves due to automation, remote work, and technology integration shifts. Key sectors such as Healthcare and Social Assistance, Accommodation and Food Services, Educational Services, Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Manufacturing, and Agriculture all see the need for workers with both foundational and specialized skills to adapt to these trends

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are creating a need for workers with both traditional trade skills and the ability to operate and maintain new technologies.

Automation is also reshaping agricultural practices through advanced machinery, automated irrigation systems, and data-driven farming techniques. Workers increasingly need skills in agricultural technologies, including drones, GPS-guided equipment, and crop monitoring systems, to improve productivity and sustainability.

Technology and Digital Infrastructure

The continued advancement of artificial intelligence, automation, and other technologies is changing the skills employers need throughout the region. Some routine and manual tasks may become increasingly automated, while demand is growing for workers who can operate, maintain, and work alongside new technologies. Occupations requiring interpersonal skills, critical thinking, problem-solving, and human interaction will continue to be important.

The growth of technology and digital infrastructure in Southwestern New Mexico is also creating opportunities for workers with skills in information technology, data management, cybersecurity, networking, engineering, and the skilled trades. The development of data-center infrastructure in Santa Teresa is expected to increase demand for workers in construction, electrical and mechanical trades, fiber and network technology, engineering, information technology, and other specialized occupations.

Remote Work

Remote and hybrid work arrangements continue to affect a variety of industries, particularly professional services, education, and technology-related occupations. Employers increasingly seek workers with strong digital communication skills, familiarity with remote collaboration tools, and the ability to work independently and manage responsibilities effectively. Educational services also require workers who can effectively use online instruction and educational platforms.

Healthcare and Social Assistance

Healthcare and Social Assistance continues to be one of the region's most important areas of workforce demand. Telehealth and digital health platforms are expanding, requiring healthcare professionals to develop skills in patient care, medical software, electronic records, and other technology used in healthcare settings. Workers need both clinical and technology-related skills to meet the changing needs of healthcare employers and the population they serve.

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Deleted: Automation is driving a need for workers skilled in digital tools, data management, and machine operation across industries. In Healthcare, for example, medical coding and data management are becoming more automated, requiring workers to possess health informatics and data analysis skills. Similarly, in Manufacturing, robotics, and automated systems are on the rise, creating the need for workers with both traditional trade skills and the ability to operate and maintain these new technologies

Deleted: Automation reshapes farming practices by introducing advanced machinery, automated irrigation systems, and data-driven farming techniques. Workers must be proficient in using agricultural technologies, including drones, GPS-guided equipment, and crop monitoring software, to enhance productivity and sustainability

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Deleted: The shift to remote work is affecting various industries, particularly in professional services, education, and even some segments of agriculture, like agricultural technology and data analysis roles. Employers are now seeking workers with strong digital communication skills, familiarity with remote collaboration tools, and the ability to self-manage. Educational services require educators who can effectively deliver online instruction and navigate educational platforms, while digital content creation and marketing have become essential in arts and entertainment

Deleted: Telehealth and digital health platforms are expanding, requiring healthcare professionals to develop skills in patient care and medical software while also mastering telecommunication technologies for remote consultations. Workers need clinical care and technology training to meet the growing demand for remote healthcare services

Hospitality and Food Services

Hospitality and Food Services continue to provide significant employment opportunities throughout the region. Employers need workers with customer service, communication, food preparation, and management skills. Increasing use of technology and automation in hotels, restaurants, and kitchens also requires workers who can operate and adapt to automated systems and other digital tools.

Agriculture

Agriculture remains an important part of the regional economy, with continued demand for workers in crop production, livestock management, equipment operation, and related occupations. The sector is increasingly incorporating technology into planting, harvesting, irrigation, and supply chain management. Agricultural workers need skills in precision agriculture, data analysis, equipment operation and maintenance, and other emerging technologies.

By focusing on the specific needs of the agricultural sector, particularly chile farming, and the migrant and seasonal workforce that supports it, the SAWDB can create career pathways that lead to more stable and higher-paying employment. This can strengthen the agricultural industry while providing long-term economic opportunities for workers across the region.

Addressing Trends through Workforce Development

Southwestern New Mexico's workforce system will prioritize digital literacy, technology skills, adaptability, and continuous training to meet growing demands. WIOA-funded programs coordinated through One-Stop partners can provide training in automation technologies, digital skills, industry-specific technical skills, and other competencies required by employers.

Workforce development strategies should also emphasize industry-recognized credentials, career pathways, apprenticeships, and work-based learning opportunities that allow individuals to gain practical experience while developing skills needed for advancement. These efforts can help workers progress into careers that provide long-term opportunities while helping employers find qualified workers.

By aligning training with current and emerging industry needs, the workforce system can help ensure that employers have access to a skilled workforce while providing workers with the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in Southwestern New Mexico's evolving labor market.

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Deleted: With the growth of tourism and the Arts and Entertainment sector, particularly in Las Cruces, and the development of the new film studio, there is an increased need for customer service, digital marketing, and management skills. The hospitality sector also sees automation in hotels and kitchens, where workers must now operate and maintain automated systems

Deleted: The agriculture sector is modernizing, with technology playing an increasing role in everything from planting and harvesting to supply chain management. Agricultural workers must develop precision agriculture, data analysis, and equipment management skills to stay competitive in the industry

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Deleted: WIOA-funded programs coordinated through One-Stop partners can provide the necessary training in automation technologies, remote work competencies, and industry-specific technical skills. This approach will allow workers to progress into career pathways that support long-term growth in the region's evolving job market while ensuring industries like agriculture, healthcare, and manufacturing remain competitive and innovative.

Deleted: By aligning training with industry needs, the workforce system can ensure employers and workers benefit from a skilled workforce ready to meet the challenges of automation, remote work, and other trends.

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The addition of technology, such as computer-based intelligence, will replace the need for human capital. Manual jobs will be most at risk, while jobs that require empathy, like caretakers and social workers, will still be in demand. These changes do not necessarily mean a loss of employment, as new jobs will be created to adapt. The need to develop new training programs to meet the needs of employers today and tomorrow will determine the success of this and any workforce program.¶

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Work Experience of Jobs and Candidates

The following table shows the minimum required work experience for job openings advertised online in the Southwestern Region and the percentage of potential candidates in the workforce system who are looking for work.

As of July 23, 2026, the majority of advertised job openings require 1 to 2 years of work experience, accounting for 4,729 openings, or 93.64% of the jobs listed. Jobs requiring less than one year of experience accounted for 90 openings, or 1.78%, while entry-level positions accounted for 187 openings, or 3.70%.

The experience levels of potential candidates show a different distribution. Candidates with more than 10 years of experience represent the largest group, at 39.84%, followed by candidates with 5 to 10 years at 17.91% and those with 2 to 5 years at 17.59%. Candidates with less than one year of experience represent 14.87% of the potential candidate pool, while those with 1 to 2 years represent 9.79%.

These data indicate a potential mismatch between the experience requirements of available jobs and the experience levels of individuals seeking employment through the workforce system. The SAWDB can use this information to help employers connect with experienced candidates while also supporting job seekers who need to gain the experience necessary to qualify for the region's available employment opportunities.

Work Experience of Jobs and Candidates

The table below shows the minimum required work experience for job openings advertised online, as well as the experience level of potential candidates in the workforce system, who are looking for jobs in the Southwestern Region, NM, on July 23, 2026.

Rank	Experience	Job Openings	% of Job Openings	Potential Candidates	% of Potential Candidates
1	Entry Level	187	3.70%	0	N/A
2	Less than 1 year	90	1.78%	1,534	14.87%
3	1 Year to 2 Years	4,729	93.64%	1,010	9.79%
4	2 Years to 5 Years	36	0.71%	1,815	17.59%
5	5 Years to 10 Years	1	0.02%	1,848	17.91%
6	More than 10 Years	7	0.14%	4,110	39.84%

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Deleted: As of August 31, 2024, data from the workforce system indicates that the most prevalent experience level among job seekers in the Southwestern region is "More than 10 Years," comprising 39.02% of all candidate résumés, followed by those with "2 to 5 Years" of experience, accounting for 18.42% of résumés, and "5 to 10 Years" of experience, which makes up 18.14% of the total candidate pool.

Deleted: These insights highlight a workforce rich in experienced professionals, underscoring the need for targeted strategies to leverage their skills in sectors that align with regional economic priorities. The SAWDB can use this data to guide employers in accessing this talent pool and tailor workforce programs that match job seekers' skills and experience levels with current and future industry demands.

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Job Source: Online advertised jobs data

Candidate Source: Is comprised of individuals whose resumes have been active in the workforce system over the past twelve months

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Top Ten Tools or Technology Skills

The table below shows the top ten tools and technologies identified in online job advertisements in the Southwestern Region. The information provides a focused view of the technology skills and equipment employers are seeking from job candidates.

Microsoft (MS) Office is the most frequently advertised technology, appearing in 589 job openings, followed by personal protective equipment in 313 openings and Microsoft PowerPoint in 202 openings. Other frequently requested tools and technologies include masks (166 openings), artificial intelligence software (147), forklifts (138), personal computers (136), cash registers (95), tractors (88), and motor vehicles (75).

These findings highlight the importance of both general technology skills and occupation-specific tools in preparing individuals for employment. While skills such as operating a cash register or forklift may often be developed on the job, their appearance in job advertisements indicates that employers may expect candidates to have these skills before entering employment. Workforce development programs can help participants obtain the basic technology skills, certifications, and training needed to meet these employer requirements and move more quickly into available jobs.

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Deleted: While employees may obtain cash register and forklift skills on the job, employers still want new employees to have these skills before applying, thus delaying some participants from starting employment and possibly prolonging their career development.

Advertised Tools and Technology

The table below shows the top advertised detailed tools and technologies found in job openings advertised online in the Southwestern Region, NM, in June 2026.

Rank	Advertised Tool or Technology	Advertised Tool and Technology Group	Job Opening Match Count
1	Microsoft (MS) Office	Office Suite Software	589
2	Personal protective equipment	Hazardous Material Protective Apparel	313
3	Microsoft PowerPoint	Presentation Software	202
4	Masks	Medical Staff Isolation or Surgical Masks	166

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Advertised Tools and Technology			
The table below shows the top advertised detailed tools and technologies found in job openings advertised online in the Southwestern Region, NM, in June 2026.			
5	Artificial intelligence software	Industrial Control Software	147
6	Forklift	Forklifts	138
7	Personal Computer (PC)	Personal Computers	136
8	Cash Register	Cash Registers	95
9	Tractors	Agricultural Tractors	88
10	Motor vehicles	Automobiles or Cars	75
Source: Online advertised jobs data			

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Education Level of Jobs and Candidates

The table below compares the minimum education levels requested by employers in online job advertisements with the educational attainment of potential candidates in the Southwestern Region.

Among the job openings with a specified education requirement, 270 openings request a High School Diploma or Equivalent, making it the most frequently listed education level. Employers also requested a Bachelor's Degree for 37 openings, a Master's Degree for 31, an Associate's Degree for 26, and one year of college or a technical or vocational school for 4 openings. A smaller number of openings requested vocational school certificates, specialized degrees, or additional years of college or technical education. Education requirements were not specified for 4,566 job openings, while 109 openings listed no minimum education requirement.

The potential candidate pool has a broader range of educational backgrounds. Candidates with a High School Diploma or Equivalent represent 38.81% of potential candidates, followed by those with a Bachelor's Degree at 12.37%. Candidates with less than a high school education represent 14.31%, while those with an Associate's Degree account for 7.92%. Other groups include candidates with vocational school certificates, some college, and varying levels of college or technical school education.

These data provide insight into the education levels employers are requesting and the educational backgrounds of individuals seeking employment through the workforce system. The information can help the SAWDB and its workforce partners identify

Deleted: The most common education level among job seekers in the Southwestern Region is a High School Diploma or Equivalent, making up 36.76% of the total. The second-largest group comprises candidates with less than a high school education, at 21.01%. Individuals with a Bachelor's degree represent 10.15%, followed by those with some college education but no degree at 6.18%. Candidates with an Associate's degree make up 7.48%. Other education levels, including vocational school certificates and varying years of college or technical school experience, comprise smaller workforce percentages.

Deleted: This data indicates a strong presence of individuals with basic education levels, with opportunities for enhancing skills through targeted educational and training programs to meet regional job market needs....

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opportunities for education, training, and credential programs that help candidates meet the requirements of available jobs.

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Minimum Education Level Requested by Employers

The table below shows the minimum level of education requested by employers on job openings advertised online, as well as the educational attainment of potential candidates in the workforce system that are looking for jobs in Southwestern Region, NM, on July 23, 2026.

<u>Education Level</u>	<u>Job Openings</u>	<u>% of Potential Candidates</u>
<u>Not Specified</u>	<u>4,566</u>	<u>0.21%</u>
<u>High School Diploma or Equivalent</u>	<u>270</u>	<u>38.81%</u>
<u>No Minimum Education Requirement</u>	<u>109</u>	<u>N/A</u>
<u>Bachelor's Degree</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>12.37%</u>
<u>Master's Degree</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>4.94%</u>
<u>Associate's Degree</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>7.92%</u>
<u>1 Year of College or a Technical or Vocational School</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5.73%</u>
<u>Vocational School Certificate</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>6.85%</u>
<u>Specialized Degree (e.g. MD, DDS)</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0.29%</u>
<u>3 Years of College or a Technical or Vocational School</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2.65%</u>
<u>Doctorate Degree</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0.91%</u>
<u>Less than High School</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>14.31%</u>
<u>2 Years of College or a Technical or Vocational School</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>5.00%</u>
<u>Some College</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0.01%</u>

Source: Job Source: Online advertised jobs data

Candidate Source: Is comprised of individuals whose resumes have been active in the workforce system over the past twelve months

Aerospace, Space, and Defense Industry Sector

The Southwestern Region has a significant aerospace, space, and defense industry presence. Participants in discussions regarding this sector included Jacobs Technology,

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White Sands Missile Range, Spaceport America, Virgin Galactic, Boeing, and the Physical Sciences Laboratory at New Mexico State University.

Key Findings from these discussion include:

- Federal requirements for candidates may limit innovation or alternate pathways for individuals to qualify for employment.
- Many positions require significant prior work experience, creating a gap between the skills and experience that local colleges and universities can produce and the qualifications employers are seeking. Addressing this talent pipeline will require strategic partnerships that extend beyond the local area to reach additional talent pools and target audiences.
- Security clearances are required for a high percentage of positions. There is an opportunity to more proactively educate prospective candidates about clearance requirements and the process for obtaining them.
- Work-based learning opportunities should be expanded to provide students and other job seekers with relevant experience and help meet employer work-experience requirements.

International Industries

The Borderland area in Santa Teresa, New Mexico, continues to be an important location for manufacturing and international industry activity. The workforce system and its partners can support these industries by aligning training programs and workforce services with the skills needed by local manufacturers.

Manufacturing employers may require skills in machinery operation, quality control, logistics, engineering, and related technical areas. Partnerships between educational institutions and local businesses can help ensure that training programs reflect current and emerging employer needs.

The workforce system can also support career advancement through work-based learning opportunities, including apprenticeships, on-the-job training, and customized training. These opportunities can help workers move from entry-level positions into longer-term career pathways while helping employers develop the skilled workforce they need.

§679.560(a)(3) An analysis of the regional workforce, including current labor force employment and unemployment data, information on labor market trends, and educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment.

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Deleted: A high percentage of jobs require security clearances, and currently, there is not an intentional effort to proactively identify and educate prospective candidates on what those requirements are

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Deleted: The Borderland area in Santa Teresa, New Mexico, has become a growing hub for manufacturing jobs. The one-stop system and its partners can play a crucial role in supporting career pathways in this industry by aligning training programs and resources with the needs of local manufacturers. These industries often require skills in areas like machinery operation, quality control, logistics, and engineering. By fostering partnerships between educational institutions and local businesses, the one-stop system can ensure that job seekers are trained in skills that meet the evolving needs of the manufacturing sector.¶ Additionally, the system can support workers in this field by offering work-based learning opportunities such as apprenticeships, on-the-job training, and customized training that help bridge the gap between entry-level positions and long-term career growth. By addressing manufacturers' immediate and long-term skill needs, the one-stop system and its partners will help create sustainable career pathways that benefit workers and employers in the region.¶

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\$679.580(b)(1) and (2)(i) An explanation of any changes in regional labor market and economic conditions, particularly any significant changes in local economic conditions.

Regional Workforce Analysis for Southwestern New Mexico

The most recent county-level unemployment data for Southwestern New Mexico show varying labor market conditions across the region. The June 2026 unemployment rates ranged from 4.9% in Grant County to 13.2% in Luna County. Doña Ana County, the region's largest county, reported an unemployment rate of 5.7%, while Catron County was at 6.3%, Hidalgo County at 6.6%, Sierra County at 6.0%, and Socorro County at 5.7%.

Compared with June 2025, unemployment increased in six of the seven counties. Catron County experienced the largest increase at 0.7 percentage points, while Sierra and Socorro counties had the smallest increases at 0.3 percentage points. Hidalgo County was the only county to show a slight improvement, declining by 0.1 percentage point.

Luna County continues to have the highest unemployment rate in the region. Its rate remained above 13% from April through June 2026, reaching 13.9% in May before declining to 13.2% in June. Grant County reported the lowest unemployment rate among the seven counties during this period, with a June 2026 rate of 4.9%.

Looking across the full period, Luna County experienced the largest year-over-year increase in unemployment, with a 1.3 percentage-point increase between April 2025 and April 2026. Year-over-year increases occurred across most counties and months, while the only year-over-year decrease occurred in Hidalgo County in June, when the unemployment rate declined from 6.7% in 2025 to 6.6% in 2026.

Unemployment Rate SW Region - 6-Month Comparison by County (January through March)

County	Jan 2025	Jan 2026	Feb 2025	Feb 2026	Mar 2025	Mar 2026
Catron	6.8%	7.0%	5.6%	6.7%	4.7%	5.5%
Doña Ana	5.0%	5.9%	5.0%	6.0%	4.8%	5.2%
Grant	4.4%	5.3%	4.0%	5.1%	3.4%	4.0%
Hidalgo	5.8%	6.6%	5.7%	6.4%	4.9%	5.6%
Luna	15.0%	15.5%	15.6%	16.5%	14.7%	15.8%
Sierra	6.7%	7.2%	6.9%	7.9%	6.7%	6.9%

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Current Labor Force Employment and
Unemployment Data

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Deleted: For 2024, the labor force participation rate in Southwestern New Mexico is approximately 57.4%, which aligns with the state average of New Mexico. This rate continues to reflect a region that, due to its rural nature and demographic challenges like aging populations, has a participation rate below the national average of around 62%.

Deleted: The region's unemployment rate has shown improvement post-COVID-19, now fluctuating between 4.7% and 5.8% as of mid-2024. These numbers are lower than in previous years, signaling recovery from the economic impacts of the pandemic, though some underemployment issues persist in the broader state context. These figures indicate that workforce development efforts must focus on increasing participation, mainly through improved access to training and employment opportunities.

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Six-Month Employment Comparison, 2023 to 2024

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Comparison by County (January through
March) ... [13]

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Comparison by County (April through June) ... [14]

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Socorro	4.6%	5.8%	4.4%	5.5%	3.8%	4.5%
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Unemployment Rate SW Region - 6-Month Comparison by County (April through June)						
County	Apr 2025	Apr 2026	May 2025	May 2026	Jun 2025	Jun 2026
Catron	4.8%	5.7%	4.9%	6.3%	5.6%	6.3%
Dofia Ana	4.5%	5.4%	4.6%	5.3%	5.3%	5.7%
Grant	3.2%	4.5%	3.7%	4.7%	4.3%	4.9%
Hidalgo	4.8%	6.1%	5.4%	6.2%	6.7%	6.6%
Luna	13.5%	14.8%	12.9%	13.9%	12.7%	13.2%
Sierra	6.4%	7.2%	6.3%	6.7%	5.7%	6.0%
Socorro	3.9%	4.9%	4.3%	5.0%	5.4%	5.7%
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Source: NMDWS, Local Area Unemployment Statistics program in conjunction with U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics						

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Labor Market Trends

Several labor market trends continue to shape the workforce in Southwestern New Mexico. Healthcare and Social Assistance remains a major source of employment and job openings, while manufacturing and international trade continue to expand in the Santa Teresa area. Technology, automation, artificial intelligence, and digital infrastructure are also creating new workforce opportunities and changing the skills employers require. Agriculture remains an important component of the regional economy, particularly for migrant and seasonal farmworkers.

- Healthcare and Social Assistance Growth: Healthcare continues to be one of the region's strongest areas of employment demand. Registered nurses, healthcare support occupations, healthcare practitioners, and other healthcare professionals are among the occupations with significant job openings and projected growth.
- Technology and Digital Infrastructure: The expansion of artificial intelligence, data centers, and other digital infrastructure is creating demand for workers with skills in information technology, networking, cybersecurity, data management, engineering, and the skilled trades. These developments are also increasing the need for workers who can operate and maintain increasingly technology-driven systems.

- Deleted: Several labor market trends are shaping the regional workforce in Southwestern New Mexico. Healthcare and Social Assistance Growth: The healthcare sector continues to expand, with growing demand for registered nurses, medical assistants, and home health aides driven by an aging population and the broader need for healthcare services in rural areas
- Deleted: Remote Work Opportunities: The shift toward remote work, especially in tech-related fields, administrative roles, and customer service, is influencing the regional labor market. This trend is opening new doors for workers in rural areas with access to broadband infrastructure
- Deleted: Manufacturing Expansion: Santa Teresa's Borderland area has seen increased manufacturing jobs, particularly in logistics, warehousing, and production roles, due to its proximity to the border and growing trade activity

- Manufacturing and International Trade: Santa Teresa's Borderland area continues to support manufacturing, logistics, warehousing, and production employment because of its location along the U.S.-Mexico border. Employers require workers with skills in machinery operation, quality control, logistics, equipment maintenance, and other technical occupations.
- Agricultural Employment: Agriculture remains vital to the regional economy, with seasonal employment associated with crops such as chile, onions, apples, and pecans. Migrant and seasonal farmworkers contribute significantly to the industry, particularly during peak growing and harvesting periods, while often facing challenges related to stable year-round employment and access to transportation, healthcare, childcare, and other services.
- Remote and Hybrid Work: Remote and hybrid work arrangements continue to influence the regional labor market, particularly in professional services, administrative positions, education, and technology-related occupations. These arrangements can expand employment opportunities for residents in rural communities while increasing the importance of reliable broadband access and digital skills.

Educational and Skill Levels of the Workforce

The educational and skill levels of the Southwestern New Mexico workforce vary considerably. Recent workforce data show that candidates with a High School Diploma or Equivalent represent 38.81% of the potential candidate pool, while those with a Bachelor's Degree represent 12.37%. Candidates with less than a high school education account for 14.31%, and those with an Associate's Degree account for 7.92%. Other candidates have vocational certificates, some college education, or other levels of postsecondary education and training. These differences in educational attainment highlight the importance of accessible education, occupational training, and industry-recognized credentials. Workforce development programs can help individuals build the technical and foundational skills needed to qualify for available jobs and advance along career pathways. This is particularly important for individuals who face additional barriers to obtaining education, training, or employment.

Individuals with Barriers to Employment

Individuals with barriers to employment remain an important consideration in regional workforce planning. These individuals may include people with disabilities, individuals with limited English proficiency, migrant and seasonal farmworkers, individuals with low educational attainment, and individuals facing transportation, childcare, or other barriers to employment.

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Deleted: Agricultural Employment: The agricultural sector remains vital in the region, with seasonal employment in the farming fields producing onions, chile, apples, and pecans. Migrant and seasonal farmworkers contribute significantly to this industry, particularly in peak seasons, but they also face challenges in gaining stable year-round employment and accessing necessary services

Deleted: The workforce in Southwestern New Mexico faces a mixture of educational attainment levels.¶

Deleted: Approximately 25% of the population holds a bachelor's degree or higher, with many working in fields like education, healthcare, and management.¶
35%-40% of the workforce holds a high school diploma or equivalent, and many individuals are employed in sectors like manufacturing, retail, and accommodation services.¶
Another 20%-25% of workers have some post-secondary education or vocational training, especially those engaged in trades like welding, plumbing, carpentry, and machine operation.¶
A sizable portion of the workforce comprises individuals with lower educational attainment levels, making it challenging to access higher-wage jobs without additional training. This is particularly true for individuals with barriers to employment, such as those with disabilities, limited English proficiency, and those impacted by the cliff effect, which occurs when individuals lose social benefits as their wages increase.¶

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Deleted: The region faces significant challenges in addressing the needs of individuals with barriers to employment, including:

- Individuals with Disabilities: Individuals with disabilities may require accommodations, supportive services, and targeted training to participate fully in the workforce. The one-stop system and its partners provide services designed to help individuals with disabilities prepare for, obtain, and retain employment.
- Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers: Migrant and seasonal farmworkers often experience inconsistent employment because of the seasonal nature of agricultural work. Access to transportation, healthcare, childcare, training, and other supportive services can be important to improving employment stability and career opportunities.
- Individuals with Lower Educational Attainment: Individuals without a high school diploma or with limited postsecondary education may face greater difficulty qualifying for higher-wage employment. Adult education, occupational training, credential programs, and career pathways can provide opportunities to build the skills necessary for advancement.
- English Language Learners and Individuals with Limited Literacy: Individuals with limited English proficiency or low literacy may face additional challenges in accessing education, training, and employment opportunities. Adult education, literacy services, English language instruction, and coordinated workforce services can help individuals develop the skills needed to enter and advance in the workforce.
- Low-Income Workers: Workers in entry-level positions may face challenges when increased earnings result in the loss of essential supportive benefits. Workforce partners can help individuals navigate available resources and develop career pathways that support advancement toward self-sufficiency.

Southwestern New Mexico's regional workforce reflects a combination of rural and urban communities, emerging industries, and longstanding agricultural and manufacturing sectors. The region's labor market trends demonstrate the importance of healthcare, manufacturing, technology, agriculture, and skilled trades while highlighting the need for accessible education, training, and supportive services. The one-stop system and its partners play an important role in helping workers, particularly those facing barriers to employment, develop the skills needed to participate in the region's changing economy.

Apprenticeships and Work-Based Learning

Apprenticeships provide an important pathway for individuals to gain in-demand skills while earning wages and receiving practical work experience. As industries in Southwestern New Mexico continue to seek skilled workers, apprenticeships and other work-based learning opportunities can help address skill gaps while providing participants with a direct pathway into employment and career advancement.

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Deleted: Individuals with Disabilities: Approximately 12% of the region's workforce faces physical or cognitive disabilities that hinder their ability to participate fully in the labor market. The one-stop system and its partners are committed to providing training and accommodation services to this population.

Deleted: Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers: These individuals often experience inconsistent employment due to the seasonal nature of agricultural work, and they may lack access to essential services such as healthcare, transportation, and childcare.

Deleted: Low-Income Workers: The cliff effect disproportionately affects workers in entry-level jobs in fields like retail, food services, and agriculture, making it difficult for them to advance in their careers without losing essential social benefits such as rental assistance and childcare subsidies.

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Deleted: unique blend of rural and urban dynamics, emerging industries, and longstanding agricultural roots shape Southwestern New Mexico's regional workforce. The region's labor market trends indicate growth in healthcare, manufacturing, and remote work, while educational attainment and skill levels reflect the need for more accessible training and education opportunities. The one-stop system and its partners will play a critical role in addressing these challenges and ensuring that workers, especially those with barriers to employment, have the resources and training they need to succeed

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Deleted: Apprenticeships have become a critical strategy in addressing labor market trends by providing a direct pathway for individuals to gain in-demand skills while earning a wage. As industries in the Southwestern region, such as manufacturing, healthcare, and the trades, continue to grow, apprenticeships offer a practical solution to close skill gaps. These programs allow employers to tailor training to their specific needs while helping workers advance in their careers, particularly in fields like carpentry, plumbing, and advanced manufacturing, which are essential for the region's evolving economic landscape.

The NMDWS State Apprenticeship Office representatives, accessible through America's Job Center offices, support apprenticeship programs across New Mexico and help connect employers and participants with available resources. Apprenticeship programs can provide participants with industry-recognized credentials while allowing employers to develop workers with the specific skills needed in their occupations. Expanding these opportunities in areas such as manufacturing, construction, healthcare, technology, and the skilled trades can strengthen career pathways and help address workforce needs throughout the Southwestern region.

Projected Growth by Industry

In the Southwestern region, Health Care and Social Assistance is projected to have the largest increase in employment between 2024 and 2034, adding nearly 2,000 jobs. Educational Services and Accommodation and Food Services are also projected to experience substantial employment growth, with Accommodation and Food Services increasing by more than 10% over the period.

Industries with the Highest Projected Employment

The table below shows the industries with the highest projected employment in the Southwestern Region from 2024–2034.

Rank	Industry	Estimated Employment	Projected Employment	Total Employment Change	Annual % Change	Total % Change
1	Health Care and Social Assistance	21,357	23,312	1,955	0.88%	9.15%
2	Educational Services	15,201	16,030	829	0.53%	5.45%
3	Total Government (Projections)	13,388	13,831	443	0.33%	3.31%
4	Accommodation and Food Services	10,856	12,007	1,151	1.01%	10.60%
5	Retail Trade	11,455	11,812	357	0.31%	3.12%
6	Construction	5,555	6,070	515	0.89%	9.27%
7	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	5,061	5,637	576	1.08%	11.38%
8	Manufacturing	4,199	4,343	144	0.34%	3.43%
9	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	3,515	3,219	-296	-0.88%	-8.42%
10	Transportation and Warehousing	2,604	2,654	50	0.19%	1.92%

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Deleted: The NMDWS State Apprenticeship Office representatives, accessible through America's Job Center offices, play a vital role in supporting apprenticeship programs across the state by helping offset training costs. These programs cover training fees and related expenses such as supplies and tools. Participants can earn certificates, degrees, or industry-recognized credentials, making apprenticeships a cost-effective way to gain the skills needed to meet the demands of in-demand industries like manufacturing, construction, healthcare, and more while addressing critical workforce needs in the Southwestern region.¶

Projected Growth by Region¶
<object>For 2024, employment in New Mexico is projected to grow from 878,470 to around 930,208 between 2018 and 2028, an increase of about 6%. In the Southwestern region, employment is anticipated to expand from 106,790 to approximately 113,870 by 2028, reflecting a growth of about 6.6%. This growth will predominantly occur in Las Cruces, part of the region's Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), which is expected to see the highest rate of employment increase in the state.¶

¶
 The sectors with the most significant employment gains in Southern New Mexico include government, education, and health services, which have shown robust growth in 2024. Over the past year, government employment alone expanded by 5.6%, adding over 1,000 jobs, while professional and business services grew by 5.7%. Other areas like construction and mining saw some contraction, reflecting ongoing economic adjustments.¶
 This growth aligns with the strategic workforce development initiatives under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), emphasizing high-demand sectors and creating long-term employment opportunities in the region.¶

<object>Projected Employment Growth by Region & MSA¶
 In the Southwestern region, Health Care, and Social Services will have both the most and fastest growth. ... [15]

Deleted: **<object>**Industry Sectors with the Largest Projected Employment Growth¶

Source: NMDWS Economic Research and Analysis Bureau, Employment Projections and Occupation ... [16]

Deleted: In the Southwestern region, the Health Care and Social Assistance sectors are projected to have the highest employment growth in the state. Employment in Accommodation and Food Services ... [17]

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Source: NMDWS, Employment Projections program

The employment projections for the Southwestern Region indicate continued demand across several major industries through 2034. Health Care and Social Assistance is projected to experience the largest numerical increase, adding approximately 1,955 jobs, followed by Accommodation and Food Services with 1,151 additional jobs and Educational Services with 829. Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services, Construction, and Retail Trade are also projected to add employment during the projection period.

Several industries are projected to experience notable percentage growth. Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services has the highest projected annual growth rate at 1.08%, followed by Accommodation and Food Services at 1.01% and Construction at 0.89%. Health Care and Social Assistance is projected to grow by 9.15% overall, reinforcing the continued need for healthcare workers and related support occupations throughout the region.

The projections also identify areas where workforce transition and skill development may be needed. Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting is projected to decline by approximately 296 jobs, or 8.42%, through 2034. Because agriculture remains an important part of the regional economy and provides employment for Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs), this projected decline may create challenges for workers who rely on seasonal employment.

Overall, the projections point to continued opportunities in healthcare, education, hospitality, construction, administrative and support services, and other growing industries. These trends provide important guidance for the SAWDB and its partners when determining training priorities, developing career pathways, expanding work-based learning opportunities, and connecting job seekers with occupations that offer opportunities for continued employment and advancement.

Challenges in Agriculture:

Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting is the only industry among the major industries in the Southwestern Region projected to experience a decline in employment between 2024 and 2034. The sector is projected to decrease by approximately 296 jobs, or 8.42%. Because agriculture remains an important part of the regional economy and provides employment opportunities for Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs), this projected decline may create challenges for workers who rely on seasonal employment.

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Deleted: Projected Employment Growth by Major Industry¶

Deleted: The employment projections for the Southwestern Region of New Mexico from 2022 to 2032 indicate diverse growth trends across various industries, reflecting both opportunities and challenges for the local workforce and economy.

Deleted: Key Employment Trends in the Southwestern Region:¶ High-Growth Sectors:¶

Accommodation and Food Services and Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation are expected to see the most significant growth, with projected increases of 20.97% and 56.07%, respectively, by 2032. This growth is indicative of a strengthening tourism and hospitality sector in the region, which could be driven by increased regional tourism, cultural investments, and recreational activities. The rapid expansion in these areas presents opportunities for job seekers, especially those in entry-level or service-oriented roles.¶

Steady Growth in Construction and Support Services:¶

Construction and Administrative and Support and Waste Management Services are projected to grow steadily, reflecting ongoing demand for infrastructure development and administrative support across industries. With growth rates of 10.59% and 12.39%, respectively, these sectors will provide stable employment opportunities for those with trade skills, administrative capabilities, and environmental management expertise.¶

Deleted: Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting are the only sectors forecasted to experience a decline in employment (-1.58%). This decline could present challenges for rural communities heavily reliant on agricultural jobs, especially for Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs), who represent a significant portion of the workforce in these sectors. With New Mexico designated as one of 20 Significant MSFW States by the U.S. Department of Labor, innovative strategies will be essential to support this population, including transitioning them into other growing industries through training and skill development programs. Pursuant to 20 CFR 653.107 (a)(4), there must be full-time, year-round outreach staff to conduct outreach duties.

The decline in agricultural employment is particularly concerning for rural communities that rely on farming as an economic driver. Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers, in particular, face significant challenges as opportunities in the sector change. With New Mexico designated as a "Significant State" for MSFWs by the U.S. Department of Labor, the state will need to develop innovative solutions to support these workers.

Transition Strategies

To mitigate the impact of changes in agricultural employment, the Board, in coordination with partners, will focus on the following strategies:

Expand Training and Skill Development: Programs focused on transitioning MSFWs to other industries, such as manufacturing, construction, or the growing healthcare sector, can help workers build skills that transfer to other occupations. Upskilling through Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)-funded initiatives can help workers adapt to the labor market's evolving needs.

Diversify Local Economies: Rural areas can benefit from investment in industries that show growth potential, including tourism and hospitality, technology and remote work, and agricultural technology. Expanding employment opportunities in growing industries can provide additional options for workers affected by changes in agricultural employment.

Targeted Support Services: Providing social and economic support services, including language training, financial literacy, transportation, and housing assistance, can help MSFWs overcome barriers as they pursue employment and training opportunities in other sectors.

By implementing these strategies, the workforce system can address changes in agricultural employment while supporting the needs of the region's agricultural workforce, particularly vulnerable populations such as MSFWs. These efforts align with the broader workforce development goals of the WIOA and support the development of sustainable career pathways for workers throughout the Southwestern region.

Implications for the Borderplex Region:

The Borderplex region, including Santa Teresa, is positioned at the intersection of manufacturing, logistics, and cross-border trade. The projected growth in Transportation and Warehousing, Construction, and Manufacturing reinforces the importance of preparing workers for occupations in logistics, transportation, production, equipment operation, and related support services. Workforce development partnerships with employers and educational institutions can help ensure that training programs reflect the skills needed in these industries.

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Deleted: The projected decline in the Agriculture, Fishing, and Hunting sector in New Mexico is driven by several converging factors, particularly impacting rural areas and Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs). Key reasons for this decline include:¶

Technological Advancements: The agriculture industry has increasingly adopted automation and advanced technologies, reducing the need for manual labor. While this improves efficiency and yields, it diminishes the demand for workers traditionally employed in farming, particularly MSFWs who often engage in labor-intensive tasks.¶

Climate Change and Water Scarcity: The Southwestern U.S. faces ongoing challenges related to water availability, exacerbated by climate change. Agriculture, heavily reliant on irrigation, is particularly vulnerable to droughts and shifting weather patterns, making it harder for farmers to maintain consistent production levels. This, in turn, reduces the demand for labor in agriculture.¶

Economic Shifts and Global Competition: Globalization has heightened competition in agricultural markets, putting pressure on U.S. farmers to cut costs. This often means fewer jobs for farmworkers as farms consolidate and seek more cost-effective methods. ... [18]

Deleted: The decline in agricultural employment is particularly concerning for rural communities that rely on farming as an economic driver. Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers, in particular, face significant challenges. ... [19]

Deleted: To mitigate the impact of job losses in agriculture, the Board, in coordination with partners, will focus on the following strategies:

Deleted: Programs focused on transitioning MSFWs to other industries, such as manufacturing, construction, or the growing healthcare sector, would be essential. Upskilling through Workforce Innovation and ... [20]

Deleted: Rural areas could benefit from investment in industries that show growth potential or developing new industries, such as renewable energy, tourism and hospitality, technology and remote work, and ... [21]

Deleted: Providing social and economic support services, including language training, financial literacy, and housing assistance, can help MSFWs integrate. ... [22]

Deleted: By implementing these strategies, New Mexico can address both the sector's decline and the needs of its agricultural workforce, particularly vulnerable populations like MSFWs. This aligns with ... [23]

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Deleted: The Borderplex region, including key areas like Santa Teresa, is uniquely positioned at the intersection of manufacturing, logistics, and cross-border trade. While manufacturing jobs are expected to grow, the region's reliance on agriculture and ... [24]

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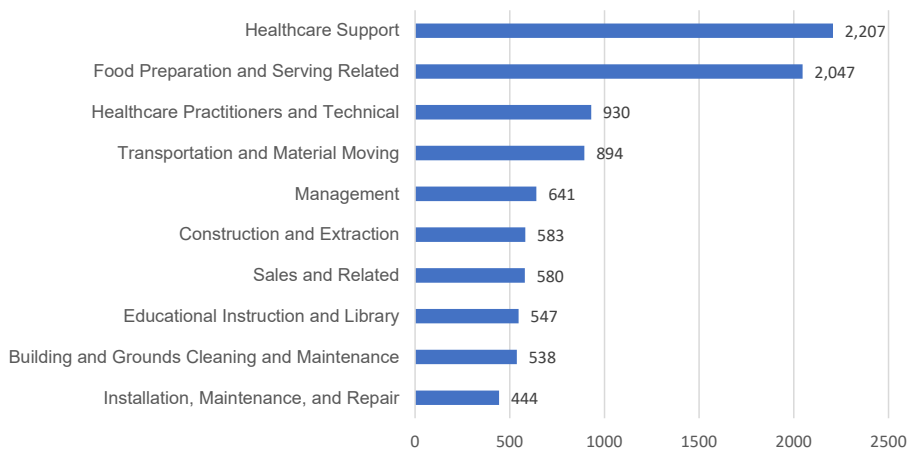
Strategic Implications for Workforce Development:

The projected employment trends provide a basis for aligning workforce development strategies with the region's anticipated needs. The SAWDB can use these projections to prioritize training and career pathways in growing industries, including healthcare, education, hospitality, construction, and administrative and support services. Work-based learning, apprenticeships, and employer partnerships can further connect job seekers with opportunities in occupations that offer continued employment and advancement.

For rural communities and agricultural workers, workforce strategies should also include accessible training and supportive services that help individuals transition into growing industries when necessary. Partnerships among the SAWDB, employers, educational institutions, and community organizations can help ensure that workforce investments respond to both current and projected labor market needs.

These employment projections underscore the need for a flexible and responsive workforce development strategy that recognizes both areas of growth and areas of projected decline. By aligning training, career pathways, employer engagement, and supportive services with regional employment trends, the workforce system can help prepare workers and employers for the changing Southwestern New Mexico labor market.

Occupations by Total Employment Change



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Deleted: These employment trends underscore the flexible, responsive, and inclusive workforce development strategy that leverages local strengths, addresses industry challenges, and fosters sustainable economic growth in the Southwestern region.

The graph below shows the Industries in Southwestern Total 2022



Source: NV Dc

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Projected Growth by Occupation

The projected employment changes for Southwestern New Mexico indicate strong demand across several occupational groups. Healthcare Support occupations are projected to have the largest increase in employment, with approximately 2,207 additional jobs, followed by Food Preparation and Serving Related occupations, with approximately 2,047 additional jobs. Healthcare Practitioners and Technical occupations are projected to add approximately 930 jobs, while Transportation and Material Moving occupations are projected to increase by approximately 894 jobs.

Other occupational groups with substantial projected employment growth include Management, with approximately 641 additional jobs; Construction and Extraction, with 583; Sales and Related, with 580; Educational Instruction and Library, with 547; Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance, with 538; and Installation, Maintenance, and Repair, with 444 additional jobs.

The projected growth across these occupational groups reflects the diverse workforce needs of Southwestern New Mexico. Healthcare-related occupations will continue to require workers with clinical, technical, and support skills, while growth in construction, transportation, installation and maintenance, and other technical occupations will require workers with specialized occupational skills and hands-on experience. Growth in food preparation and serving, sales, and building and grounds maintenance also indicates continued demand for workers in service-oriented occupations.

These projections provide the SAWDB and its workforce partners with important information for aligning training and career pathway investments with anticipated occupational demand. Training programs, apprenticeships, work-based learning, and employer partnerships can help prepare job seekers for occupations with projected employment growth while providing opportunities to develop skills that support advancement and long-term employment.

Level of Education

The education levels of job seekers in the Southwestern Region indicate a workforce with varied educational backgrounds, while most advertised job openings do not specify a minimum education requirement. Of the 5,050 advertised job openings, 4,566, or 90.42%, do not specify an education requirement. Among the openings that do identify a minimum requirement, 270 require a high school diploma or equivalent, while 37 require a bachelor's degree and 31 require a master's degree.

On the candidate side, 4,004 individuals, or 38.81%, have a high school diploma or equivalent, while 1,476 individuals, or 14.31%, have less than a high school education. Other candidates have some college education, associate's degrees, or vocational and

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Deleted: Growth in the occupational groups of home health aides, personal care aides, speech-language pathologists, physician assistants, food preparation and serving, construction, extraction, healthcare practitioners, and technical areas represents 62.2 percent of total projected employment growth between 2024 and 2028. New demand for workers in these occupational groups is projected to grow quickly. Jobs for personal care and service workers are projected to grow by 25.0 percent, while jobs for food preparation and servers are projected to increase by 11.0 percent. Jobs for construction and extraction workers are expected to increase by 10.8 percent, while healthcare practitioners and techs are projected to increase by 10.9 percent.

Deleted: Community and social service occupations are projected to increase by 9.9 percent. In contrast, the occupations of office and administrative support, sales and related, and production are expected to have job losses over the projection period.

Deleted: The SAWDB strongly supports the development of a skilled workforce for both the jobs that exist today and those that are emerging in the region. As we advance, the SAWDB aims to learn more about and engage further with the Southwestern region's local businesses and industries to develop training programs that will result in a well-developed career pipeline tailored to the needs of local businesses and industries within the Southwestern region.

Deleted: The following table shows the minimum level of education requested by employers on job openings advertised online, as well as the educational attainment of potential candidates in the workforce system who are looking for jobs in Southwestern New Mexico. The data shows the region's workforce has a pool of 1,312 job seekers with less than a high school education. Nearly 37% of the region's job postings require a high school diploma or equivalent.

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technical training. This range of educational attainment reinforces the importance of accessible education, training, and career pathway opportunities that connect job seekers with the requirements of available occupations.

Education Level of Advertised Jobs and Potential Candidates

The table below shows the minimum level of education required by employers for job openings advertised online, as well as the educational attainment of potential candidates in the workforce Systems that are looking for jobs in the Southwestern Region, NM, on July 23, 2026.

Education Level	Job Openings	% of Job Openings	Potential Candidates	% of Potential Candidates
Not Specified	4,566	90.42%	22	0.21%
High School Diploma or Equivalent	270	5.35%	4,004	38.81%
No Minimum Education Requirement	109	2.16%	0	N/A
Bachelor's Degree	37	0.73%	1,276	12.37%
Master's Degree	31	0.61%	510	4.94%
Associate's Degree	26	0.51%	817	7.92%
1 Year of College or a Technical or Vocational School	4	0.08%	591	5.73%
Vocational School Certificate	3	0.06%	707	6.85%
Specialized Degree (e.g. MD, DDS)	2	0.04%	30	0.29%
3 Years of College or a Technical or Vocational School	1	0.02%	273	2.65%
Doctorate Degree	1	0.02%	94	0.91%
Less than High School	0	N/A	1,476	14.31%
2 Years of College or a Technical or Vocational School	0	N/A	516	5.00%
Some College	0	N/A	1	0.01%

Source: Job Source: Online advertised jobs data

Candidate Source: Is comprised of individuals whose resumes have been active in the workforce system over the past twelve months

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WIOA Title II: The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, or AEFLA

The New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED) is the State's eligible agency for administering Adult Education and Literacy programs under WIOA, and the Adult Education Division (NMHED-AE) oversees this effort. NMHED is required to award multi-year grants or contracts on a competitive basis to eligible providers within the

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State or outlying area to develop, implement, and improve adult education and literacy activities within the State. Eligible providers must use AEFLA funds to establish or operate programs that provide adult education and literacy activities, including programs that provide these concurrently. As outlined in Section 203 of WIOA, sanctioned activities include:

- Adult education;
 - Literacy;
 - Workplace adult education and literacy activities;
 - Family literacy activities;
 - English language acquisition activities;
 - Integrated English literacy and civics education;
 - Workforce preparation activities; or
 - Integrated education and training that—
1. Provides adult education and literacy activities, concurrently and contextually with both, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, and
 2. Is for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

NMHED-AE held its last competitive grant process in the spring of 202~~5~~. The new 4-year grant cycle began on July 1, 202~~5~~, with 26 awards issued to local providers in all four workforce regions, including four program providers who serve the Southwestern region: Doña Ana Community College, University of New Mexico – Valencia, Western New Mexico University, and Southern New Mexico Corrections Facility.

“MANY PATHWAYS, ONE BRIGHT FUTURE”

In a nutshell, Adult Education programs help New Mexicans to:

- Strengthen core literacy, numeracy, digital literacy, and workplace readiness skills
- Earn a High School Equivalency (HSE) credential or New Mexico Adult Diploma
- Become college-ready and enter or progress along an in-demand career pathway, which may include “fast tracking” and enrolling in an Integrated Education and Career Training Program
- Enhance parent and caregiver ability to support children’s learning needs
- Learn English as a second language (ESL) and civics + prepare for citizenship if applicable

WIOA Title II includes a requirement that states provide corrections education (Section 225). Corrections education is for criminal offenders who reside in correctional

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institutions. In the Southwestern region, corrections education is provided at the Southern New Mexico Correctional Facility located in Las Cruces in Doña Ana County.

The following table lists the WIOA Title II Adult Education providers in the Southwestern region.

**Southwestern Program Providers with FY24 and FY25 Service Numbers
(Program Years 23-24, 24-25)**

Summary	Doña Ana Community College		University of New Mexico – Valencia		Western New Mexico University		Southern New Mexico Corrections Facility	
	FY <u>24</u>	FY <u>25</u>	FY <u>24</u>	FY <u>25</u>	FY <u>24</u>	FY <u>25</u>	FY <u>24</u>	FY <u>25</u>
Total number of qualified students served in Title II programs	<u>768</u>	<u>969</u>	<u>117</u>	<u>182</u>	<u>172</u>	<u>168</u>		
Total number of qualified students participating in Adult Basic Education and Adult Secondary Education Programs	<u>247</u>	<u>401</u>	<u>88</u>	112	<u>136</u>	<u>153</u>		
Total number of qualified students participating in the English as a Second Language Program	<u>521</u>	<u>568</u>	<u>29</u>	52	<u>36</u>	<u>15</u>		
Percent of qualified students who made educational gains	<u>45.18</u> %	<u>44.89</u> %	<u>61.54</u> %	<u>32.53</u> %	<u>44.77</u> %	<u>32.74</u> %		

Note: Service numbers for the Southern New Mexico Corrections Facility were not available as a separate facility-level count for the reporting periods shown.

Source: LACES student management system; NMHED

The National Reporting System (NRS) is a key framework used to measure and report the outcomes of Adult Education participants. For a student's outcomes to be reported to the NRS, they must have at least 12 contact hours in the program and complete an assessment to determine their initial academic level.

What Do These Numbers Represent?

Enrollment Numbers: Reflect Adult Education participants who have completed a minimum of 12 contact hours and have undergone an assessment. This assessment helps to establish their starting academic level and ensures they are included in the NRS reporting.

Measurable Skill Gains (MSG): This metric captures the progress of Adult Education participants and represents the percentage of individuals who have:

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Deleted: 0	
Deleted: 28.85%	
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Deleted: 35.05	
Deleted: 30.34	
Deleted: 31.73	
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- Achieved an academic level gain,
- Earned a High School Equivalency (HSE) credential,
- Transitioned to college or post-secondary training, or
- Obtained a training credential.

Implications for the Southwestern Region:

For the Southwestern Region, these metrics highlight the importance of not only enrolling individuals in Adult Education programs but also ensuring they remain engaged long enough to achieve measurable outcomes. This is particularly relevant in rural and underserved communities, where access to educational resources may be limited. By focusing on increasing contact hours and providing assessments and targeted support, the region can better align adult education efforts with workforce needs, such as filling gaps in high-growth sectors. Moreover, tracking MSG outcomes provides valuable insights into how well educational programs are preparing residents for career advancement, college, and credential attainment, contributing to overall economic development in the region.

For more information about Adult Education (Title II of WIOA, administered by USDE), see the Adult Education program-specific section of New Mexico's Combined State Plan, as well as Title II contributions woven throughout the main Plan body. Also available is the Higher Education Department website:

<https://www.dws.nm.gov/en-us/WIOA/WIOA-Plans-and-Reports>

https://hed.nm.gov/students-parents/adult_education

Work Experience

The table below compares the minimum work experience required for job openings advertised online in the Southwestern Region with the work experience reported by potential candidates in the workforce system. The data indicate that most advertised job openings (93.76%) require one to two years of work experience. Smaller percentages of openings require less than one year of experience (1.79%), two to five years (0.59%), five to ten years (0.04%), or more than ten years (0.24%). Approximately 3.58% of advertised openings are identified as entry-level.

The comparison also shows a difference between the experience requirements of employers and the experience levels of potential candidates. While there are candidates across each experience category, the largest numbers of potential candidates have more than ten years of experience (4,168), two to five years (1,821), and less than one year (1,558). This information can help the workforce system identify opportunities to

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Deleted: The table below shows the minimum required work experience on job openings advertised online in the region and the experience level of potential candidates in the workforce system looking for jobs in Southwestern New Mexico on September 1, 2024.

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connect job seekers with employers and to provide appropriate career services, training, and work-based learning opportunities for individuals whose experience level does not align directly with employer requirements.

Education Level of Advertised Jobs and Potential Candidates

The table below shows the minimum required work experience for job openings advertised online, and the work experience of potential candidates in the workforce system that are looking for jobs in the Southwestern Region, NM on August 1, 2020.

Education Level	Job Openings	% of Job Openings	Potential Candidates	% of Potential Candidates
Entry Level	176	3.58%	0	N/A
Less than 1 year	88	1.79%	1,558	14.94%
1 Year to 2 Years	4,612	93.76%	1,016	9.74%
2 Years to 5 Years	29	0.59%	1,821	17.46%
5 Years to 10 Years	2	0.04%	1,866	17.90%
More than 10 Years	12	0.24%	4,166	39.95%

Source: Online advertised jobs data AND Individuals with active résumés in the workforce system.

Top Skills

The following table provides additional information on the tools and technologies most frequently identified in online job postings in the Southwestern Region. These data provide insight into the technical and digital competencies employers are seeking across a range of occupations and industries.

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Deleted: In the Borderland areas of Southwestern New Mexico, several critical skill gaps are prevalent that hinder workers' ability to meet the evolving demands of regional employers. One major gap is language proficiency, particularly in Spanish, which is essential in this border region for both customer-facing roles and collaborative work environments. Additionally, soft skills, such as communication, problem-solving, and teamwork, are often lacking and are crucial for success across industries, from retail to manufacturing.

Advertised Tools and Technology			
The table below shows the top advertised detailed tools and technologies found in job openings advertised online in the Southwestern Region, NM, in June 2026.			
Rank	Advertised Tool or Technology	Advertised Tool and Technology Group	Job Opening Match Count
1	Microsoft (MS) Office	Office Suite Software	589
2	Personal protective equipment	Hazardous Material Protective Apparel	313
3	Microsoft PowerPoint	Presentation Software	202
4	Masks	Medical Staff Isolation or Surgical Masks	166
5	Artificial intelligence software	Industrial Control Software	147
6	Forklift	Forklifts	138
7	Personal Computer (PC)	Personal Computers	136
8	Cash Register	Cash Registers	95
9	Tractors	Agricultural Tractors	88
10	Motor vehicles	Automobiles or Cars	75
Source: Online advertised jobs data			

The advertised tools and technologies provide additional insight into the skills and technical competencies sought by employers in the Southwestern Region. Microsoft Office is the most frequently advertised technology, followed by personal protective equipment, Microsoft PowerPoint, masks, artificial intelligence software, forklifts, personal computers, cash registers, tractors, and motor vehicles. The range of tools and technologies reflects the diversity of the region's labor market, including administrative, healthcare, manufacturing, transportation, retail, and agricultural occupations.

These findings reinforce the importance of ensuring that workforce development programs provide job seekers with the technical and digital skills needed to meet current employer requirements. Access to training in commonly requested technologies and equipment can help job seekers strengthen their qualifications and improve their ability to compete for available employment opportunities.

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Deleted: Basic computer literacy, including proficiency in Microsoft Office, is also a significant gap, as these skills are necessary for clerical, administrative, and even frontline jobs in manufacturing and warehouse settings. With automation rising, workers need math and technical skills to adapt to new machinery and processes. This gap is particularly relevant in sectors like manufacturing and warehousing, where technological advances drive the need for a more skilled workforce.

Deleted: In the retail and service sectors, the workforce often struggles with these same gaps in soft skills and basic computer skills, limiting their upward mobility and the ability to transition into management or higher-level positions. Bridging these skill gaps through targeted training programs and partnerships between educational institutions and employers can help to develop a stronger, more resilient workforce in Southwestern New Mexico.

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The workforce system can support apprenticeship, work-based learning, and on-the-job training opportunities that respond to the skills employers are seeking across the region. These programs can combine technical and workplace skills while allowing participants to gain experience and earn wages. Partnerships among employers, the SAWDB, America's Job Center partners, WIOA Title II Adult Education providers, and other education and training institutions can help develop career pathways that connect job seekers with employment opportunities in growing industries. For Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers and other individuals who may face barriers to participation, partners can also coordinate supportive services such as flexible scheduling, transportation, and other assistance needed to participate in training and employment.

These efforts can help the region strengthen the connection between employer needs and the education, training, and supportive services available to job seekers.

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Deleted: The workforce system can develop apprenticeship programs and on-the-job training targeting manufacturing, warehouse, and retail sectors by leveraging partnerships with employers and core partners. These programs could focus on career pathways that include technical and soft skills, allowing workers to upskill while earning. Special provisions can be made for migrant seasonal farmworkers by coordinating flexible schedules and transportation assistance through partner organizations like TANF, NMSU, DACC, WNMU, NM Tech, and other training institutions.

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Deleted: The following table shows the top skills employers require in online job postings against potential candidates in the workforce system who possess those skills.¶
The need for bilingual, Spanish-speaking skills is currently the greatest. Technology continues to be challenging, and the need for personal computers and skills is primarily due to remote work and school.

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B. Analysis of Workforce Development Activities

§679.560(a)(4) An analysis of workforce development activities, including education and training, in the region. This analysis must include the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities and capacity to provide the workforce development activities to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of employers.

The following table contains a summary report that provides a look at the number of services provided at America's Job Centers in the region to individuals and employers who have registered in NM JOBS.

The report contains data on the number of individuals who registered in the system, distinct (unduplicated) individuals receiving services, the total number of services provided to individuals, the total number of internal job orders created, and the total number of job referrals, as well as services provided to employers. The report represents twelve months from July 1, 202⁵, through June 30, 202⁶, for the entire seven-county area of Southwestern New Mexico.

America's Job Center New Mexico - SW Services

Service	Total
Total number of Individuals that Registered	5,515
Total number of Distinct Individuals Receiving Services	11,745
Total number of Services Provided to Individuals	131,598
Total number of Résumés Added	4,367
Total number of Internal Job Orders Created	1,449
Total number of Internal Job Referrals	2,939
Total number of Services Provided to Employers	7,267
Source: NM JOBS Online System Master Summary Report by LWIA Region/LWDB : Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board	

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Strengths

America's Job Center System

The America's Job Center system is a partnership of organizations working as a team to promote a universal approach to providing practical workforce assistance to job seekers and businesses. This collaboration of state, regional, and local organizations provides a seamless program and service delivery system.

The impact of the America's Job Center system extends into public education, mainly through Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. These partnerships help prepare youth for high-demand careers by directly integrating academic and technical training into the classroom. By collaborating with public schools, the America's Job Center system and its partners ensure that students enrolled in CTE programs have access to valuable work-based learning opportunities such as internships, apprenticeships, and job shadowing, connecting them to real-world experiences that align with the needs of regional employers. These collaborations help align CTE curricula with local labor market trends, providing students with the knowledge and skills needed in growing sectors like healthcare, manufacturing, and information technology. This support helps ensure that CTE students are not only graduating with diplomas but are also equipped with the certifications, skills, and experiences that make them competitive candidates for future employment or further education. By bridging the gap between education and the workforce, the America's Job Center system plays a critical role in developing a pipeline of talent that supports regional economic growth.

Employer Services

NM JOBS allows employers to post job openings, view registered job seekers for potential candidates, and search labor market information. Qualified employers appreciate the availability of federal funds for Training Reimbursement, Tuition Assistance, and In-School and Out-of-School Youth programs. On-the-Job Training (OJT) helps reduce employer training costs while providing new employees with the necessary skill sets required for the job. If a business plans to hire, the employer could get reimbursed for up to half of the employee's wages for up to six months. The program is available to train new employees or existing employees who are moving to a different position within the business, but will need additional in-house training programs to do the job.

A key strength is the comprehensive approach to workforce development, which leverages partnerships with local agencies like Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion, Economic Development organizations, Chambers of Commerce, training institutions, public schools, and Income Support Offices. These relationships help provide

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wraparound services to job seekers, students, and employers, ensuring a more holistic support system. By coordinating efforts across these entities, the workforce system can better align training programs with the skill needs of local industries while addressing barriers such as language proficiency, transportation, and childcare. For example, integrating economic development efforts with workforce activities ensures that, as new industries grow, the necessary training and employment pathways are created to meet employer demand. Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion services also play a critical role in supporting both employers and workers during periods of potential or actual layoffs. Services may include early intervention for at-risk businesses, employer education on layoff-aversion strategies, and assistance to affected workers through job search, retraining, and reemployment services.

Job Seeker Services

One of the benefits of America's Job Centers is that they allow an employer to hold hiring events, interview candidates, set up skills assessment tests with potential candidates, and more. Job seekers utilize services to create résumés and work closely with case managers to search the job database for careers that suit them while addressing barriers to employment, including disabilities.

The Tuition Assistance program has been successful in helping low-income participants gain skills that lead to better-paying jobs. The program provides financial assistance that helps eligible participants obtain education and training aligned with their employment and career goals.

Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs

The Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program is a federal program designed to support workers who lost their jobs or experienced a reduction in wages due to foreign trade. The TAA program is currently operating under a termination provision. As a result, the U.S. Department of Labor is not accepting new TAA petitions or making new determinations. However, workers who were members of worker groups certified under an approved TAA petition before June 2022 may remain eligible, as applicable, to receive TAA benefits and services.

For eligible workers, TAA case managers continue to provide services through the America's Job Center system, including employment and case management services, job search assistance, relocation assistance, income support through Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA), and assistance with training and reemployment. Case managers also review local employment opportunities and labor market information, provide employment referrals, and assist eligible workers with accessing local colleges or approved online training programs.

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Deleted: Rapid Response services also play a critical role in minimizing the impact of layoffs, offering immediate support to displaced workers through retraining and upskilling initiatives

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Deleted: Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) programs are essential tools for helping workers who have lost their jobs due to changes in global trade, outsourcing, or increased imports. These programs provide critical services to support dislocated workers in finding new employment and achieving long-term career stability. In the Southwestern region, where industries like manufacturing, agriculture, and mining are key economic drivers, TAA is especially important for workers affected by trade fluctuations

Deleted: TAA offers various services that can integrate as activities within the one-stop system. These include job training, income support (such as Trade Readjustment Allowances or TRA), job search assistance, and relocation support. Additionally, TAA provides wage subsidies for workers over 50 who are re-employed at lower wages than their previous jobs, and it offers opportunities for workers to earn industry-recognized credentials and certifications that can help them transition into new sectors

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TAA case managers also encourage eligible participants to co-enroll in other workforce programs when appropriate so that participants can access additional career and supportive services. The State's 2026–2027 State Plan modification identifies continued coordination between TAA and WIOA programs and notes that TAA case management staff are working with WIOA staff to facilitate co-enrollment and help participants access available benefits and services.

For the Southwestern region, the America's Job Center system remains an important point of access for eligible TAA participants as they pursue reemployment, training, and career services. Coordination among TAA, WIOA, and other workforce partners can help ensure that eligible workers receive appropriate services and support as they transition to new employment opportunities.

Veteran Services

Veteran services are a crucial component of the one-stop system. The system is designed to support veterans transitioning from military to civilian employment. The one-stop centers in Southwestern New Mexico are committed to providing tailored services that recognize veterans' unique needs and skills, ensuring they receive priority in job placement, training, and supportive services.

Veteran services within the one-stop system are provided by Veterans Representatives who assist veterans with employment and workforce needs. Veterans Representatives help veterans overcome barriers to employment by providing intensive job search assistance, career counseling, and referrals to training programs. Veterans can also receive help translating their military experience into civilian credentials or certifications, making them more competitive in the job market.

The one-stop system partners with local employers to identify job opportunities well-suited to veterans' skills, particularly in industries like healthcare, manufacturing, and transportation, which are in demand in the Southwestern region. Veterans are connected to training programs and apprenticeships that align with their career goals, offering pathways into high-wage, high-demand industries.

Wraparound services for veterans often include assistance with housing, access to healthcare, and support for mental health and wellness, provided through partnerships with local veteran service organizations and agencies like the VA. By leveraging the resources of all workforce partners, the one-stop system ensures that veterans receive support when searching for employment and achieving long-term career stability.

The one-stop system also focuses on outreach to underrepresented veteran populations, such as homeless veterans, veterans with disabilities, and those recently

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Deleted: TAA activities can include targeted outreach to workers in industries particularly susceptible to trade impacts, such as manufacturing, agriculture, and mining. This could involve job fairs, industry-specific workshops, and partnerships with local employers to provide on-the-job training or apprenticeships. TAA programs collaborate with other workforce system partners to braid resources and ensure that dislocated workers receive wraparound services like career counseling, training, and job placement

Deleted: Trade-related job losses can significantly affect the local economy, and TAA is an essential bridge to new opportunities. Through activities like retraining and certification programs, TAA helps workers reenter the workforce in in-demand industries like healthcare, logistics, and the growing film industry while ensuring they receive the necessary support to transition smoothly.

Deleted: include specialized staff, such as Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialists and Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVERs). Trained staff members

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separated from service, ensuring that they have access to the comprehensive services available. Through these efforts, the workforce system helps veterans successfully transition into civilian life and contributes to the economic growth of the Southwestern region.

Weaknesses

The Southwestern region consists of seven counties. Six are small rural communities with dispersed populations farthest from employment, education, and training opportunities. The Southwestern region has limited resources for addressing the barriers limiting people from accessing the workforce.

Through discussions with workforce partners about areas to overcome in the region's workforce system, the SAWDB compiled the following list of improvements to focus on:

1. Transition to an integrated referral system among WIOA partners
2. Limited facility space at America's Job Centers for additional core programs
3. Limited resources for outreach and community awareness
4. Funding resources
5. Lack of job and education services in rural communities
6. Limited broadband access in rural communities, creating barriers to training programs and workforce services

As the Southwestern region moves into its sector strategy efforts, the capacity to provide workforce development activities to address the education and skill needs of the local workforce will improve and better adapt to the needs of local employers. A more concise understanding of what employers need will help the SAWDB enhance programs for individuals with barriers to employment.

One barrier to employment seen in the Southwestern region is English as a Second Language (ESL) during job placement. Many ESL individuals, particularly in areas with a large migrant or immigrant workforce, have the skills necessary for employment but face difficulties securing jobs matching their abilities due to limited English proficiency. Employers may be hesitant to hire individuals who struggle with language barriers, particularly for roles requiring clear communication or customer interaction. ESL learners may be unaware of available resources that cater to their needs, such as job placement services or skill development programs.

Job placements that require technical language or specialized terminology may pose an added hurdle. For example, industries like healthcare, manufacturing, or information technology often require a higher level of language proficiency in specialized areas, preventing ESL learners from advancing in their careers.

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Finding ways to support these learners by offering bilingual training, focusing on industry-specific English learning, and providing wraparound services (such as coaching and mentoring) will help bridge the gap between ESL learners and job placement opportunities. Partnerships with employers willing to offer training or internships for ESL learners will help build confidence and foster skills while overcoming language barriers.

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C. Strategic Vision and Goals

§679.560(a)(5) A description of the local board's strategic vision to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. This must include goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment), and goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on performance indicators described in §677.155(a)(1) of the WIOA Joint Rule.

Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board Vision

The SAWDB's vision is for a skilled and ready workforce in current and emerging occupations for regional businesses and industries.

Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board Mission

The SAWDB's mission is to empower individuals with access to quality employment, education, and training, fostering a skilled workforce that meets local employer needs and drives community economic growth.

Southwestern Area Workforce Development Board Goals

The SAWDB, pursuant to its vision, established the following local goals for the program years 2024 - 2027:

Goal 1: Establish sector partnerships and career pathways within target industry sectors that support the economic and workforce development of the region by providing individuals with lifelong training opportunities leading to good jobs by

- 1) increasing the availability of short-term training directly related to the target industry sectors and leading to industry-recognized credentials.
- 2) working with industry to identify skills and credentials (including stackable credentials) and with community colleges and training institutions to identify existing or develop new training programs.
- 3) prioritizing sector strategies and career pathways in this current plan and expanding on the goals and objectives in the next 4-year plan to strengthen the region's economic and workforce development efforts.

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Goal 2: Enhance training programs for stakeholders to understand the SAWDB's vision, regulations, contractual obligations, as well as the region's strengths and weaknesses in the workforce system by

- 1) building an online training platform for training providers, service providers, staff, and board members that includes board duties and responsibilities, policy review, training provider duties and responsibilities, and labor market information.

Goal 3: Use systems that will incrementally improve the SAWDB's negotiated performance measures identified in Attachment E by

- 1) capitalizing on the functions of the database quality management system (Future Works) and focusing on monitoring and measuring performance data to provide compliance of negotiated performance measures and conduct periodic reporting to the SAWDB.

Goal 4: Build a more sustainable value-added agriculture industry in the region by

- 1) working with training providers, economic developers, and local farmers and ranchers to enhance the production and manufacturing processes.
- 2) assisting regional agencies to determine what workforce services are needed to expand markets for local agricultural products.

Goal 5: Build a trained and ready workforce to replace workers who are retiring and leaving the industry by

- 1) working with employers to develop targeted and customized programs, especially for the large entities such as White Sands Missile Range, that are rapidly losing employees.
- 2) recruiting new participants, such as WIOA youth participants and individuals with barriers to employment, to the workforce within these career areas.

Goal 6: Provide community stakeholders, workforce partners, and the public with an understanding of the workforce needs of each respective county and how to address them by

- 1) developing a Customized Workforce Development Action Plan in a minimum of three counties of the region.

Goal 7: Strengthen the regional workforce by increasing credential completion rates from post-secondary institutions by

- 1) identifying individuals who are nearing credential completion and training in occupations-in-demand but lack funding for tuition, supplies, or other items and

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enroll them into WIOA Title IB Individual Training Accounts and Supportive Services.

Goal 8: Increase the number of co-enrollments among the required partner programs to improve braided funding and efficiencies of the workforce system by

- 1) identifying policies that will encourage co-enrollments of participants.

The SAWDB understands that people and businesses create healthy economies. Its vision and mission align with that of the New Mexico Governor and Cabinet Secretary for the Department of Workforce Solutions to keep New Mexicans working by utilizing an “All Hands” approach to connect New Mexican workers with New Mexico businesses. The goal of this approach is to keep our economy competitive while providing good-paying jobs for people so they can support themselves and their families.

§679.560(a)(6) Taking into account analyses described in Sections A and B above, describe the local board’s overall strategy for working with the entities that carry out the core programs and required partners to align resources available to the local area, to achieve the strategic vision and goals.

The SAWDB’s overall strategy for working with the entities that carry out the core programs and align the available resources in the local area to achieve the strategic vision and goals is two-pronged. The Core partners are the WIOA Title IB Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs; Title II Adult Education and Literacy programs; Title III Wagner-Peyser programs; and Title IV Rehabilitation Act programs.

Career Pathways Plan

Career pathways remain an important component of SAWDB’s strategy to connect individuals to education, training, work-based learning, employment, and opportunities for career advancement. Career pathways are developed through collaboration among workforce partners, education and training providers, employers, economic development organizations, community partners, and other stakeholders to ensure that services are responsive to both participant needs and regional workforce demand.

The SAWDB’s original Career Pathways Plan established a six-phase framework addressing cross-agency partnerships, industry engagement, education and training, funding alignment, policy alignment, and performance measurement. While the framework continues to provide a foundation for career pathways work, implementation has evolved as regional workforce needs, service providers, partnerships, funding opportunities, and state workforce initiatives have changed.

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During the current Local Plan period, the SAWDB has implemented components of the Career Pathways framework through regional partnerships, sector strategy activities, employer engagement, work-based learning, apprenticeship activities, education and training partnerships, supportive services, and coordination among WIOA programs and One-Stop partners. These activities have reinforced the need to update the Career Pathways Plan to better reflect the current workforce system and provide a more practical framework for implementation.

The SAWDB is updating its Career Pathways Plan for PY26 and beyond. The updated approach retains the six key elements of the original framework while placing greater emphasis on employer-validated pathways, short-term and stackable credentials, work-based learning, Adult Education integration, co-enrollment, supportive services, rural and tribal access, and stronger connections among K-12 Career and Technical Education (CTE), postsecondary education, America's Job Centers, Native workforce partners, and employers.

Updated Career Pathways Framework

1. Cross-Agency Partnerships and Partner Alignment

SAWDB will continue strengthening coordination among the Administrative Entity, One-Stop Operator, Title I service providers, NMDWS, Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, K-12 and CTE programs, higher education, Native workforce partners, economic development organizations, employers, and community organizations. Rather than establishing a separate structure for every pathway, SAWDB will utilize existing partner meetings, sector strategy activities, employer convenings, and workforce system coordination whenever possible.

2. Industry and Employer Engagement

Labor market information, employer input, sector strategy activities, job demand, wages, advancement opportunities, and regional economic priorities will be used to identify and validate career pathways. Employer engagement will help identify required skills and credentials and expand opportunities for work experience, On-the-Job Training, internships, apprenticeships, and other work-based learning.

3. Education, Training, and Work-Based Learning

SAWDB will strengthen connections among K-12/CTE, Adult Education, postsecondary education, occupational training, apprenticeship, and employment. Regional education and training partners include New Mexico State University, Doña Ana Community College, Western New Mexico University, New Mexico Tech, regional school districts and CTE programs, Adult Education providers, apprenticeship sponsors, and other eligible training providers.

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Career pathways will provide multiple entry and exit points so that Youth, Adults, Dislocated Workers, and individuals with barriers to employment can enter at the level appropriate to their needs and progress toward higher-level credentials and employment.

A general pathway may include:

Career Exploration/Assessment → Foundational or Bridge Services → Short-Term Credential/Training → Work-Based Learning → Employment → Advanced Credential/Education → Career Advancement

4. Funding and Resource Alignment

SAWDB will coordinate WIOA Title I resources with other workforce, education, and community resources when appropriate and allowable. This may include Wagner-Peyser, Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, CTE/Perkins, apprenticeship resources, state workforce initiatives, education grants, supportive-service resources, employer contributions, and other public or private funding. Coordination will focus on maximizing resources while preventing duplication of services and maintaining the requirements of each funding source.

5. Policy and Program Alignment

SAWDB will continue reviewing local policies and procedures to support effective career pathways and remove unnecessary barriers to participation. Particular attention will be given to policies governing training, supportive services, Youth Work Experience, On-the-Job Training, Transitional Jobs, apprenticeships, employer eligibility, internships, referrals, and co-enrollment. Policies will also consider the unique service-delivery needs of rural, tribal, border, and underserved communities.

6. Performance Measurement and Continuous Improvement

SAWDB will use participant outcomes, WIOA performance measures, employer feedback, partner input, and available labor market information to evaluate career pathway effectiveness. Measures may include training participation and completion, credential attainment, work-based learning participation, employment, earnings, retention, co-enrollment, employer participation, and services to rural and Native American communities. Pathways and priority sectors will be reviewed periodically and adjusted as workforce needs change.

Regional Career Pathway Priorities

Rather than permanently limiting career pathways to a fixed list of industries, SAWDB will use labor market information, employer demand, training capacity, wages, advancement opportunities, and regional significance to determine where concentrated career pathway development is warranted.

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Current areas of opportunity include:

- Healthcare and Behavioral Health
- Education and Early Childhood
- Advanced Manufacturing and Technology
- Transportation, Logistics, and Global Trade
- Energy, Infrastructure, and Construction
- Aerospace, Engineering, and Cybersecurity
- Mining, Natural Resources, and Geoscience
- Agriculture and Value-Added Food Systems
- Hospitality, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation
- Public and Community Services

Priority pathways may vary by county and will be periodically reviewed as labor market conditions and regional investments change.

Organizing Partners and Clarifying Roles

The Administrative Entity and One-Stop Operator will provide system-level coordination for career pathways activities, with participation from Title I service providers, core and required One-Stop partners, education and training institutions, employers, economic development organizations, Native workforce partners, and community organizations.

The One-Stop Operator will support partner coordination, referral processes, and service alignment, while the Administrative Entity will provide strategic oversight, policy coordination, and alignment with SAWDB priorities and the Local Plan. Service providers and partners will implement participant-level services within their respective program responsibilities.

Employers and industry partners will play a central role in validating workforce demand, identifying skills and credentials, informing training, and providing employment and work-based learning opportunities. Education partners will assist in developing accessible and stackable education and training pathways. Community and workforce partners will help address barriers such as transportation, childcare, housing, broadband access, and other needs that may prevent individuals from successfully completing a pathway.

This updated approach allows SAWDB to build upon career pathways activities already occurring throughout the region while establishing a clearer and more current framework for continued implementation and continuous improvement.

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Deleted: The State recognizes the importance of career pathways and saw that each workforce board had little guidance when developing and implementing one for their region. The State plans to initiate the development of a Career Pathways Plan, and with team members from each region, it will become the State's universal template for them.¶
The SAWDB approved a Career Pathways Plan at the end of 2019 and the onset of COVID-19 in early 2020 paused its implementation. After returning from the COVID shutdown, the WIOA Project Manager researched the use of career pathways in the region. He discovered that many organizations were already utilizing a version they created. SAWDB members agreed that the current Career Pathways Plan is outdated and that the Planning Committee will revise it. After the update, the SAWDB's administrative staff will make its best effort to implement and focus on the priorities in the plan and ensure alignment with the state's creation and implementation of career pathway initiatives. ¶
As described in the SAWDB's Career Pathways Plan, the first step will be to use a traditional approach to provide quick support to the various industries in the region. That begins with convening a leadership team to work on developing career pathways information sheets for the eight Priority Industries. ¶
"A Leadership Team (WIOA Project Manager or Administrative Entity designee [Lead], SAWDB Chair [or appointed representative], WIOA Administrator, and One-Stop Operator) will identify entry points, recruitment strategies, career ladders, and lattices. Industry leaders will be involved in the design process of the career pathways system."¶
Underscoring this work is the understanding that central to developing career pathways information sheets is the simultaneous development of training programs that provide community members with the training necessary to participate in the eight priority industries. The Leadership Team will develop and disseminate career information sheets for each industry throughout the region. The information sheets will provide information on the education needed for the careers in that industry, the available hands-on experience, the particular careers in that field, and possible salaries. ¶
Partners and educational providers will be encouraged to post a link to the career pathways webpage and provide hardcopy career information sheets to the public and their staff. ¶
After developing the Initial Career Strategies information sheets for all industries and producing and disseminating information, work can then begin on the new Sector Strategies approach that will result in Career Pathways for the first two priority industries (... [34]

OPERATIONAL ELEMENTS

A. Local Workforce System Structure

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

Geographical Workforce Development Area

The Southwestern Workforce Investment Region comprises seven counties: Catron, Doña Ana, Grant, Hidalgo, Luna, Sierra, and Socorro. The region shares a border with Arizona, Texas, and Mexico.

Agriculture, including chile production, and copper mining, provide many jobs in this area. Military installments such as White Sands Missile Range and NASA also provide many jobs, as does the growing Border Industrial Area (BIA) along the border with Mexico. The Santa Teresa industrial area has become a significant employment and economic center for the region. New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, New Mexico State University, and Western New Mexico University are also important sources of employment in the region.

Tourist attractions include Gila, Cibola, and Apache National Forests; several state parks; Elephant Butte Lake; the Town of Mesilla; and Truth or Consequences and their hot mineral springs.

Major Communities

1. Catron County is a very rural county located in western New Mexico. Catron County is the largest county by area, with 6,928 square miles. More than half of Catron County's land comprises parts of three national forests (Gila, Cibola, and Apache). Government is the largest employing sector, with local schools and the U.S. Forest Service providing many opportunities. Agriculture is also important to the local economy, particularly cattle ranching and the timber industry. The Village of Reserve in western Catron County is situated in the Gila National Forest about 15 miles east of the Arizona border. Reserve is the largest community in Catron County with two grocery stores, a hardware store, a few restaurants, bar, fairgrounds, and a health clinic covering just over half a square mile.

The 2020 Census data for Catron County, New Mexico, provides essential insights that will inform the initiatives the SAWDB drives in its Local Plan and the implementation of

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Deleted: as well as the more than 100 industries located in the Border Industrial Area (BIA) along the border with Mexico, where over 500 jobs (and growing) are located...

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the WIOA. Below is an overview of key data points from the 2020 Census and their relevance to the SAWDB's strategic priorities.

Catron County, New Mexico - 2020 Census Data:

Population:

- **Total Population:** Approximately 3,579
- **Population Change:** The population has remained relatively stable, with some fluctuations typical of rural areas.

Age Distribution:

- **Median Age:** 59.9 years, one of the highest in the state, indicating a significantly aging population.
- **Youth (Under 18):** About 13% of the population.
- **Seniors (65 and over):** Nearly 40%, reflecting a large senior population.

Racial and Ethnic Composition:

- **White (Non-Hispanic):** 82%
- **Hispanic or Latino:** 16%
- **Native American:** 1%
- **Other Races:** 1%

Economic Indicators:

- **Median Household Income:** \$32,674, below both state and national averages.
- **Poverty Rate:** Approximately 20%, higher than the national average.
- **Educational Attainment:** About 23% of the population has a bachelor's degree or higher, slightly above some rural counties but still below state averages.

Employment and Industry:

- **Primary Industries:** Agriculture, ranching, and forestry are dominant, along with small-scale tourism related to the Gila National Forest.
- **Unemployment Rate:** Historically low but largely due to a lack of a formal job market, with many residents engaged in self-employment or informal work.

Key Insights for Workforce Development

Support for an Aging Population and Workforce:

- **Initiative:** With nearly 40% of the population aged 65 or older, the SAWDB will focus on supporting the aging workforce. This includes initiatives to help seniors transition into part-time work, remote work, or volunteering roles that keep them engaged and financially stable.

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- **Monitoring:** The SAWDB will track participation rates in programs for older workers, job retention rates for seniors, and the success of initiatives designed to engage this demographic in the workforce.

Youth Retention and Engagement:

- **Initiative:** The relatively low percentage of youth (13%) suggests a need to focus on retaining young people in the county. The SAWDB will implement initiatives that provide career pathways in local industries, apprenticeships, and educational opportunities that encourage youth to stay and contribute to the local economy.
- **Monitoring:** Success in this area will be measured by youth participation in workforce development programs, the number of apprenticeships created, and the retention rate of young people in the county.

Economic Diversification and Small Business Support:

- **Initiative:** Given the county's reliance on agriculture, ranching, and tourism, there will be a focus on diversifying the economy. The SAWDB will promote small business development, particularly in areas like eco-tourism, sustainable agriculture, and remote work opportunities. Encouraging entrepreneurship in these sectors will be key.
- **Monitoring:** The SAWDB will track the number of new businesses started, the growth of existing businesses, job creation in diversified industries, and the effectiveness of entrepreneurship support programs.

Educational Attainment and Workforce Training:

- **Initiative:** To address the gap in higher education and workforce readiness, the SAWDB will likely focus on increasing access to post-secondary education and vocational training. Partnerships with community colleges, online education providers, and local organizations will provide more educational opportunities tailored to the needs of the county.
- **Monitoring:** Success will be evaluated by tracking increases in educational attainment, certification completions, and the translation of these credentials into local job placements.

Addressing Poverty and Economic Mobility:

- **Initiative:** The relatively high poverty rate indicates a need for targeted interventions to improve economic mobility. Workforce development efforts will include financial literacy programs, support for low-income individuals in accessing training and education, and assistance in overcoming barriers to employment such as transportation and childcare.

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- **Monitoring:** The SAWDB will monitor changes in poverty rates, income growth among participants in workforce programs, and the overall economic impact of these initiatives on low-income populations.

Cultural and Community Engagement:

- **Initiative:** While Catron County has a less diverse population, it's important that workforce development programs are inclusive and culturally sensitive. The SAWDB will ensure that initiatives are accessible to all residents, including the small Hispanic or Latino population.
- **Monitoring:** The SAWDB will track participation and outcomes across different demographic groups to ensure equity in access and success in workforce development programs.

The 2020 Census data for Catron County highlights several key areas where the SAWDB can focus its efforts under its Local Plan and WIOA. By addressing the needs of an aging population, engaging youth, promoting economic diversification, improving educational attainment, and supporting low-income residents, the SAWDB can drive initiatives that foster a more resilient and sustainable economy in Catron County. Monitoring these initiatives through specific metrics will ensure that the SAWDB can adjust strategies as needed to meet the community's evolving needs.

2. Doña Ana County – Doña Ana County's economy is supported by its agricultural base, New Mexico State University, and a developing urban area. Las Cruces is the largest city in the county and the second largest in New Mexico, spanning approximately 77 square miles. Located approximately 20 miles north of the Texas state border, Las Cruces sits where I-25 stems from I-10 and is the center of the Mesilla Valley. Bisected by the Rio Grande, the Mesilla Valley boasts fertile land, contributing to the growth of pecans, cotton, chile, onions, corn, and wine-producing grapes. Major employers for Las Cruces residents include Las Cruces Public Schools, City of Las Cruces, Doña Ana County Government, New Mexico State University, two hospitals, and U.S Government jobs at White Sands Missile Range and NASA.

Population and Demographics

Total Population: Approximately 219,561 residents.

Age Distribution:

- **Under 18 years:** 24.5%
- **18 to 64 years:** 60.7%
- **65 years and over:** 14.8%
- **Gender:** Roughly 49.7% male and 50.3% female.

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Relevance: A significant percentage of the 18-64 age group population represents a substantial potential workforce. Workforce development programs under WIOA can target these working-age individuals, primarily focusing on youth (under 18 transitioning to work or post-secondary education) and older workers who may need reskilling.

Race and Ethnicity

- **Hispanic or Latino:** 67.8% of the population.
- **White (Non-Hispanic):** 27.5%
- **Other Races and Ethnicities:** Includes African American (1.5%), Native American (1.4%), Asian (1.1%), and others (2.2%).

Relevance: Given the majority Hispanic or Latino population, WIOA initiatives should focus on culturally responsive programs, bilingual training, and support services to better serve this demographic. Outreach and engagement efforts need to be tailored to effectively reach and support these communities.

Housing and Households

- **Total Housing Units:** Approximately 84,164.
- **Occupied Housing Units:** 89.8% of total housing units.
- **Average Household Size:** 2.68 persons.
- **Homeownership Rate:** About 61.7%.

Relevance: Understanding housing stability is vital for workforce initiatives. For instance, programs that increase economic mobility might consider partnerships with housing organizations to address barriers that low homeownership or unstable housing can create.

Economic Indicators

- **Median Household Income:** Approximately \$42,759.
- **Poverty Rate:** About 21.4% of the population is living below the poverty line.
- **Unemployment Rate:** 6.5% (as of the 2020 Census data).

Relevance: The high poverty and unemployment rates highlight a need for targeted WIOA programs focused on job training, upskilling, and career pathways that lead to higher-wage jobs. There is an opportunity to leverage WIOA funds for initiatives that support in-demand sectors and provide pathways out of poverty.

Education

- **High School Graduate or Higher:** 83.4% of residents aged 25 and older.
- **Bachelor's Degree or Higher:** 24.1% of residents aged 25 and older.

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Relevance: WIOA programs in Doña Ana County can focus on bridging the education gap by offering GED programs, adult basic education, and post-secondary transition services. Emphasizing partnerships with local educational institutions, such as community colleges, to offer targeted training and certification programs aligned with local labor market needs is critical.

Key Insights for Workforce Development

- **Targeted Programs for Diverse Needs:** With a high percentage of the population being Hispanic or Latino, WIOA programs must include bilingual and culturally competent training materials, leveraging programs like Linguistica for language services.
- **Addressing Economic Barriers:** With a considerable proportion of the population living in poverty, WIOA initiatives should focus on wraparound services—such as transportation assistance, childcare, and career counseling—to address barriers that may prevent individuals from accessing training and employment.
- **Focus on High-Growth Sectors:** The SAWDB will prioritize sectors showing growth potential, such as healthcare, education, logistics, and skilled trades, by aligning training programs to meet employer needs in these fields.
- **Collaboration with Local Entities:** Strengthening partnerships with local economic development agencies, chambers of commerce, community colleges, and social service providers will enhance the effectiveness of workforce initiatives. Braiding funding and resources can support more comprehensive approaches to workforce development.

For Doña Ana County, the 2020 Census data points to a need for targeted, culturally competent, and barrier-removing WIOA initiatives that respond to the region's unique demographic and economic characteristics. By aligning these initiatives with local labor market demands and providing supportive services, the SAWDB can foster a more inclusive and robust workforce development strategy that benefits both residents and employers in the Southwestern region.

3. Grant County covers 3,966 square miles. Home to Western New Mexico University, the Town of Silver City is located near the center of Grant County and spans approximately 10 square miles. Located 3 miles east of the Continental Divide, Silver City was founded as a mining town rich in silver, gold, copper, lead, and zinc. Mining opportunities dwindled over the years and Freeport-McMoRan is now the primary employer for mining operations. Gila Regional Medical Center and Hidalgo Medical Services are two major healthcare employers, with Western New Mexico University (WNMU) the major education employer. Local tourist attractions include Silver City, Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monument and City of Rocks State Park.

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Grant County, New Mexico - 2020 Census Data:

Population:

- **Total Population:** Approximately 27,135.
- **Population Change:** A slight decline from the 2010 Census, reflecting broader trends of rural depopulation.

Age Distribution:

- **Median Age:** 47.1 years, significantly higher than the national median age, indicating an aging population.
- **Youth (Under 18):** Around 18% of the population, lower than the national average.
- **Seniors (65 and over):** About 26%, significantly higher than the national average.

Racial and Ethnic Composition:

- **White (Non-Hispanic):** 44%
- **Hispanic or Latino:** 51%
- **Native American:** 2%
- **Other Races:** 3%

Economic Indicators:

- **Median Household Income:** \$39,213, lower than the state and national averages.
- **Poverty Rate:** Approximately 19%, higher than the national average.
- **Educational Attainment:** About 21% have a bachelor's degree or higher, which is slightly below the state average.

Key Insights for Workforce Development

Aging Population and Workforce:

- The high median age and a large proportion of seniors suggest a shrinking workforce and a growing need for healthcare services and retirement planning.
- Workforce strategies must focus on retraining older workers and supporting industries that cater to the aging population, such as healthcare.

Youth Engagement:

- With a lower percentage of youth, engaging with this demographic is necessary to prevent outmigration and build a sustainable local workforce.
- WIOA programs will target youth for training in high-demand sectors, apprenticeships, and career pathways that encourage them to stay and work locally.

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Economic Disparities:

- The lower median income and higher poverty rate indicate economic challenges requiring targeted workforce development.
- The Local Plan will emphasize creating job opportunities in high-growth sectors, improving access to education and training, and supporting entrepreneurship.

Educational Attainment:

- The slightly lower rate of higher education attainment suggests a need for expanding access to post-secondary education and vocational training.
- WIOA can support this through partnerships with local colleges, adult education programs, and career technical education (CTE) initiatives.

Ethnic Diversity:

- The high percentage of Hispanic or Latino residents requires culturally responsive workforce programs.
- Bilingual training programs, outreach in Spanish, and support for minority-owned businesses will be key components of the Local Plan.

The 2020 Census data for Grant County highlights demographic and economic trends critical for informing the strategic direction of workforce development initiatives in Southwestern New Mexico. Addressing the challenges of an aging population, engaging youth, and improving economic outcomes through education and targeted support will be essential for the success of the WIOA programs and the broader Local Plan.

4. Hidalgo County covers 3,446 square miles. The largest employing industries are public administration, retail, accommodation and food services, and agriculture. The county has a very small population, and many of its residents are employed by city and county government entities. At approximately 8.4 square miles, the City of Lordsburg is known as a rest stop for travelers. To New Mexicans, Lordsburg is the birthplace of the New Mexico state song. Located in northern Hidalgo County, Lordsburg is situated on I-10 where it intersects with Hwy 70 and is about 20 minutes from the Arizona state border.

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Deleted: According to the USDA's 2009 Agricultural Statistics Bulletin, Hidalgo County ranked third among all New Mexico counties for chile production, behind Doña Ana and Luna Counties.

Hidalgo County, New Mexico - 2020 Census Data:

Population:

- **Total Population:** Approximately 4,178.
- **Population Change:** The population has been relatively stable but has experienced some decline over the past decade, reflecting broader rural depopulation trends.

Age Distribution:

- **Median Age:** 47.6 years, indicating an aging population.
- **Youth (Under 18):** Approximately 21% of the population.
- **Seniors (65 and over):** Around 25%, highlighting a significant senior population.

Racial and Ethnic Composition:

- **White (Non-Hispanic):** 39%
- **Hispanic or Latino:** Approximately 57%
- **Native American:** 1%
- **Other Races:** 3%

Economic Indicators:

- **Median Household Income:** \$31,563, below the state and national averages.
- **Poverty Rate:** Approximately 24%, significantly higher than the national average.
- **Educational Attainment:** Around 18% of the population has a bachelor's degree or higher, slightly below the state average.

Employment and Industry:

- **Primary Industries:** Agriculture, mining, and services dominate the local economy. Hidalgo County is known for its cattle ranching, farming, and mining operations, particularly in copper and other minerals.
- **Unemployment Rate:** Historically fluctuating, often reflecting the economic volatility in primary industries like agriculture and mining.

Aging Population and Workforce Development:

- The high median age and significant senior population suggest a shrinking labor force, with challenges in retaining younger workers.
- Workforce strategies will focus on retraining older workers, addressing skills gaps, and creating opportunities for younger residents to remain in the county through education, training, and employment initiatives.

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Youth Engagement:

- With over 20% of the population under 18, there is an opportunity to engage youth early in workforce development.
- WIOA programs will target youth through career counseling, apprenticeships, and training in high-demand fields to ensure they have viable career paths within the county, reducing the outmigration of young talent.

Economic Diversification:

- The county's reliance on agriculture and mining makes it vulnerable to economic fluctuations.
- The Local Plan will include strategies to diversify the local economy by promoting small business development, attracting new industries, and supporting entrepreneurial initiatives. WIOA funding can assist in retraining workers from declining industries into emerging sectors.

Support for Hispanic and Latino Populations:

- With a majority Hispanic or Latino population, workforce development programs must be culturally sensitive and accessible.
- Bilingual training programs, outreach, and services tailored to this community can enhance participation and success rates in WIOA initiatives.

Addressing Poverty and Low-Income Levels:

- The high poverty rate and low median household income require targeted interventions to improve economic outcomes.
- Workforce development efforts will focus on increasing access to education and training for higher-paying jobs, improving financial literacy, and offering support for individuals seeking to start or expand businesses in the county.

Educational Attainment and Workforce Readiness:

- The relatively low educational attainment levels highlight the need for programs that enhance access to higher education and vocational training.
- The Local Plan will emphasize partnerships with local educational institutions to provide training in critical skills that align with the county's economic needs, including agriculture technology, mining safety, and renewable energy.

The 2020 Census data for Hidalgo County underscores the importance of tailored workforce development strategies to meet the community's specific needs. The SAWDB's Local Plan should prioritize economic diversification, support for aging workers, engagement with youth, and targeted programs for the Hispanic and Latino population. Through the effective use of WIOA programs, the SAWDB can address the

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challenges of poverty, unemployment, and low educational attainment, fostering a more resilient and sustainable local economy.

5. Luna County – Economic drivers include agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism with alfalfa, chile, cotton, corn, and pecans representing the bulk of its agricultural production. Food manufacturing employs many workers to process agricultural output. Luna County is home to an international port of entry located three miles south of the village of Columbus. Tourist attractions include Pancho Villa State Park, Rockhound State Park, the Deming Luna Mimbres Museum, and several ghost towns. At just under 17 square miles, the City of Deming sits on I-10 at quite the intersection. Deming is one hour east of Lordsburg, one hour west of Las Cruces, 1 hour south of Silver City, and approximately 35 minutes north of Mexico. Among a variety of businesses, Deming has a municipal airport, hospital, and golf course. The City of Deming, Deming Public Schools, and the U.S. Border Patrol are among the largest employers.

Luna County, New Mexico - 2020 Census Data:

Population:

- **Total Population:** Approximately 23,709.
- **Population Change:** The county has seen fluctuations, with some population decline reflective of broader rural trends.

Age Distribution:

- **Median Age:** 38.6 years, slightly lower than the national average, indicating a relatively younger population compared to some other rural areas.
- **Youth (Under 18):** Around 25% of the population, indicating a significant proportion of young people.
- **Seniors (65 and over):** About 20%, showing a substantial aging population as well.

Racial and Ethnic Composition:

- **White (Non-Hispanic):** 23%
- **Hispanic or Latino:** Approximately 67%
- **Native American:** 1%
- **Other Races:** 9%

Economic Indicators:

- **Median Household Income:** \$28,929, significantly lower than state and national averages.
- **Poverty Rate:** Approximately 30%, one of the highest in the state.

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- Unemployment Rate: Historically high, often exceeding state and national averages.
- **Educational Attainment:** Around 13% of residents have a bachelor's degree or higher, lower than the state average.

Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Population:

- Luna County has a significant population of migrant and seasonal farmworkers due to its agricultural economy, particularly in chile peppers, onions, and other crops.
- Many farmworkers are from Hispanic or Latino backgrounds, with a considerable number being immigrants or first-generation residents.

Key Insights for Workforce Development

Highest Unemployment Rate in New Mexico:

- The high unemployment rate, coupled with the low median income, indicates a need for robust job creation strategies.
- The Local Plan should focus on diversifying the local economy, increasing access to training in high-demand sectors, and providing support for job seekers, particularly those transitioning from seasonal work to more stable employment.

Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Support:

- WIOA programs should prioritize services for migrant and seasonal farmworkers, who often face unique barriers, such as language barriers, limited access to education, and employment instability.
- Programs will include ESL (English as a Second Language) training, job placement services, and assistance with transitioning into non-seasonal work.

Youth Engagement and Educational Support:

- With a significant proportion of the population under 18, it's crucial to develop programs that prevent youth from falling into cycles of poverty and unemployment.
- The Local Plan should include initiatives like apprenticeships, vocational training, and early career counseling targeted at young people.

Addressing Economic Disparities:

- The high poverty rate requires targeted interventions to improve economic outcomes. Workforce development programs under WIOA can include financial literacy, small business support, and initiatives promoting entrepreneurship, particularly in underrepresented communities.

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Cultural and Language Accessibility:

- Given the high percentage of Hispanic or Latino residents, including many migrant farmworkers, workforce programs must be culturally and linguistically accessible.
- Bilingual services, outreach efforts tailored to the Hispanic community, and collaboration with local organizations serving these populations will be essential.

The 2020 Census data for Luna County highlights the region's significant challenges and opportunities for workforce development. Addressing the high unemployment rate, supporting the migrant and seasonal farmworker population, and improving access to education and training will be key elements of a successful Local Plan and WIOA strategy for Southwestern New Mexico. Programs must be tailored to meet the needs of a diverse population, with a focus on economic empowerment, job stability, and reducing poverty. To help address accessibility and language barriers, the SAWDB recently invested in website accessibility software. The Recite Me cloud-based technology toolbar makes the website digitally inclusive. Visitors can listen and learn the content in many forms or languages that work best for them.

6. Sierra County covers 4,180 square miles. Sierra County's main economic drivers are agriculture, healthcare, tourism, and aerospace. Spaceport America is located near Upham, east of Truth or Consequences, and supports aerospace, research, testing, and tourism activities. The agriculture industry consists primarily of cattle ranching. Healthcare industry employers include Sierra Vista Hospital, New Mexico State Veterans' Home, Ben Archer Health Center, and Sierra Health Care Center. Local tourist attractions include Elephant Butte Lake and State Park, the Gila National Wilderness, Caballo Lake State Park, Percha Dam State Park, several museums and ghost towns, and the mineral baths located in Truth or Consequences. Major communities include the cities of Elephant Butte and Truth or Consequences and the Village of Williamsburg. Major employers include the City of Truth or Consequences, Sierra County, the hospital, and the New Mexico State Veterans' Home.

Sierra County, New Mexico - 2020 Census Data Overview:

Population:

- Total Population:** Approximately 10,094.
- Population Trend:** A decline in population, reflecting rural depopulation trends common in the region.

Age Distribution:

- Median Age:** 59.3 years, indicating a significantly aging population.

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- **Youth (Under 18):** Approximately 12% of the population.
- **Seniors (65 and over):** Around 37%, highlighting a large senior population.

Racial and Ethnic Composition:

- **White (Non-Hispanic):** 77%
- **Hispanic or Latino:** 20%
- **Native American:** 1%
- **Other Races:** 2%

Economic Indicators:

- **Median Household Income:** \$31,128, significantly below state and national averages.
- **Poverty Rate:** Approximately 27%, higher than the national average.
- **Educational Attainment:** Around 19% of the population has a bachelor's degree or higher, slightly below state averages.

Employment and Industry:

- **Primary Industries:** Tourism (driven by attractions like Elephant Butte Lake), healthcare, retail, and agriculture.
- **Unemployment Rate:** Fluctuates, often higher than the state average, partly due to the seasonal nature of the tourism industry.

Key Insights for Workforce Development

Aging Workforce and Senior Employment:

- **Initiatives:** With 37% of the population aged 65 or older, the SAWDB will prioritize programs that support senior employment and engagement. This may include part-time job opportunities, remote work options, and volunteering programs that leverage the experience of older residents.
- **WIOA Relevance:** Aligning WIOA programs, including job training and employment services specifically designed for older workers, helping them remain active in the workforce.

Youth Engagement and Retention:

- **Initiatives:** With only 12% of the population under 18, there is a critical need to engage and retain young people. Initiatives may include creating career pathways through partnerships with local schools, offering apprenticeships, and focusing on industries like healthcare and renewable energy that can provide sustainable employment opportunities.

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- **WIOA Relevance:** WIOA funds will support youth training programs, internships, and career counseling services, ensuring that young residents have access to local job opportunities and are incentivized to stay in the area.

Economic Diversification and Small Business Development:

- **Initiatives:** Sierra County's reliance on tourism suggests the need for economic diversification. The SAWDB will promote small business development in sectors like sustainable agriculture, renewable energy, and niche tourism. Supporting local entrepreneurs through training and financial assistance will be crucial.
- **WIOA Relevance:** WIOA resources will be directed toward entrepreneurial training, apprenticeship, internship, business development workshops, and workforce readiness programs that support the growth of diverse industries, reducing the county's economic dependency on seasonal tourism.

Poverty Reduction and Economic Mobility:

- **Initiatives:** Addressing the high poverty rate is a priority. The SAWDB will ensure focus on job training programs that lead to higher-paying employment, financial literacy education, and initiatives that reduce barriers to employment, such as transportation and childcare support.
- **WIOA Relevance:** WIOA partners can fund targeted job training programs, support services for low-income individuals, and initiatives designed to increase economic mobility, directly addressing the high poverty levels in Sierra County.

Educational Attainment and Workforce Training:

- **Initiatives:** To improve educational attainment, the SAWDB will expand access to higher education and vocational training tailored to local industry needs. This will involve partnerships with community colleges, online education platforms, and industry-specific training providers.
- **WIOA Relevance:** Braided funds can be used to enhance workforce training programs, increase the availability of certifications, and provide educational opportunities that directly correlate with local job market demands.

Tourism and Hospitality Workforce Development:

- **Initiatives:** Given the importance of tourism, initiatives will focus on improving the skills of workers in the hospitality sector, such as customer service training, management development, and digital marketing.
- **WIOA Relevance:** WIOA core partners can support training programs specific to the tourism and hospitality sectors, helping workers develop skills that enhance the quality of services provided, ultimately boosting the local economy.

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The 2020 Census data for Sierra County highlights several critical areas where the SAWDB can focus its efforts under WIOA and its Local Plan. Initiatives addressing the aging population, youth engagement, economic diversification, poverty reduction, educational attainment, and tourism workforce development are essential for fostering a resilient and sustainable economy in Sierra County. By aligning these initiatives with WIOA resources, the SAWDB can effectively meet the workforce needs of the community and support long-term economic growth.

7. Socorro County covers 6,646 square miles. The New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology is the major employer in the area, and it supports other entities in the professional and technical services sector, including the National Radio Astronomy Observatory. The healthcare industry includes employees at Socorro General Hospital, Socorro Good Samaritan Village, Socorro Community Health Center, Presbyterian Medical Services, and Magdalena Area Health Center. Agriculture in this area consists of small farming communities along the Rio Grande. A major tourist attraction is the Bosque Del Apache National Wildlife Refuge. There are also a variety of museums and outdoor hiking, biking, and wildlife viewing opportunities. The City of Socorro sits right off I-25 and spans more than 14 square miles.

Socorro County, New Mexico - 2020 Census Data Overview:

Population:

- **Total Population:** Approximately 16,595.
- **Population Trend:** Slightly declining, reflecting broader rural depopulation trends in the region.

Age Distribution:

- **Median Age:** 37.5 years, younger than many rural counties in New Mexico, indicating a more balanced age distribution.
- **Youth (Under 18):** Around 23% of the population.
- **Seniors (65 and over):** About 18%, reflecting a moderate aging population.

Racial and Ethnic Composition:

- **White (Non-Hispanic):** 45%
- **Hispanic or Latino:** 50%
- **Native American:** 4%
- **Other Races:** 1%

Economic Indicators:

- **Median Household Income:** \$35,040, below both state and national averages.

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- **Poverty Rate:** Approximately 24%, higher than the national average.
- **Educational Attainment:** Around 23% of the population has a bachelor's degree or higher, slightly above some rural counties but still below the state average.

Employment and Industry:

- **Primary Industries:** Education (due to New Mexico Tech), government services, retail, agriculture, and mining.
- **Unemployment Rate:** Historically higher than state and national averages, influenced by the economic structure and reliance on a few key sectors.

Key Insights for Workforce Development

Youth Engagement and Educational Pathways:

- **Initiatives:** With 23% of the population under 18 and the presence of New Mexico Tech, a key focus will be on creating educational pathways that retain youth in the county. This might include partnerships with New Mexico Tech for STEM-focused programs, internships, and apprenticeships in emerging fields like technology and engineering.
- **WIOA Relevance:** The WIOA One-Stop system can support these efforts by offering career counseling, workforce training, and job placement services for youth, particularly in high-demand industries that align with local educational resources.

Support for a Diverse Workforce:

- **Initiatives:** The county's diverse population, with 50% identifying as Hispanic or Latino, suggests the need for culturally responsive workforce programs. The SAWDB will focus on bilingual education, targeted outreach, and support services that address the unique barriers faced by Hispanic and Native American communities.
- **WIOA Relevance:** The One-Stop system can ensure that services are accessible to all residents, offering language support, culturally relevant training programs, and resources that promote inclusivity in the workforce.

Economic Diversification and Small Business Support:

- **Initiatives:** Socorro County's economy relies heavily on education, government services, and agriculture, necessitating a push for diversification. The SAWDB will support small business development in sectors like renewable energy, technology (leveraging New Mexico Tech), and value-added agriculture.

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- **WIOA Relevance:** WIOA funds can be directed toward entrepreneurial training, small business development programs, and workforce training in emerging industries, helping to create a more resilient local economy.

Poverty Reduction and Economic Mobility:

- **Initiatives:** With a poverty rate of 24%, the SAWDB will focus on initiatives aimed at lifting residents out of poverty. This will involve job training programs that lead to higher-paying jobs, financial literacy education, and support for low-income families to access education and employment opportunities.
- **WIOA Relevance:** The One-Stop system can provide comprehensive services that address barriers to employment, such as transportation, childcare, and access to education, ensuring that all residents have the tools they need to achieve economic mobility.

Educational Attainment and Workforce Training:

- **Initiatives:** The SAWDB will focus on increasing access to higher education and vocational training, particularly in industries critical to the county's economy, such as education, technology, and agriculture. Collaboration with New Mexico Tech and other educational institutions will be key.
- **WIOA Relevance:** WIOA can fund training programs that align with local industry needs, providing certifications and credentials that lead to direct employment. The One-Stop system can also offer continuous education and upskilling opportunities for the existing workforce.

Support for Agriculture and Mining Industries:

- **Initiatives:** Given the importance of agriculture and mining, the SAWDB will develop specialized training programs focusing on modernizing these industries, introducing sustainable practices, and improving safety and efficiency.
- **WIOA Relevance:** WIOA resources can offer training that enhances workers' skills in these sectors, ensuring that they are equipped to meet modern industry demands and improving job security in these traditional industries.

Leveraging New Mexico Tech for Workforce Development:

- **Initiatives:** New Mexico Tech is a significant asset, and the SAWDB will focus on leveraging this institution for workforce development. Initiatives might include partnerships for research and development projects, workforce training programs aligned with technological advancements, and internships that prepare students for local employment.
- **WIOA Relevance:** The One-Stop system can play a key role in connecting students and graduates with local employers, ensuring that the skills developed

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at New Mexico Tech are utilized within the county, contributing to local economic growth.

The 2020 Census data for Socorro County underscores several strategic areas where the SAWDB can focus its efforts. By engaging youth, supporting a diverse workforce, promoting economic diversification, reducing poverty, enhancing educational attainment, and supporting key industries, the SAWDB can drive initiatives that align with the WIOA One-Stop system. These efforts will be critical in fostering a resilient and sustainable economy in Socorro County, ensuring all residents have access to the resources and opportunities needed to thrive.

Workforce
Southwestern New Mexico's workforce, spanning Catron, Doña Ana, Grant, Hidalgo, Luna, Sierra, and Socorro Counties, is characterized by diverse industries and unique regional challenges. Doña Ana County, the largest in the region, benefits from the presence of New Mexico State University (NMSU) and key employers like White Sands Missile Range and major healthcare providers. The county's workforce development efforts focus on aligning educational programs with local industry needs, particularly in healthcare, technology, and agriculture, leveraging NMSU's resources for training and upskilling.

In Luna and Hidalgo Counties, agriculture is a dominant industry, with significant employment in farming and related sectors. These counties also face challenges like high unemployment rates and a large migrant and seasonal farmworker population. Workforce development initiatives in these areas focus on supporting the agricultural workforce through targeted training, language services, and efforts to diversify the economy to reduce reliance on seasonal employment.

Grant and Socorro Counties have economies shaped by mining, education, and government services. Grant County's workforce is heavily influenced by Freeport-McMoRan and Western New Mexico University (WNMU), while Socorro County benefits from the presence of New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology (New Mexico Tech). Workforce development strategies in these counties emphasize industry-specific training, particularly in mining and technology, and leveraging educational institutions for workforce development.

Smaller counties like Sierra and Catron face challenges related to aging populations and limited economic diversity. Sierra County's economy is driven by tourism and healthcare, while Catron County relies on ranching and small-scale farming. Workforce development efforts in these areas focus on supporting traditional industries, promoting small business development, and addressing the needs of an aging workforce through

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reskilling and flexible work options. Across all counties, the SAWDB's initiatives aim to build a more resilient and sustainable workforce that meets the needs of both employers and workers.

Regional Employers

Large Employers in the Southwestern Area

The following is a list of employers in the Southwestern Region identified by NM JOBS as having 100 or more employees.

Addus Homecare	Links of Life
Alamo Navajo School Board, Inc.	Memorial Medical Center
American Refrigeration Supplies	Mesilla Valley Hospital
City of Las Cruces	Mimbres Memorial Hospital
Doña Ana County	Mountain View Regional Medical Center
Fairfax Realty, Inc.	New Mexico State University
Fort Bayard Medical Center	New Mexico State Veterans Home
Freeport-McMoRan	NRAO Very Large Array
Gadsden Independent School District	Peak Behavioral Health
Gila Regional Medical Center	Physical Science Lab
House of Representatives NM	Quintana Learning Center
Keller Williams Realty, Inc.	RDD Field Service
Keystone Consolidated Industries	State of New Mexico
Laborers International Union	STS of New Mexico
Las Cruces Home Rehabilitation	United States Government Gila
Las Cruces Public Schools	Walmart
Lescombes Winery	White Sands Missile Range
Source: NM JOBS Online System Downloaded: 8/13/2026 4:50 PM	

The following table highlights the employers with the highest number of advertised job openings in the Southwestern Region. The data provide a current snapshot of employer demand and show that healthcare and public-sector employers are among the region's most active recruiters. These postings provide useful information for the workforce system to assess employer demand and align job-seeker services, training, and career pathways with available opportunities.

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Employers by Number of Job Openings

The table below shows the employers with the highest number of job openings advertised online in the Southwestern Region, NM, on August 1, 2026.

Rank	Employer Name	Job Openings
1	Addus HomeCare, Inc.	197
2	Community Health Systems, Inc.	148
3	Suppressed	108
4	MCI	103
5	La Clinica de Familia, Inc.	71
6	New Mexico State University	68
7	MountainView Regional Medical Center	65
8	Deming Public School District	63
9	Walmart Inc.	63
10	Presbyterian Healthcare Services	57

Source: Online advertised jobs data

Training and Educational Institutions

The SAWDB plans to continue to use the State's web-based eligible training provider lists. Prospective and current providers will access the applications to become eligible providers via the State website (<https://www.jobs.dws.nm.gov/>). Applications for training provider programs are also accessed using the same procedure. Eligible training providers will enter course information and performance information onto the state's website. All programs will be reviewed to make sure they have been identified as an occupation in demand for the Southwestern area.

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The following is a current list of Eligible Training Providers in the Southwestern Region.

<u>Eligible Training Providers</u>	
<u>The table below lists the eligible training providers located in the Southwestern Region of NM on August 1, 2026.</u>	
<u>Providers</u>	
1	<u>Doña Ana Community College of NMSU</u>
2	<u>FAMCo, Inc.</u>
3	<u>Glitz, Inc.</u>
4	<u>MANSCo</u>
5	<u>New Academy</u>
6	<u>New Mexico Dental Institute, Inc.</u>
7	<u>New Mexico State University</u>
8	<u>Pinnacle Institute</u>
9	<u>Prime Time CDL</u>
10	<u>Western New Mexico University</u>

Source: NM JOBS

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Major Educational Institutions

The largest educational institutions in the Southwestern region include Doña Ana Community College, the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, New Mexico State University, and Western New Mexico University.

Doña Ana Community College (DACC) is deeply committed to its mission of serving the educational needs of New Mexico's diverse populations through comprehensive academic and workforce programs.



The fourth largest institution of higher education in New Mexico, DACC has a total of 6 campuses in Anthony, Chaparral, Las Cruces, and Sunland Park in southern Doña Ana

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County. Established in 1973 to offer vocational training programs, today DACC is a leading community college that provides transformative educational opportunities that meet the transfer and workforce needs of Doña Ana County. With a focus on access, innovation, and excellence, DACC offers over one hundred degrees and certificates, adult education, specialized workforce training, and small business assistance. DACC alumni are academically and professionally skilled, valued by transfer institutions and industry leaders. In Fall 2025, the college enrolled more than 7,900 students, and in 2025, DACC awarded 1,415 degrees and certificates.
<https://dacc.nmsu.edu/>

New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology (NMT) in Socorro was established in 1889 and is a doctoral degree-granting research university focused on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STE²M). NMT offers associate, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in science and engineering, along with programs in technical communication and technology-oriented management. The university provides students with opportunities for hands-on learning and research, with more than 1,600 students pursuing a STEM education. NMT research portfolio includes materials science, energy, cybersecurity, and other fields. NM Tech reports that 94% of its students are employed within one year after graduation.
<https://www.nmt.edu/>



New Mexico State University (NMSU) has a 900-acre main campus and enrolls more than 15,000 students. NMSU is a NASA Space-Grant College and home to the very first Honors College in New Mexico. NMSU serves a multicultural population of students and community members across the state at four campuses, a satellite learning center in Albuquerque, Cooperative Extension offices located in each of New Mexico's 33 counties, and 12 agricultural research and science centers. NMSU offers more than 80 majors and maintains a 16-to-1 student-to-faculty ratio. NMSU's programs include business, management, marketing, engineering, agriculture, healthcare, education, and many other fields.
<https://www.nmsu.edu/>



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Western New Mexico University (WNMU) in Silver City was established in 1893 and its main campus spans 83 acres. WNMU offers more than 70 fields of study, from accounting to zoology, including fully online bachelor's and master's degree programs. As an open-access Hispanic-Serving Institution, WNMU combines a liberal arts foundation with professional programs and career and technical preparation. More than 3,500 students attend WNMU's campuses and are enrolled online, and the university awards approximately 500 degrees each year. <https://wnmu.edu/>



WESTERN NEW MEXICO UNIVERSITY

Population

U.S. Census Bureau estimates show that Doña Ana County has the largest population in the Southwestern Region, with an estimated 229,366 residents in 2024. The following table provides the estimated population of each county and identifies the largest community within each county.

Population by County

The table below shows the estimated population of each county and its largest community in the Southwestern Region, NM, in 2024.

County	2024 Estimated Population	Largest Community
Catron	3,795	Village of Reserve
Doña Ana	229,366	City of Las Cruces
Grant	27,541	Town of Silver City
Hidalgo	3,966	City of Lordsburg
Luna	25,878	City of Deming
Sierra	11,389	Truth or Consequences
Socorro	15,967	City of Socorro

Source: US Census Bureau Estimates via NM JOBS

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www.wnmu.edu/about/

<object>Doña Ana Community College (DACC) has a total of 6 campuses in Anthony, Chaparral, Las Cruces, and Sunland Park in southern Doña Ana County. Originating as a trade school in 1973, DACC is now a higher education institution graduating highly skilled professionals ready for today's workforce. They have 44 associate degrees and 55 certificate programs and produced 1,055 graduates in the 2020 school year. <https://dacc.nmsu.edu/>

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Relevant Growth Trends

Employment projections for the Southwestern Region indicate continued growth across several major industries between 2024 and 2034. Health Care and Social Assistance has the highest projected employment and the largest projected increase in employment among the industries shown. Other industries with substantial projected employment growth include Accommodation and Food Services, Education Services, Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services, Construction, and Retail Trade.

The projections also indicate continued employment opportunities in Local Government and Transportation and Warehousing, while Manufacturing is projected to experience more modest growth. Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting is the only industry among the ten shown with a projected decline in employment over the projection period.

These projections provide important information for the workforce system and its partners when identifying training and career pathway opportunities. Aligning workforce development activities with industries experiencing employment growth can help prepare job seekers for available opportunities while supporting employers' need for skilled workers throughout the Southwestern Region.

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The agriculture sector, long a staple of the state's economy, continues to grow, particularly in regions known for farming onions, chile, apples, and pecans. With new technology and sustainable farming practices being introduced, agriculture remains a steady provider of jobs in rural areas. This growth is further supplemented by the rise of cannabis agriculture, which has emerged as a dynamic new field since the legalization of recreational cannabis in New Mexico. Cannabis farming has created opportunities not just in cultivation but also in processing, distribution, and retail, bringing significant job creation to rural and urban areas.

Deleted: Meanwhile, the film industry has experienced a substantial boom in New Mexico due to state-backed tax incentives that make the region an attractive location for production companies. The construction of a new film studio in Las Cruces, paired with these incentives, has drawn significant productions to the area. The film industry's growth multiplies various trades, with high demand for skilled workers in carpentry, plumbing, set design, and other technical jobs supporting film production. These developments position the film industry as a major future employer in New Mexico, further diversifying the state's economy and offering various career pathways.¶

As these industries expand, the workforce system and its partners strategically align their resources to ensure training and career pathway opportunities are available to meet the growing demand for skilled workers in agriculture, cannabis cultivation, and the film industry. Through programs supported by the one-stop system, job seekers can access training and certifications that prepare them for in-demand roles, ensuring that New Mexico's workforce remains competitive in these fast-evolving industries.

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The following chart reflects the industries with the highest projected annual employment in the workforce region for the next eight years.

Industries with the Highest Projected Employment						
The table below shows the industries with the highest projected employment in the Southwestern Region from 2024–2034.						
Rank	Industry	Estimated Employment	Projected Employment	Total Employment Change	Annual % Change	Total % Change
1	Health Care and Social Assistance	21,357	23,312	1,955	0.88%	9.15%
2	Educational Services	15,201	16,030	829	0.53%	5.45%
3	Total Government (Projections)	13,388	13,831	443	0.33%	3.31%
4	Accommodation and Food Services	10,856	12,007	1,151	1.01%	10.60%
5	Retail Trade	11,455	11,812	357	0.31%	3.12%
6	Construction	5,555	6,070	515	0.89%	9.27%
7	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	5,061	5,637	576	1.08%	11.38%
8	Manufacturing	4,199	4,343	144	0.34%	3.43%
9	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	3,515	3,219	-296	-0.88%	-8.42%
10	Transportation and Warehousing	2,604	2,654	50	0.19%	1.92%
Source: NMDWS, Employment Projections program						

§679.550(c) Local Board Structure. Provide a full roster of local board membership, including the group each member represents, in Attachment B. Include a list of all standing committees, along with a description of the purpose of each committee.

The following chart shows the relationship between the CEOs, the SAWDB, and its relationship with its contractors. The CEOs are the grant recipients of the funds and appoint members to the SAWDB. The CEOs contract with SAWDB, the Fiscal Agent, and the Administrative Entity. The SAWDB also approves policies for the Southwestern

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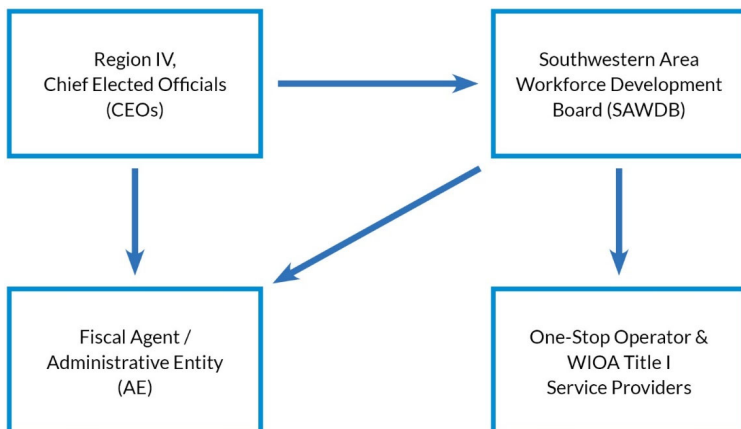
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Time Period	Industry	Industry Code	Est. Em.
2022-2032	Health Care and Social Assistance	62	20,743
2022-2032	Accommodation and Food Services	72	10,342
2022-2032	Retail Trade	44-45	11,054
2022-2032	Educational Services	61	14,214
2022-2032	Manufacturing	31-33	4,429
2022-2032	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	56	4,101
2022-2032	Construction	23	4,692
2022-2032	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	71	815
2022-2032	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	54	4,044
2022-2032	Transportation and Warehousing	48-49	2,435

region and contracts with WIOA Title IB service providers: One-Stop Operator, Adult and Dislocated Worker program, and Youth program.

Local Workforce Development Board Structure



View Attachment B for a full roster of local board members and the sector each member represents. Attachment B also contains a list of all standing committees, along with a description of the purpose of each committee.

§679.560(b)(1)(i) Provide a description of the workforce development system in the local area that identifies the programs that are included in the system; demonstrating alignment with regional economic, workforce and workforce development analysis. (In addition, please provide a list in Attachment C of the one-stop centers in your local area, including address and phone numbers. Indicate the one-stop operator for each site and whether it is a comprehensive or satellite center. Include a list of the one-stop partners physically located at each of the one-stop centers in the local board area, and the services provided by these partners.)

Workforce System Programs

The Combined State Plan calls for a customer-driven, one-stop system with multiple partners to match skilled individuals to employers. The workforce system is aligned with a common federal brand and service requirements across federal, state, and local levels.

The SAWDB supports six America's Job Center offices for the seven-county region. These sites offer the WIOA adult, dislocated worker, and youth services and offer referrals to services that may not be staffed at each site. These sites provide staff-assisted and self-directed services to meet the needs of the participants for job training,

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unemployment application, and access to computers for job searches, as well as other services listed in Attachment C of this plan.

Access to services in the SAWDB partner network is provided through America's Job Center or referrals to various programs and organizations. Co-located partners in America's Job Center offices across the seven counties include the following:

- WIOA Title I.B Adult & Dislocated Worker (Equus Workforce Solutions)
- WIOA Title I.B Youth (DACC)
- WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Program (NMDWS)
- Veterans' Services Program (NMDWS)
- National Farmworker Jobs Programs (Motivational Educational Training)

Alignment of Regional Economic & Workforce Development

The SAWDB will continue to strengthen and expand its relationships with regional economic development organizations, including the NM Public Education Department, local school districts/local educational agencies, Career and Technical Education regional priorities, local economic development corporations, chambers of commerce, educational institutions, labor organizations, and other workforce stakeholders throughout the seven-county region. Through active participation in regional planning efforts, business engagement activities, and cross-sector partnerships, the Board will support strategies that align workforce development with regional economic growth and employer talent needs.

The Board will collaborate with economic development partners to identify emerging industry trends, workforce challenges, and opportunities for business expansion and retention. These relationships will also support increased coordination among employers, education providers, workforce system partners, and registered apprenticeship and work-based learning programs to develop talent pipelines for high-demand occupations.

In partnership with chambers of commerce, labor organizations, economic development entities, and community stakeholders, the SAWDB will continue to promote workforce participation and labor force engagement across the region. The Board will support data-informed decision-making by collecting, analyzing, and disseminating regional labor market information, including employment and unemployment trends, labor force participation rates, workforce demographics, industry growth data, occupational demand projections, and other relevant economic indicators. This information will help guide workforce investments, strengthen employer engagement efforts, and ensure workforce services remain responsive to the needs of businesses, workers, and job seekers.

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The collection of data allows the SAWDB to prioritize and target underserved populations. This data is shared with workforce partners to provide service levels within specific target populations for continual service improvement by increasing outreach. Our service providers also collect data to inform the SAWDB and staff how they are meeting the most recent service demands. Certain corrections are made to allow funding between workforce programs to be transferred, making training dollars available to the programs most in need.¶¶
The SAWDB plans to strengthen its relationships with economic development offices, school districts, chambers of commerce, and other trade and labor organizations within the seven-county area. This goal will be accomplished by increasing communication through active participation in regional meetings of each group and by developing a monthly regional economic analysis publication of each county that will include all relevant workforce-related data such as employment/unemployment, labor participation rates, workforce demographics, and other pertinent information

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A complete list of the Southwestern Area America's Job Center locations and the partners located in each center can be found in Attachment C.

§679.560(b)(1)(ii) Describe how the LWDB will support the strategies identified in the State Plan and work with the entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs, including programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.) to support service alignment.

Strategic Support

The SAWDB supports the strategies identified in the New Mexico Combined State Plan through continued collaboration with WIOA core programs, Perkins-funded career and technical education (CTE) programs, educational institutions, employers, and other workforce development partners. The SAWDB's efforts focus on strengthening service coordination, aligning education and training with local workforce needs, and improving access to employment and training opportunities throughout the Southwestern region.

The SAWDB will continue working with secondary and postsecondary educational institutions to support CTE pathways that respond to local labor market needs. Collaboration with educational partners will include career exploration, work-based learning opportunities, and alignment of education and training with industry-recognized credentials and in-demand occupations.

The SAWDB will continue coordinating with WIOA core program partners, including Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs; Title II Adult Education and Literacy; Title III Wagner-Peyser Employment Services; and Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation. Coordination among these programs supports referrals, access to training and career services, and opportunities for individuals to progress along career pathways. The SAWDB will also participate in efforts to strengthen communication, referral practices, and service coordination among workforce partners.

The SAWDB will support sector strategy efforts that bring workforce, education, economic development, and industry partners together to identify workforce needs and develop solutions for priority industries. These efforts will help align training and employment services with the needs of local employers and job seekers.

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Deleted: The SAWDB will actively support the strategies identified in the state plan by fostering alignment and collaboration with entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development initiatives, including those under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006. This will involve several key approaches:¶
The SAWDB will ensure that workforce development activities align with the Perkins programs' educational objectives. This will be achieved by continuing to work closely with secondary and postsecondary institutions to ensure that career and technical education (CTE) pathways are tailored to meet the evolving needs of the local labor market, with an emphasis on in-demand sectors such as healthcare, manufacturing, agriculture, and the growing film industry. The SAWDB will continue coordinating with these educational partners to align CTE curricula with industry-recognized certifications and credentials, ensuring that students gain the skills employers seek.¶
The SAWDB will promote greater integration of services by establishing strong partnerships between the one-stop system and CTE programs. This will involve the One-Stop Operator and WIOA partner, developing cross-referral systems, sharing labor market data, and collaborating on career exploration activities and work-based learning opportunities, such as internships and apprenticeships. The goal is to create seamless transitions for students from education into the workforce while also providing pathways for adult learners and displaced workers to re-skill or up-skill in high-demand fields.¶
The SAWDB will also work with entities carrying out core WIOA programs, such as adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs, as well as Title II Adult Education and Literacy, Title III Wagner-Peyser Employment Services, and Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation, to ensure that all efforts are aligned toward increasing access to training, career pathways, and credentialing opportunities. By facilitating regular communication and data-sharing between these entities, the SAWDB will enhance the ability of the one-stop system to address skill gaps and support workforce needs across the region.¶
The SAWDB will encourage the development of sector partnerships to support targeted industries. The State Plan emphasizes a coordinated Sector Strategy outreach led by NMDWS. This strategy is centered around developing comprehensive roadmaps that ... [39]

B. Local Workforce Development System Alignment

§679.560(b)(2)(i) Describe how the local board will work with entities carrying out core programs to expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment.

The SAWDB will work collaboratively with entities carrying out core programs to expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, especially those with barriers to employment. A key strategy will be co-enrollment, where eligible individuals are enrolled in multiple programs, such as WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs, as well as TANF, SNAP E&T, and Vocational Rehabilitation services. This will maximize resources, allowing for a comprehensive approach that addresses individuals' immediate needs and long-term career goals. Co-enrollment will enable individuals to access a broader range of services, including employment counseling, job search assistance, and training opportunities.

To further expand access, the SAWDB will prioritize partnerships with educational institutions to offer coordinated outreach efforts targeting middle and high school students. These outreach activities will provide early exposure to career pathways, apprenticeships, and industry-recognized certifications, encouraging students to pursue high-demand fields. In collaboration with core program partners, the SAWDB will implement robust education and training programs tailored to the needs of the regional labor market while working closely with the state's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) to increase the number of available training programs and providers. The SAWDB will also increase outreach and educate and inform training providers within the region who may meet the ETPL requirements.

Supportive services such as childcare, transportation, and housing assistance will also be critical in expanding access for eligible individuals. The SAWDB, in partnership with community-based organizations, will ensure that individuals with barriers to employment have access to these essential services, helping them to participate in education and training programs without financial strain. Implementing a common assessment tool across all partners will streamline the identification of individuals' needs, allow for more efficient referrals to appropriate services, and reduce the likelihood of duplication.

Regular workforce partner meetings will facilitate coordination among all entities carrying out core programs, ensuring that partners align their approach to service delivery and that best practices are shared. The SAWDB will work to increase job placements by fostering strong relationships with employers across sectors and

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▲ promoting apprenticeships as a key strategy for building sustainable careers. These apprenticeships will offer individuals an earn-while-you-learn model that combines on-the-job training with classroom instruction, leading to industry-recognized credentials and long-term employment opportunities.

Through these strategies, the SAWDB will work with core program partners to create a more inclusive and supportive workforce development system that addresses the unique needs of individuals with barriers to employment while driving regional economic growth.

SAWDB's Objective

The SAWDB's objective for the core program partners is to expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services to individuals with barriers to employment through planning, partner and training provider collaboration, cross-training, implementation, and reporting through the One-Stop Operator and Administrative Entity.

Monthly Planning

Monthly workforce core partner meetings, facilitated by the One-Stop Operator, will periodically measure:

- leveraging of partner resources
- coordination of outreach and recruitment
- re-alignment of service delivery strategies
- review of performance measure indicators
- funding opportunities with the Administrative Entity

Specific examples include the planning and leveraging of staff for workforce and career-readiness events throughout the region. In Deming, partners coordinate job fairs with the City of Deming and Luna County, who provide a venue. In Silver City, partners work with Silver High School to support a career fair that connects students with employers and career exploration opportunities. The partners also work annually with Las Cruces Public Schools on Mock It Till You Rock It, a career-readiness event that provides high school students with an opportunity to participate in mock interviews with community volunteers.

▲ The SAWDB is committed to partnering with other entities in applications for additional funding, such as the Rural Healthcare Initiative, to develop healthcare apprenticeship programs to meet the needs of the healthcare industry through a discretionary U.S. Department of Labor funding opportunity. This will be accomplished by maintaining a

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▲ healthy system for referring individuals to workforce partners that specialize in helping those with barriers overcome or navigate their challenges.

As different partners assist individuals in the workforce system, collaboration and coordination among the partners play a critical role in expanding access to services and supporting participant success. WIOA establishes regulations and guidance that allow the SAWDB to create partnerships among the required workforce partners in the system.

One-Team Approach

The SAWDB will nurture its existing organizational structure by promoting the “One Team” approach with its partners who provide core program services. This approach will support open communication, collaboration, and strategic development focused on leveraging resources and expanding access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for individuals, particularly those with barriers to employment.

The SAWDB will focus on providing access and flexibility for work-based training options such as On-the-Job Training (OJT), Customized Training, and Incumbent Worker Training programs, while supporting career pathways, co-enrollment opportunities for job seekers, and job-driven strategies for employers and industries.

Improved access to training programs and partnerships with businesses and educational organizations will benefit job seekers with barriers to career pathways and employers. The Board will deploy additional measures to enhance access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly those with barriers to employment.

Enhancing Coordination with Core and other Workforce Partners

The SAWDB, through its Administrative Entity and One-Stop Operator, will facilitate coordination with its partners to determine how co-location, resource leveraging, program goal mapping, cross-training, and new outreach strategies and materials can help expand access to services. Beyond the planning phase, the partners will also work on their plan and timeline for implementation. A memorandum of understanding to support their plan is the blueprint for how the workforce system functions. It establishes a working relationship that promotes cooperative outreach and leverages efforts for capacity building to expand services. Under WIOA, the SAWDB’s focus and priority of service are serving those with barriers to employment.

SAWDB Representation

The SAWDB has representation from various partners who engage in strategic planning, policy development, monitoring, and oversight of the WIOA program. This

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representation helps the Board understand the strengths and weaknesses of the workforce system and helps shape how resources are managed and delivered.

Funding

The SAWDB will seek to maintain at least 50% of its service providers' funding allocation for employment, training, education, and supportive services. This will help expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services throughout the workforce network.

Incremental Capacity Building

As the SAWDB and workforce partners implement the strategies outlined in this plan, improvements will be made to the system that will incrementally build capacity in the system.

America's Job Centers have established a strong and effective system of coordinated services with their partners and will continue to do so. Numerous educational institutions, known as eligible training providers, service providers, partners, and employers, have been the foundation of the workforce system. Under WIOA, the system will continue to improve and align services to better serve individuals with barriers to employment.

Supportive services may only be provided to individuals who are: (a) participating in career or training services, including training in any WIOA program (Title I, II, III, and IV), and other trainings that are not within the WIOA programs (b) unable to obtain supportive services through other programs providing such services. Additionally, supportive services may only be provided when they are necessary to enable individuals to participate in Title I activities.

The SAWDB has a supportive services policy that supports the needs of participants at <https://www.employnm.com/policies-regulations>. It provides details on eligibility and the types of services available, such as transportation, mileage reimbursement, bus passes, and vehicle repair. Other allowable supportive services may include background checks, clothing and footwear, tools, rental and utility assistance, vehicle insurance and registration fees, laptops, software, and internet access.

§679.560(b)(2)(ii) Describe how the local board will work with entities carrying out core programs to facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs.

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The SAWDB, Administrative Entity (AE), One-Stop Operator (OSO), and America's Job Center partners share responsibility for maintaining an integrated, responsive, and continuously improving workforce system. Roles are carried out in accordance with WIOA, the America's Job Center Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), applicable grant agreements, and the One-Stop Operator contract.

The Administrative Entity maintains administrative oversight of WIOA-funded activities and subrecipients, including compliance with federal, state, and local requirements. Subrecipients are responsible for meeting applicable performance measures, goals, benchmarks, and contractual requirements and for providing data necessary to evaluate performance.

The One-Stop Operator supports system-level coordination and continuous improvement by bringing partners together, reviewing available performance and service-delivery information, identifying opportunities for improvement, facilitating communication, and supporting alignment across the America's Job Center network. The OSO works collaboratively with the SAWDB, AE, service providers, and partners rather than replacing the individual programmatic oversight responsibilities of each partner or funding entity.

Partner Coordination and Performance

The OSO facilitates regular communication among One-Stop partners to review system operations, service delivery, customer access, referrals, workforce needs, and opportunities for improvement. The MOU establishes a shared commitment among partners to communication, information sharing, collaboration, joint planning, referrals, customer satisfaction, and continuous quality improvement.

Performance and operational information may be used to identify service gaps, referral challenges, duplication of services, emerging workforce needs, and opportunities for stronger coordination. When compliance or performance concerns involve a contracted WIOA service provider, the AE retains responsibility for appropriate administrative oversight, technical assistance, corrective action, or other remedies consistent with the applicable agreement. The PY26 OSO contract specifically provides for performance improvement plans, additional performance reviews, and technical assistance when contracted performance or compliance requirements are not met.

Career Pathways and Sector Strategies

Career pathways are a shared responsibility of the workforce system, involving employers, education and training providers, workforce programs, economic development organizations, community partners, and other regional stakeholders. The OSO supports this work by convening and coordinating partners, sharing labor market

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1. Structured Collaboration and Alignment¶

The workforce development system includes multiple partners that provide employment and training services, including WIOA core programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs), Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and more. Each partner is held accountable for contributing to the overall performance of the local workforce system.¶

The success of the SAWDB's goals are highly dependent on establishing clear accountability mechanisms across all partners within the workforce development system. Ensuring strong partnerships with WIOA core programs and other community organizations is essential to achieving high levels of performance and meeting the needs of the local economy. The One-Stop Operator plays a pivotal role in implementing the SAWDB's vision and helping all partners meet performance goals through coordinated efforts, continuous improvement, and strategic support.¶

Accountability with Partners¶

The workforce development system in the region includes a variety of partners offering employment and training services. These include WIOA-funded Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs, as well as Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and others. Holding these partners accountable ensures the successful achievement of SAWDB goals such as job placement rates, credential attainment, and participant retention in employment.¶

Key Accountability Strategies:¶

Shared Performance Metrics: All partners are required to meet common performance indicators as outlined by WIOA. These include job placement, credential attainment, measurable skill gains, and employment retention. The One-Stop Operator ensures that partners understand these expectations and actively work toward meeting them.¶

Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs): The roles and responsibilities of each partner are formalized through MOUs, which are regularly reviewed to ensure all parties remain aligned with the SAWDB's objectives. [40]

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information, strengthening employer engagement, and helping connect workforce services with education, training, work-based learning, and employment opportunities.

Consistent with the SAWDB's updated Career Pathways approach, career pathways will be informed by labor market information, sector strategy activities, employer input, education and training capacity, and regional workforce needs. Sector strategies and career pathways are complementary: employer and industry engagement helps identify workforce and skill needs, while career pathways connect individuals to the education, credentials, work-based learning, supportive services, and employment opportunities necessary to meet those needs.

The OSO will support collaboration among partners to strengthen career pathways, work-based learning, apprenticeship, On-the-Job Training, occupational training, and other workforce strategies while minimizing duplication and leveraging existing regional resources.

Referrals, Co-Enrollment and Aligned Case Management

The SAWDB promotes an integrated service-delivery model in which customers can access the programs and resources most appropriate to their individual needs. The MOU establishes referrals as a key component of the America's Job Center system and requires partners to understand available partner services, identify appropriate referrals, provide substantive referrals when appropriate, follow up on referral results, and evaluate the effectiveness of the referral process.

Co-enrollment will be encouraged when appropriate and allowable to provide participants with coordinated access to workforce, education, training, supportive services, and other resources. Individual programs remain responsible for eligibility determinations, enrollment, case management, documentation, and services required under their respective funding sources. The OSO's role is to facilitate the coordination and communication necessary to make those connections effective.

The SAWDB will also align its local referral and co-enrollment efforts with New Mexico's Aligned Case Management initiative and the UPin Project. Rather than implementing a separate local referral platform, the SAWDB and its partners will participate in and support the statewide approach as it is implemented. This will strengthen warm handoffs, referral tracking, partner communication, follow-up, and coordinated service delivery across workforce, education, human services, and other participating programs.

This approach supports the MOU's goal of providing integrated and seamless services while reducing duplication and improving coordination among partners. The MOU specifically calls for partners to use assessment, referral, and case-management

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▲ processes, data sharing where appropriate, joint planning, regular partner meetings, and continuous improvement to strengthen system integration.

Partner Support and Capacity Building

The OSO supports partners through coordination, information sharing, cross-training, technical assistance, and identification of available workforce resources. Training and capacity-building activities may address WIOA system requirements, partner programs and eligibility, referral processes, accessibility, customer service, labor market information, career pathways, sector strategies, and other topics that strengthen integrated service delivery.

Cross-training is particularly important to ensure that frontline staff understand the services available throughout the workforce system and can effectively connect customers to appropriate programs. The MOU commits partners to cross-training staff, as appropriate, and to sharing professional learning opportunities that support continuous quality improvement.

Continuous Improvement and Customer Experience

The SAWDB and its partners will use available performance information, customer and employer feedback, referral outcomes, partner input, labor market information, and service-delivery observations to identify opportunities for continuous improvement.

The OSO will facilitate system-level discussions regarding service gaps, customer access, partner coordination, employer needs, referral effectiveness, and opportunities to strengthen the America's Job Center network. The MOU specifically identifies customer satisfaction, coordinated partner meetings, performance information, and continuous improvement as components of the One-Stop system.

Implementing SAWDB's Vision

The One-Stop Operator serves as a system coordinator and convener supporting implementation of SAWDB's vision for an integrated workforce development system. Working with the AE and America's Job Center partners, the OSO helps connect workforce services, education and training, employers, career pathways, sector strategies, referrals, and other resources across the seven-county region.

SAWDB will continue to strengthen collaboration among core and required partners so that workforce, education, training, community, and employer resources can be leveraged effectively. Partners will coordinate services and, where allowable and appropriate, align or braid resources to reduce duplication, address barriers, expand access to career pathways, and improve employment and training outcomes.

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Through partner coordination, aligned case management, effective referrals, co-enrollment, career pathways, sector strategies, employer engagement, and continuous improvement, the SAWDB seeks to provide a more seamless workforce system that responds to the needs of both job seekers and employers throughout Southwestern New Mexico.

Career Pathways

1. Cross-Agency Partnerships and Partner Alignment

SAWDB will continue strengthening coordination among the Administrative Entity, One-Stop Operator, Title I service providers, NMDWS, Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, K-12 and CTE programs, higher education, Native workforce partners, economic development organizations, employers, and community organizations. Rather than establishing a separate structure for every pathway, SAWDB will utilize existing partner meetings, sector strategy activities, employer convenings, and workforce system coordination whenever possible.

2. Industry and Employer Engagement

Labor market information, employer input, sector strategy activities, job demand, wages, advancement opportunities, and regional economic priorities will be used to identify and validate career pathways. Employer engagement will help identify required skills and credentials and expand opportunities for work experience. On-the-Job Training, internships, apprenticeships, and other work-based learning.

3. Education, Training, and Work-Based Learning

SAWDB will strengthen connections among K-12/CTE, Adult Education, postsecondary education, occupational training, apprenticeship, and employment. Regional education and training partners include New Mexico State University, Doña Ana Community College, Western New Mexico University, New Mexico Tech, regional school districts and CTE programs, Adult Education providers, apprenticeship sponsors, and other eligible training providers.

Career pathways will provide multiple entry and exit points so that Youth, Adults, Dislocated Workers, and individuals with barriers to employment can enter at the level appropriate to their needs and progress toward higher-level credentials and employment.

A general pathway may include:

Career Exploration/Assessment → Foundational or Bridge Services → Short-Term Credential/Training → Work-Based Learning → Employment → Advanced Credential/Education → Career Advancement

4. Funding and Resource Alignment

SAWDB will coordinate WIOA Title I resources with other workforce, education, and community resources when appropriate and allowable. This may include

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Deleted: The One-Stop Operator is integral to achieving the Board's goals, ensuring that all partners in the workforce development system are accountable for meeting performance metrics while receiving the support they need. Through data-driven monitoring, collaborative efforts, and a commitment to continuous improvement, the Operator ensures that career pathways are effectively implemented and participants benefit from seamless co-enrollment in services that lead to meaningful employment outcomes. This coordination, accountability, and high support ensure that the workforce development system remains aligned with the Board's vision and responsive to the needs of employers and job seekers in Southwestern New Mexico. The SAWDB actively engages in collaborative planning with core program partners to enhance the community's access to workforce services. The community workforce, education, training partners, and employers will have the opportunity to leverage their respective resources, braid funding, and provide better outcomes for the region's participants.

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Wagner-Peyser, Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, CTE/Perkins, apprenticeship resources, state workforce initiatives, education grants, supportive-service resources, employer contributions, and other public or private funding. Coordination will focus on maximizing resources while preventing duplication of services and maintaining the requirements of each funding source.

5. Policy and Program Alignment

SAWDB will continue reviewing local policies and procedures to support effective career pathways and remove unnecessary barriers to participation. Particular attention will be given to policies governing training, supportive services, Youth Work Experience, On-the-Job Training, Transitional Jobs, apprenticeships, employer eligibility, internships, referrals, and co-enrollment. Policies will also consider the unique service-delivery needs of rural, tribal, border, and underserved communities.

6. Performance Measurement and Continuous Improvement

SAWDB will use participant outcomes, WIOA performance measures, employer feedback, partner input, and available labor market information to evaluate career pathway effectiveness. Measures may include training participation and completion, credential attainment, work-based learning participation, employment, earnings, retention, co-enrollment, employer participation, and services to rural and Native American communities. Pathways and priority sectors will be reviewed periodically and adjusted as workforce needs change.

Regional Career Pathway Priorities

Rather than permanently limiting career pathways to a fixed list of industries, SAWDB will use labor market information, employer demand, training capacity, wages, advancement opportunities, and regional significance to determine where concentrated career pathway development is warranted.

Current areas of opportunity include:

- Healthcare and Behavioral Health
- Education and Early Childhood
- Advanced Manufacturing and Technology
- Transportation, Logistics, and Global Trade
- Energy, Infrastructure, and Construction
- Aerospace, Engineering, and Cybersecurity
- Mining, Natural Resources, and Geoscience
- Agriculture and Value-Added Food Systems
- Hospitality, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation
- Public and Community Services

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Priority pathways may vary by county and will be periodically reviewed as labor market conditions and regional investments change.

Organizing Partners and Clarifying Roles

The Administrative Entity and One-Stop Operator will provide system-level coordination for career pathways activities, with participation from Title I service providers, core and required One-Stop partners, education and training institutions, employers, economic development organizations, Native workforce partners, and community organizations.

The One-Stop Operator will support partner coordination, referral processes, and service alignment, while the Administrative Entity will provide strategic oversight, policy coordination, and alignment with SAWDB priorities and the Local Plan. Service providers and partners will implement participant-level services within their respective program responsibilities.

Employers and industry partners will play a central role in validating workforce demand, identifying skills and credentials, informing training, and providing employment and work-based learning opportunities. Education partners will assist in developing accessible and stackable education and training pathways. Community and workforce partners will help address barriers such as transportation, childcare, housing, broadband access, and other needs that may prevent individuals from successfully completing a pathway.

This updated approach allows SAWDB to build upon career pathways activities already occurring throughout the region while establishing a clearer and more current framework for continued implementation and continuous improvement.

WIOA Core Program Partners

The core program partners collaborate in various areas of the public workforce system. Working together as part of the career pathways process provides the system with a variety of perspectives that enhance the quality of services to employers, job seekers, and youth:

- WIOA Title I – Adult Program
- WIOA Title I – Dislocated Worker Program
- WIOA Title I – Youth Program
- WIOA Title II – Adult Education Services
- WIOA Title III – Wagner-Peyser Employment Program
- WIOA Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation Program

WIOA Additional Partners

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The Career Pathways Plan contains six Phases and Key Element Components that guide the development of career pathways.¶

Phase I: Building Cross-Agency Partnerships and Clarifying Roles¶

Key Element Components:¶

Engage cross-agency partners and employers¶
Establish a shared vision, mission, and set of goals¶
Define the roles and responsibilities of all partners¶
Develop a work plan and/or Memorandum of Understanding for the partnership¶

Phase II: Identifying Industry Sectors & Engaging Employers

Key Element Components:¶

Conduct labor market analysis to target high-demand and growing industries¶
Survey and engage key industry leaders from targeted industries and sector partnerships¶
Clarify the role of employers in the development and operation of programs¶
Identify existing training systems within the industry¶

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Phase III: Designing Education & Training Programs¶

Key Element Components:¶

Identify and engage education and training partners¶
Identify target populations, entry points, and recruitment strategies. Review, develop, or modify competency models with employers and develop and validate career ladders/lattices.¶
Analyze the State's and region's education and training resources and response capability¶
Research and promote work-based learning opportunities within business and industry¶
Develop integrated, accelerated, contextualized learning strategies¶
Provide flexible delivery methods¶
Provide career services, case management, and comprehensive support services. Provide employment assistance and retention services.¶

Phase IV: Identifying Funding Needs and Sources Key Element Components:¶

Identify the costs associated with the system and program development and operations¶
Identify sources of funding available from partner agencies and related public and private resources and secure funding¶
Develop a long-term sustainability plan with state ... [41]

The Code of Federal Register, 20 CFR § 678.400, as listed below, identifies the additional partners who have a role in the public workforce system. Like the core programs under the Act, these partners specialize in providing employment or education to specific populations within our communities. Their roles are essential to addressing the unique and diverse needs of those within our workforce system.

- The Senior Community Service Employment Program authorized under title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965 (42 U.S.C. 3056et seq.);
- Career and technical education programs at the postsecondary level authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301et seq.);
- Trade Adjustment Assistance activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271et seq.);
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants programs authorized under chapter 41 of title 38, U.S.C.;
- Employment and training activities carried out under the Community Services Block Grant (42 U.S.C. 9901et seq.);
- Employment and training activities carried out by the Department of Housing and Urban Development;
- Programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws (in accordance with applicable Federal law);
- Programs authorized under sec. 212 of the Second Chance Act of 2007 (42 U.S.C. 17532); and
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) authorized under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601et seq.), unless exempted by the Governor under § 678.405(b).

Education Providers

In addition to the core and additional partners under WIOA, K-12 education providers are additional partners that have an essential role in the process. The region has over 20 public school districts and numerous private schools that will be invited to convene and participate in both the sector partnership strategy process and industry roundtable discussions. Having K-12 education providers provides a sound balance and adds value to the workforce system.

Community-based organizations and government agencies, not WIOA or K-12 partners, will be invited based on their value to the workforce system. Such partners are valuable as they can potentially fill gaps in delivering wrap-around services for individuals or their families.

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§679.560(b)(2)(iii) Describe how the local board will work with entities carrying out core programs to improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable).

The SAWDB actively collaborates with entities carrying out core programs to enhance access to activities that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials, including industry-recognized certificates or portable and stackable certifications. The SAWDB strongly emphasizes maintaining and strengthening relationships with Eligible Training Providers (ETPs), many of which are postsecondary institutions such as New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, New Mexico State University, Western New Mexico University, and Doña Ana Community College. These institutions and other ETPs on the state's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) play a critical role in offering classroom training through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), enabling individuals to obtain industry-recognized credentials.

The SAWDB utilizes formal agreements such as Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with core system partners and training institutions to expand customer access. These agreements establish roles and coordination among workforce partners and training institutions to support participant access to training programs that lead to high-demand credentials, including stackable credentials that provide opportunities for long-term career advancement.

The SAWDB is committed to deepening connections with postsecondary schools, employers, and school districts through its partnerships within the one-stop system. By engaging employers in the design and delivery of training programs, the SAWDB supports alignment of training and credentials with industry needs, including credentials that are portable and stackable for continued learning and career progression. The focus on enhancing communication and collaboration between the workforce system and educational institutions nurtures a pipeline of qualified workers equipped with the skills required by employers in the region, driving long-term economic growth and workforce development.

The One-Stop Operator will facilitate workforce partner meetings that will lead to greater accessibility to assessment tools, partner co-enrollments, enrollments in education, supportive services, and credential attainment. The One-Stop Operator will also coordinate cross-training among the partner programs. Sharing this knowledge with workforce partners will open the door to improving communications, increasing referrals, and enhancing public workforce system relationships.

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Assessment Tools

The local workforce service providers use multiple assessment tools to guide participants into long-term career pathways. These tools use a system of assessments and curriculum that build and measure essential workplace skills that can affect a participant's job performance and increase opportunities for lifelong learning, career changes, and job advancement. After an assessment, the participants can access available training opportunities online, in a classroom, or at a job site.

Workforce Partner Meetings

Representatives of higher education, economic development, postsecondary training providers, and other workforce partner agencies attend monthly partner meetings hosted by the local workforce region. This workgroup addresses the current training needs of the participants by leveraging resources to meet the current employment needs of the region's employers, as identified in our industry sector partnership programs.

Supportive Services

The SAWDB also works with workforce partners to develop policies to align supportive services with job training and basic education in the framework of occupational training. This is to move educationally underprepared students more successfully to certificate or degree completion. These policies can provide tuition assistance to working students enrolled part-time or in non-credit occupationally-focused programs.

C. Local Strategy Implementation

§679.560(b)(3)(i) Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to facilitate engagement of employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

The SAWDB's goal is to meet the workforce needs of regional employers through the delivery of services offered at America's Job Centers and through its partners. Since the inception of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), the Board's strategy has been to work toward developing a business-driven model. This model will encourage job seekers to earn credentials that lead to self-sufficiency and meet the workforce needs of regional businesses so that individuals may not need to leave their communities to find jobs that can support a family.

The local area will implement a range of targeted strategies and services to facilitate the engagement of employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and those in in-demand industry sectors and occupations. Targeted strategies and services include:

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The state's public school system allows students to enroll in a dual college credit program that will enable them to graduate high school with enough college credits to obtain a community college associate degree. In this program, high school students can take courses in areas not available at their high school. If they plan to continue their education at the local university, these students will have already completed most of their general education requirements. Finally, most of these credits are transferrable to other universities. ¶

1. **Industry Sector Partnerships:** The SAWDB will strengthen and develop new sector-specific partnerships by working closely with employers from key industries. This has involved forming industry councils and advisory boards that include representatives from major employers in high-growth sectors. These partnerships have helped us identify workforce needs in Southwestern New Mexico, shape training programs, and support alignment of training with industry demands.
2. **Customized Training Solutions:** We have tailored training programs used in collaboration with employers to address skill gaps within their organizations. This includes on-the-job training (OJT), customized training, and incumbent worker training programs. By engaging employers in the design of these programs, the SAWDB helps align training with the skills needed for current and future job openings.
3. **Employer Outreach and Recruitment Events:** The local area will continue to host job fairs, recruitment events, and industry-specific expos to connect employers with job seekers. These events are organized in partnership with economic development agencies, chambers of commerce, and other stakeholders to attract a diverse range of employers, including small businesses.
4. **Business Services and Support:** Equipped with training and a menu of WIOA program services, dedicated business services teams will provide support to employers by offering services such as job matching, recruitment assistance, and workforce planning. This support will also extend to helping small employers access resources and funding for employee training and development.
5. **Employer Incentives and Recognition:** Incentive programs will be used to encourage employers to participate actively in workforce development initiatives. This could include subsidies for training costs, tax incentives, and public recognition for companies that demonstrate a commitment to workforce development.
6. **Sector-Based Workforce Development Initiatives:** For industries with high demand, the local area will launch sector-specific initiatives that include developing career pathways, providing industry certifications, and aligning training programs with industry standards. These initiatives will be designed to meet the needs of both large and small employers within the sector.
7. **Support for Small Employers:** The SAWDB will encourage service providers to support small businesses that would greatly benefit from OJT, Internship and Apprenticeship opportunities.

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8. **Collaborative Workforce Planning:** The SAWDB encourages providers within the workforce system to engage employers in collaborative workforce planning efforts, including sector-specific strategy sessions and planning workshops. These efforts will ensure that the workforce development strategies align with the long-term needs of employers and help anticipate future skill requirements.

By implementing these strategies, the local area aims to create a robust and responsive workforce development system that meets the needs of employers across various industries, supports small businesses, and aligns training programs with regional economic priorities.

Career Pathways

Career pathways are developed through collaboration among workforce partners, education and training providers, employers, economic development organizations, community partners, and other stakeholders. Employer engagement is central to identifying and validating career pathways based on labor market information, employer input, sector strategy activities, job demand, wages, advancement opportunities, and regional economic priorities. Employer input helps identify required skills and credentials and expand opportunities for work experience, On-the-Job Training, internships, apprenticeships, and other work-based learning.

Small Employers

Many employers in the region's rural areas have fewer than 25 employees. The business services team from each workforce office will work with the career pathways leadership team to develop methods to engage and serve small employers, as they do for larger employers. The teams may incorporate NM JOBS, which provides employers with information via email. Through the Board's social and web-based media, employers can receive customized messages at minimal cost.

The workforce partners may engage with economic development offices and chambers of commerce to establish and cultivate relationships with smaller employers. Other methods for reaching employers are the traditional use of radio, newspaper, and billboards.

In-Demand Industries

Labor market information and the dominant industries in a community easily lend themselves to identifying in-demand industry sectors and occupations. Per SAWDB's policies, this community-centered work will establish criteria for in-demand industries and occupations through its labor market analysis. Labor market information is obtained from NMDWS's Economic and Research Analysis Bureau. It identifies occupation

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Currently, the Southwestern region has chosen the following priority industries.¶
Priority Industries¶
Aerospace¶
Agricultural¶
Education¶
Healthcare¶
Hospitality and tourism¶
Information Technology¶
Logistic and warehousing¶
Manufacturing¶
Mining

Deleted: According to the Southwestern region's Career Pathways Plan, the first step for the industry's Core Team will be to do Phase I of the Career Pathways Plan: Build Cross-Agency Partnerships and Clarify Roles.¶
When Phase I is completed, Phase II, Identifying Industry Sectors & Engaging Employers' calls for the following:¶
Conducting labor market analysis to target high-demand and growing industries¶
Surveying and engaging key industry leaders from targeted industries and sector partnerships.¶
Clarifying the role of employers in the development and operation of programs.¶
Identifying existing training systems within the industry as well as the natural progression and/or mobility (career ladders/lattices)¶
Identifying the skill competencies and associated training needs¶
Sustaining and expanding business partnerships.¶
By completing the first two phases of the Career Pathways Plan, the career pathways leadership team will be able to move on to Phase III, Designing Education & Training Programs that meet the needs of local employers.

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information, wage information, unemployment rates, advertised job posting statistics, demographic information, and more, for a specific region, county, or metropolitan area.

§679.560(b)(3)(ii) Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area.

To support a local workforce development system that effectively meets the needs of businesses in the area, the SAWDB will implement several key strategies and services designed to align workforce training with business demands, enhance employer engagement, and support economic growth.

1. **Business Engagement and Consultation:** The SAWDB will support DWS to establish dedicated business services teams to act as the primary point of contact for Sector Industry employers. These teams will provide personalized consultation to understand specific business needs, assist with workforce planning, and recommend tailored workforce solutions. This approach ensures that businesses receive the support they need to address skill gaps and improve productivity.
2. **Customized Training and Development Programs:** In collaboration with employers, the SAWDB has created policies for Adult/DW and Youth WIOA programs to deliver customized training programs that target the specific skill requirements of local businesses. This includes On-the-Job Training (OJT), Customized Training, and Incumbent Worker Training programs tailored to individual companies and sectors' needs.
3. **Sector-Based Workforce Initiatives:** The SAWDB will focus on sector-specific workforce development initiatives, targeting industries with high growth potential or significant local presence. These initiatives will involve creating industry partnerships, developing career pathways, and aligning training programs with the needs of key sectors such as manufacturing, healthcare, and technology.
4. **Job Matching and Placement Services:** To connect businesses with qualified candidates, the SAWDB will provide job matching and placement services. This includes creating a robust job board, facilitating job fairs and recruitment events, and offering targeted outreach to potential candidates based on the specific needs of employers.
5. **Workforce Planning and Development:** The SAWDB will work with businesses to develop long-term workforce strategies that align with their growth plans. This includes providing labor market analysis, identifying emerging trends, and forecasting future skill requirements to help businesses prepare for changes in their workforce needs.

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6. **Incentives for Employer Participation:** The SAWDB will implement incentive programs to encourage employer involvement in workforce development. This could include financial subsidies for training programs, tax credits, or recognition programs for companies that actively engage in workforce initiatives and contribute to the development of the local talent pool.
7. **Collaboration with Economic Development Agencies:** By partnering with local economic development organizations, the SAWDB will align workforce development efforts with broader economic goals. This collaboration will help attract new businesses to the area, support existing businesses in expanding, and ensure that workforce development aligns with regional economic priorities.
8. **Support for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs):** Recognizing the critical role of SMEs in the local economy, the SAWDB will offer targeted support to small and medium-sized businesses. This includes providing access to training resources, offering consulting services to address specific workforce challenges, and facilitating connections with industry networks and resources.
9. **Continuous Feedback and Improvement:** The SAWDB will implement a feedback mechanism to regularly gather input from businesses about the effectiveness of workforce development programs and services. This feedback will be used to make continuous improvements, ensuring that the local workforce development system remains responsive to the evolving needs of businesses.

By leveraging these strategies and services, the local workforce development system will be well-positioned to support businesses, enhance the local labor market, and contribute to the overall economic vitality of the region.

Future Innovations:

1. **Virtual Reality (VR) and Immersive Learning Strategies:** The SAWDB recognizes the growing role of virtual reality (VR) and immersive learning technologies in workforce development, particularly in high-demand sectors such as healthcare, manufacturing, skilled trades, logistics, and education. Over the past several years, the SAWDB has explored and invested in VR-related workforce development opportunities and supported staff participation in trainings and demonstrations showcasing the potential of immersive technologies for skills development, career exploration, work-based learning, and employer training.

As VR technology continues to evolve rapidly, the SAWDB has determined that partnering with universities, educational institutions, and other regional training providers that maintain advanced VR equipment and technical expertise is the most sustainable approach. Rather than maintaining and continuously upgrading specialized equipment internally, the SAWDB will leverage these partnerships to

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expand access to innovative training experiences while maximizing resources and ensuring participants have access to current technology.

2. Artificial Intelligence (AI) Workforce and Service Delivery Initiatives: The SAWDB will continue to explore the use of artificial intelligence (AI) and other emerging technologies to enhance workforce development services. Staff and workforce partners have participated in trainings and discussions related to AI applications in workforce development, business services, career exploration, labor market analysis, and operational efficiency.

The SAWDB will investigate opportunities to utilize AI-powered tools that can improve job matching, identify skills gaps, support career pathway development, enhance labor market intelligence, and help employers identify qualified talent. As AI adoption continues to expand across industries, the SAWDB will also work with workforce, education, and industry partners to identify emerging skill needs and prepare job seekers and businesses for an increasingly technology-driven economy.

By embracing emerging technologies and strategic partnerships, the local workforce development system will support innovation, increase access to advanced training opportunities, strengthen connections between education and industry, and promote a skilled workforce capable of meeting the changing needs of employers throughout the Southwestern region.

This version is more realistic for an Administrative Entity because it emphasizes partnerships, training exposure, AI readiness, and resource stewardship rather than implying SAWDB will independently own and maintain VR infrastructure.

§679.560(b)(3)(iii) Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development.

Workforce Presentations to Economic Development Entities

To better understand the WIOA system, the SAWDB's One-Stop Operator and/or Administrative Entity will share information about career services and training services through the in-service training programs offered to economic development entities throughout the region.

Presentations to various economic development entities will include the types of services available to businesses. This training consists of an orientation on career services, on-the-job training, incumbent worker training, customized worker training, employee training programs, and tuition assistance services. Some of these services

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By leveraging these strategies and embracing innovative approaches, the local workforce development system aimed to support businesses, enhance the local labor market, and contribute to the overall economic vitality of the region.

Deleted: Workforce Presentations to Economic Development Entities¶

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complement the Job Training Incentive Program offered by the Economic Development Department, which reimburses companies for training expenses when they create new jobs.

The SAWDB will offer labor market information to economic development offices in the areas of economic activity, researching employers by industry, industry profiles, regional reviews, industry spotlights, occupations bulletins, and other reports that assist with their economic strategies and services.

One-Stop Operator

Through the One-Stop Operator and workforce partners, the SAWDB will market the workforce services to businesses as an economic development approach. This approach will attract additional businesses to use and take advantage of the services offered. The expectation is to help businesses become more competitive in the market by narrowing the skills gap in the region.

The SAWDB contracts with the South Central Council of Governments for its Administrative Entity services. It assists local governments and political subdivisions with local planning and economic development. The organization also develops the Comprehensive Economic Development Plan that describes the regional economy, establishes regional goals and objectives, develops a regional plan of action, and identifies investment priorities for Socorro, Sierra, and Doña Ana Counties. This partnership enhances outreach by connecting workforce and economic development resources and supporting employee training and other workforce needs.

Other economic development plans are listed under §679.560(b)(1)(i).

Economic and Workforce Organizations in the Southwestern Region

The SAWDB plans to strengthen its relationships with economic development offices, school districts, chambers of commerce, and other trade and labor organizations within the seven-county area. Enhanced communication and collaboration with these partners will help identify regional economic and workforce trends and inform workforce development strategies and goals for the Southwestern Region.

Numerous regional economic, workforce, and workforce development organizations exist across the region and are essential partners in supporting the region's economy through workforce development. The organizations listed below represent key partners that the SAWDB can engage with to better understand regional economic conditions, employer needs, and workforce opportunities.

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Deleted: The SAWDB will work with the Grant County Workforce and Economic Development Alliance (GCWEDA) to align strategies between GCWEDA's plan and the Board's Local Plan. The SAWDB will invite the GCWEDA to be part of the sector partnership strategies process to identify the workforce needs of industries. Numerous regional economic, workforce, and workforce development programs exist across the region that are essential partners in supporting the region's economy through workforce development. The largest programs are listed below.

<u>Economic and Workforce Organizations in the Southwestern Area</u> The following organizations are key partners in supporting economic and workforce development in the Southwestern Region. <u>Border Industrial Association (BIA)</u> https://nmbia.org/ <u>City of Lordsburg - Economic Development Office</u> https://cityoflordsburg.com/economic-development/ <u>Deming Luna County Economic Development (DLCED)</u> https://dlced.com/ <u>Doña Ana County Economic Development</u> https://www.donaana.gov/departments/administration/economic_development/index.php <u>Mesilla Valley Economic Development Alliance (MVEDA)</u> https://www.mveda.com/ <u>Middle Rio Grande Economic Development Association (MRGEDA)</u> https://mrgeda.com/ <u>Southwest New Mexico Council of Governments (SWNMCOG)</u> https://swnmcog.org/
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Deleted: Economic and Workforce Organizations in the SW Region [42]

§679.560(b)(3)(iv) Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs.

Individuals who become unemployed may submit a claim for unemployment benefits through NMDWS at America's Job Center, online, or by phone. The partners within the public workforce system also assist those who are unemployed through various workforce services to assist individuals with re-employment.

Key Strategies for Strengthening Linkages

- Coordinating services and processes with workforce partners and the unemployment insurance partner at workforce partner meetings
- Providing key re-employment services for those entering or contacting America's Job Center
- Providing key re-employment services for Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) workshops

- Conducting periodic reassessment of strategies and services with partners

Key Re-Employment Services

- Conducting an initial triage of the individual's employment status
- Assisting with initial unemployment claims
- Registering individuals in NM JOBS
- Helping individuals develop résumés
- Providing help to navigate the resources room and NM JOBS
- Determining the need and desire for training
- Assessing barriers to education or employment/need for supportive services
- Providing job search assistance

The SAWDB's primary objective is to ensure that the unemployment insurance (UI) program, provided through NMDWS, is offered office space at each of the comprehensive and affiliate America's Job Centers for individuals to certify and recertify for benefits via telephone or computer. The unemployment insurance program is a lifeline for individuals who are dislocated from their employment (through no fault of their own) and are eligible to receive monetary benefits while they search for and acquire their next job.

As unemployed individuals enter America's Job Center to certify for UI benefits, they will be registered in NM JOBS, offered employment services to develop or update their résumés, taught how to do online job searches, and determine their need for job training or education on the available jobs in the region, along with education/training/experience required and other services as deemed necessary. During the assessment phase, individuals will also be referred to other workforce partners to address any barriers to training, education, and employment. These coordinated services help ensure that the one-stop system is available to support individuals receiving unemployment insurance benefits and connect them with services that can assist with re-employment.

Dislocated workers may access employment services under Wagner-Peyser, training services under Title I-B, and other services offered by core and additional partner.

1. **Job Search Assistance:** Workforce partners provide guidance and resources to help individuals actively search for jobs, including access to job listings, job fairs, and employer connections.
2. **Career Counseling:** Personalized career counseling is available to help individuals assess their skills, interests, and career goals, leading to tailored job search strategies or training opportunities.

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3. **Résumé Writing and Interview Preparation:** Partners offer workshops and one-on-one sessions to help individuals create effective résumés and prepare for job interviews, enhancing their chances of securing employment.
4. **Skills Assessments:** America's Job Center provides assessments to identify existing skills and any gaps that may need to be addressed through further training or education.
5. **Training and Education Programs:** Eligible individuals may receive support to enroll in training programs, certifications, or educational courses to enhance their skills and employability.
6. **On-the-Job Training (OJT) Programs:** These programs allow individuals to gain hands-on experience in a new occupation while earning wages, with the possibility of long-term employment after the training period.
7. **Apprenticeship Opportunities:** Workforce partners connect individuals with apprenticeship programs, combining paid work experience with classroom instruction in a specific trade or profession.
8. **Networking Events:** America's Job Center hosts networking events, including job fairs and industry-specific meetups, to facilitate connections between job seekers and potential employers.
9. **Supportive Services:** In certain cases, individuals may be eligible for supportive services such as transportation assistance, childcare, or work-related tools and clothing to help them secure and maintain employment.
10. **Veteran Services:** Specialized services are available to veterans, including priority access to job listings, veteran-specific job fairs, and assistance with translating military skills to civilian careers.
11. **Workshops and Seminars:** A variety of workshops are offered on topics such as financial literacy, digital literacy, and job readiness, aimed at equipping individuals with the skills needed to succeed in today's job market.
12. **Referrals to Community Resources:** Workforce partners can provide referrals to other community resources and programs, such as housing assistance, healthcare, and legal aid, to support individuals in overcoming barriers to employment.

These services are designed to help individuals receiving unemployment benefits transition back into the workforce as quickly and effectively as possible.

§679.560(b)(4) Describe 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 board will promote entrepreneurial skills training and small business services.

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The SAWDB actively coordinates local workforce investment activities with regional economic development efforts throughout the area, focusing on rural communities. The Board fosters a collaborative environment that drives job creation and economic growth in rural areas by partnering with regional economic development agencies, chambers of commerce, and local businesses.

The SAWDB prioritizes promoting entrepreneurial skills training and small business services in rural communities by working with small business development centers (SBDCs) and economic development organizations. Workshops, mentorship programs, and access to capital opportunities are provided to help individuals start and grow small businesses, which are often critical to the economy in rural areas.

The SAWDB leverages partnerships with community colleges and training providers to deliver targeted education and training programs that align with the needs of local economies. Online and hybrid training options can help expand access for rural residents who face geographical barriers to education and training. The focus on entrepreneurship and small business support stimulates job creation and strengthens local economies, making them more resilient and self-sustaining.

§679.550(c) Describe how the local board will develop and implement training across systems for all core partners to ensure a unified approach to service delivery, including vocational rehabilitation.

The SAWDB is committed to continuing the cross-system training for all core partners to ensure a unified approach to service delivery, including vocational rehabilitation. This aligns with the strategic goals outlined in the New Mexico Combined State Plan 2024-2027, which emphasizes the importance of collaboration, shared training, and continuous improvement across all workforce development partners.

The SAWDB will continue to support cross-system training initiatives in the Southwestern region to help core partners, including Vocational Rehabilitation, understand each program's role and coordinate services. These efforts will focus on strengthening communication, collaboration, and service delivery across the workforce system.

The SAWDB has initiated cross-training efforts designed to enhance understanding among partner staff of each program's services, eligibility requirements, and unique areas of expertise. This approach enables staff from different programs to effectively communicate and coordinate when working with shared customers, improving access to services and streamlining the customer experience.

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Ongoing professional development opportunities and workshops are scheduled to facilitate continuous learning. These sessions are focused on critical areas such as disability awareness, career pathway development, and supportive services to ensure that all staff have the knowledge and skills necessary to serve individuals, particularly those with disabilities.

Vocational Rehabilitation staff play an integral role in these efforts, ensuring that services are inclusive and fully accessible. Collaboration with VR staff during these training sessions helps ensure the workforce system is prepared to address the needs of individuals with disabilities through joint case management, effective use of accommodations, and a holistic service strategy that includes all core partners. As these systems continue to evolve, the local SAWDB remains focused on unifying the service delivery system to better meet the diverse needs of the region's workforce.

Key strategies for developing and implementing training include:

1. **Joint Training Sessions:** The SAWDB will support joint training sessions that involve all core partners. These sessions will focus on aligning service delivery strategies, understanding the unique roles of each partner, and fostering a collaborative environment. Specific topics may include customer-centered service delivery, effective use of NM JOBS, and understanding the vocational rehabilitation process.
2. **Continuous Learning Opportunities:** The workforce system will provide ongoing learning opportunities, including regular training updates, refresher courses, and access to online training modules. This will ensure that all partners remain current on best practices, policy changes, and new tools or technologies that support integrated service delivery.
3. **Cross-Partner Workshops:** Workshops will be designed to address specific challenges or areas of improvement identified by core partners. These may include workshops on effective referral processes, collaborative case management, and leveraging shared resources to meet the needs of job seekers, particularly those with disabilities.
4. **Utilization of Subject Matter Experts:** Subject matter experts from vocational rehabilitation and other core programs may lead training sessions. This will ensure that all partners have a deep understanding of each program's capabilities, leading to more effective coordination and service delivery.
5. **Feedback and Evaluation:** The SAWDB, through the One-Stop Operator, will implement a feedback and evaluation system to assess the effectiveness of training programs. This will include gathering participant input, tracking

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performance outcomes, and making adjustments to improve future training sessions.

D. One-Stop Delivery System

§679.560(b)(5)(i) Describe how the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers through the system and how such providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and job seekers.

The SAWDB engages with many partners in the Southwestern region, including economic development entities, adult education services, higher education, and community-based organizations. The Board actively supports and coordinates with these partner agencies to carry out workforce development programs, including core programs and secondary/post-secondary institutions with career and education programs, to strengthen alignment with education and industry.

Collaborative Planning

The One-Stop system is engaged in collaborative planning to enhance the region's access to workforce services. The regional workforce program, along with education and training partners and employers, has a history of operating under a collective impact model that leverages partner resources and braids funding to deliver better outcomes for the communities we serve. A key strategy is for workforce partners and stakeholders to address Title II Adult Education and Literacy, Vocational Rehabilitation Services, and other targeted populations for the alignment of services and favorable outcomes. The Administrative Entity with the One-Stop Operator will hold partner meetings tied to collaborative planning, such as building trust, identifying opportunities, delivering services, and identifying partner strengths.

Continuous Improvement

The SAWDB continues to ensure the continuous improvement of eligible training providers (ETPs) within the workforce system to effectively meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and job seekers. This ongoing commitment involves:

1. **Continuous Feedback Mechanisms:** The SAWDB maintains open lines of communication with ETPs and local employers through regular meetings, surveys, and industry advisory groups. This ongoing feedback informs adjustments to program curricula and the development of new training initiatives to align with job market demands.

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2. **Collaborative Partnerships:** The SAWDB fosters partnerships between ETPs, employers, and other workforce system partners, but we intend to fortify these partnerships by developing new outreach strategies for industry sectors. These collaborations ensure that training programs are designed to meet specific industry needs through sector-focused initiatives, where providers and employers work together to address skills gaps and job requirements.
3. **Adaptation to Market Needs:** The SAWDB will support ETPs in adapting to market changes by promoting curriculum updates to reflect new industry standards, incorporating new technologies, and expanding training options to cover emerging sectors and occupations.

Eligible Training Providers and Programs

The selection of quality providers and training programs is vital to achieving the core principles. As required by WIOA Sec. 122, states, the Local Boards must identify eligible training providers (ETPs) and programs that are qualified to receive WIOA Title I-B funds to train adults, dislocated workers, and out-of-school youth ages 16 through 24, including those with disabilities.

The approved state list of eligible training providers and programs serves as an important tool for participants seeking training to identify appropriate providers and programs, and relevant information, such as cost and program outcomes. WIOA Sec. 122 (c) specifies that states must establish an application procedure for training providers and programs to maintain their eligibility and the eligibility of their programs. The State has centralized the administrative responsibility for certifying ETP applications.

As the State Administrative Entity (SAE), NMDWS partners with the SAWDB to provide oversight and administration for the Eligible Training Provider (ETP) certification system. The SAWDB works with NMDWS to identify eligible training providers and programs qualified to receive WIOA title I-B funds to train adults and dislocated workers, and out-of-school youth ages 16 through 24, including those with disabilities.

§679.560(b)(5)(ii) 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 other means.

The SAWDB facilitates access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system by using technology and other innovative means to reach job seekers,

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Integrated Training Platforms: We aim to develop and implement integrated training platforms that combine virtual and in-person learning experiences. This approach will enhance accessibility and flexibility for learners, allowing them to engage in training that is both convenient and aligned with industry needs.
Industry-Specific Boot Camps: We plan to explore the idea of industry-specific boot camps designed to upskill individuals in high-demand sectors rapidly. These boot camps would focus on critical skills needed by local employers and will be developed in collaboration with industry leaders to ensure relevance and effectiveness.
By continuing these strategies and incorporating these future innovations, the Board will further enhance the quality and relevance of training programs, ensuring they meet the evolving needs of employers, workers, and job seekers in the region.

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particularly in remote and rural areas. One of the most impactful changes has been the integration of video conferencing, texting, and e-signature forms into regular service offerings.

These technological advancements have provided easier access to workforce services, training, and job placement support for individuals in rural and remote areas. Video conferencing has become vital for conducting virtual workshops, one-on-one career counseling sessions, and even employer interviews. This has allowed job seekers to participate without traveling long distances to one-stop centers, a particularly critical benefit in regions with limited transportation options.

To facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, the Board recognizes the unique challenges that remote areas such as Reserve, Magdalena, Columbus, and Hatch face. While technology and virtual platforms are pivotal in bridging these gaps, especially in areas with limited broadband access, the Board also emphasizes the importance of direct community engagement.

The Board will use mobile units and virtual tools and deploy staff to remote locations to create and host events specifically designed to connect residents with workforce development programs. These events will be tailored to each community's unique needs, ensuring that individuals can learn about available services, enroll in programs, and receive one-on-one support from knowledgeable staff.

This hands-on approach allows for a more personalized service delivery model, where staff can directly address individuals' concerns and barriers in these areas. Combining technology with in-person outreach and events, the Board aims to ensure that all residents, regardless of location, have equitable access to the resources and support necessary for their career development.

Software and Data Tools

The SAWDB will support the use of software services and data collection processes available to the network to inform data-based decisions, improve communication with partner agencies, and continually improve services for all participants.

The following is a list of some of the tools used in the One-Stop system:

1. [Career Pathways Explorer](#) – Career Matching Software
2. [FutureWorks](#) – Labor Market Data and Access
3. [LASER](#) – State and Local Labor Market Information
4. [Jobs EQ](#) – Labor Market Data Tool
5. [Money Essentials](#) – Financial Literacy

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Another very impactful innovation in rural areas where traditional work experience opportunities may be limited or inaccessible is Virtual Reality (VR) technology, which presents a transformative solution for enhancing workforce development. The WIOA Youth Program can bridge the gap between geographic isolation and essential job training by leveraging VR technology. The Board will drive WIOA providers to utilize this technology for individuals in rural areas, providing services to communities that would not otherwise have access.

The SAWDB will drive WIOA youth providers to effectively use VR technology by closely monitoring and measuring service delivery in rural areas. By setting clear performance metrics and regularly evaluating VR-based training outcomes, the Board ensures that youth in remote locations receive high-quality, impactful work experience. This includes tracking participant engagement, skill development, and job placement success rates. Through ongoing oversight and data-driven adjustments, the Board will ensure that VR technology effectively bridges gaps in service delivery, providing equitable opportunities for all youth, regardless of geographic barriers.

Virtual Work Experience: VR technology provides a viable alternative to physical work experience by simulating real-world job environments. For youth in rural areas, VR can offer virtual internships, apprenticeships, and job simulations across various industries. This immersive experience allows participants to engage in meaningful work-related activities, regardless of their location.

Access to Diverse Career Paths: Rural areas often lack the variety of job opportunities found in urban ce... [43]

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6. **TABE Academy** – Testing Preparation
7. **The Academy** – Online Training Platform
8. **Virtual Orientation** – Job Readiness Workshops
9. **NM JOBS** – New Mexico **JOBS** Online System

§679.560(b)(5)(iii) Describe how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA sec. 188 (Nondiscrimination), if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.

Periodic Reviews

The SAWDB performs periodic reviews of America's Job Centers to determine compliance with provisions of WIOA section 188 for both physical access and programmatic functions. The One-Stop Operator partner meeting reviews compliance with accessibility to buildings and services.

Training

The SAWDB, through its One-Stop Operator and workforce partners, will conduct training for its respective regional staff. The training may be facilitated by the NMDWS's training team, which encourages local workforce areas to request training that benefits staff within the workforce system. The training programs will cover Non-Discrimination (Sec. 188), as well as ADA requirements.

Non-Discrimination, Sec. 188

This segment of section 188 prohibits discrimination against individuals in any program or activity that receives financial assistance under Title I of WIOA, as well as by the one-stop partners listed in WIOA Section 121(b) that offer programs or activities through the one-stop/American Job Center system. Section 188 prohibits discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, or, for beneficiaries, applicants, and participants only, citizenship status, or because of an individual's participation in a program or activity that receives financial assistance under Title I of WIOA. As it pertains to new employees, the partners should receive training on WIOA Sec. 188 as part of their employee orientation or onboarding. The Department of Workforce Solutions (DWS) provides a language line access program called Linguistica to serve all individuals who come through the center.

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As tenants of the buildings, it is the SAWDB's responsibility, along with the owners, to ensure that the buildings meet the requirements of state and federal laws. In addition to building compliance, the workforce partners must also be involved in ensuring that they understand the requirements for equipment and materials that are necessary for individuals with disabilities and ensure they are provided.

Facility and Equipment Compliance

Regarding facility and equipment compliance, the SAWDB's partners provide services from three State of New Mexico-owned America's Job Center buildings. These offices are in Deming, Las Cruces, and Silver City. There is one America's Job Center inside a county-owned building in Socorro. Under state and federal regulations, all five facilities must comply with the Disabilities Act of 1990 and have programs and services, technology, materials, and staff training to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities and barriers to language.

One-Stop Operator

The SAWDB's One-Stop Operator will present the ADA requirements to the America's Job Center co-located partners. The Board will also coordinate with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Commission for the Blind to develop the process for inspections and staff training. The One-Stop Operator will coordinate annual inspections of the centers and promptly correct any deficiencies identified by the building owners and workforce partners. The SAWDB will explore the requirements of having staff who can communicate using American Sign Language and provide written materials in English and Spanish.

[§679.560\(b\)\(5\)\(iv\) Describe the specific roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners, to date. Please include your process for updating any cooperative agreements, resource sharing agreements, and memoranda of understanding relevant to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. \(If any of these documents have already been updated or are even still in draft form, please provide copies as a part of Attachment D.\)](#)

Each partner organization is integrated into the workforce system. America's Job Centers allow specialized reviews of the system to identify and improve services to participants, including the disabled and those with significant barriers to employment.

Memorandum of Understanding

The Board, Administrative Entity, and One-Stop Operator implemented its Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with workforce partners. The MOU outlines the purpose, vision, mission, workforce system structure, employment and training services,

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As tenants of the buildings, it is the SAWDB's responsibility, along with the owners, to ensure that the buildings meet the requirements of state and federal laws. In addition to building compliance, the workforce partners must also be involved in ensuring that they understand the requirements for equipment and materials that are necessary for individuals with disabilities and ensure they are provided.

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One-Stop Operator role, roles and responsibilities of partners, and mandatory laws and rules of operations.

Infrastructure Funding Agreement

The workforce partners' Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) is in place, and the IFAs are an attachment to the MOU. The IFAs define the allocated costs for each co-located partner. The AE negotiates the required funding for the non-co-located partners.

For partners without direct financial resources, there are still meaningful ways they can contribute to the success of the workforce system. These non-financial contributions can include:

1. **In-Kind Services:** Partners can offer staffing support, such as job coaches, case managers, or administrative assistance, to contribute to the operation of the one-stop centers. This helps reduce labor costs and ensures adequate support for participants.
2. **Space and Facilities:** Some partners may have access to facilities, such as meeting rooms, training spaces, or technology resources, that can be used for workshops, job fairs, or training sessions, reducing the need for additional venue rental costs.
3. **Program Integration:** Partners can also contribute by facilitating access to their programs and services within the one-stop system. By aligning their service delivery with the one-stop center, they can enhance the range of services available to job seekers without requiring additional funding.
4. **Volunteer Efforts:** Some partners may offer volunteer personnel to assist with résumé writing, career counseling, or other job-readiness activities. These contributions, while non-financial, significantly enhance service delivery and support the SAWDB's goals.

Updating Documents

The SAWDB will update the documents every two years, or more frequently as needed. It will entail collaborating with workforce partners to identify changes that reflect current or future priorities and initiatives, presenting the proposed changes to the One-Stop Committee with their recommendations, and then presenting them to the SAWDB and CEOs for their approval.

§679.560(c) Describe how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will provide for the Accessibility for English Language Learners (ELL).

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Language Barriers

An extensive network of partner organizations operating across the region, through offices and other access points, makes it easier for the One-Stop Operator to efficiently engage individuals in every county of the Southwestern region. Integration with a range of partners enhances service offerings to meet diverse needs and address a variety of barriers. The SAWDB works with regional partners to analyze who is currently using services in each location, their demographics, and their English language challenges. This information will help develop plans to adequately address any gaps due to language barriers.

Linguistica is a language access program shared by NMDWS with all partners within the workforce system. The program is designed to bridge communication gaps between service providers and individuals who have limited English proficiency (LEP). It offers on-demand interpretation and translation services in multiple languages, enabling workforce staff to communicate effectively with non-English-speaking job seekers and employers.

Key Benefits of Linguistica:

1. **Enhanced Accessibility:** Linguistica ensures that all individuals, regardless of their primary language, can access critical workforce services. This is particularly beneficial in New Mexico, where a significant portion of the population speaks Spanish or other languages.
2. **Immediate Support:** The program provides real-time interpretation services, allowing for immediate and effective communication during in-person meetings, phone calls, or virtual sessions. This instant support is crucial for delivering timely assistance to LEP individuals.
3. **Diverse Language Coverage:** Linguistica supports a wide range of languages, accommodating the community's diverse linguistic needs. This diversity ensures that no one is excluded from receiving services due to language barriers.
4. **Consistency Across Partners:** By sharing Linguistica across all partners in the workforce system, DWS ensures a standardized approach to language access. This consistency helps maintain high-quality service and ensures that LEP individuals receive the same level of support, regardless of the partner organization they engage with.
5. **Improved Service Delivery:** With access to professional interpreters and translators, workforce staff can provide more accurate information and better guidance, leading to improved outcomes for job seekers and employers alike.
6. **Support for Compliance:** Linguistica helps partners comply with federal and state language access laws, ensuring that all services are delivered equitably and that language barriers do not prevent individuals from accessing opportunities.

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By incorporating Linguistica into the workforce system, DWS and its partners can better serve the linguistically diverse population of New Mexico, contributing to more inclusive and effective workforce development.

One-Stop Center

The One-Stop centers provide accessibility for English language learners through their partners. Each office has a staff member who can read, write, and speak Spanish. NM JOBS offers English and Spanish language functions. The New Mexico Unemployment Insurance services system provides access in Spanish. Promotional materials are also made available in Spanish. Individuals expressing interest in English as a Second Language (ESL) will be referred to the Title II Adult Education provider in their area. NM JOBS will be used to document the referral and monitor its status.

In the future, the One-Stop Operator will work with the one-stop partners to evaluate their processes and examine best practices. Best practices are provided in the Training and Employment Notice (TEN) 28-16. As stated in the notice, it provides workforce system examples, best practices, partnership models, and information on aligning resources available under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) to increase services to English Language Learners (ELL) with substantial cultural and language barriers to employment. It further provides the workforce system, including partner programs and entities that are jointly responsible for workforce and economic development, education, and other human resource programs, with guidance on how to align their efforts to provide basic, individualized, and training services.

E. Service Implementation for Indicated Populations

Youth

§679.560(b)(8) Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local area including activities for youth with disabilities, and other barriers, such as homeless youth, foster and former foster youth, and/or expecting and parenting youth.

The SAWDB is dedicated to enhancing youth workforce investment activities across our seven-county region, with a focus on delivering meaningful and impactful services using Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds. Our goal is to support all youth, including those facing significant barriers such as disabilities, homelessness, and those in foster care, by providing targeted programs and resources that foster career development and opportunities.

The Board will expand our youth workforce programs to address the diverse needs of young people. This includes partnering with local educational institutions like the Gadsden School District to create and enhance career pathways that align with local job

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markets. Our services include career exploration, internships, and connections to post-secondary education opportunities to help youth build a strong foundation for their future careers.

Youth Industry Forums have taken place at schools within our region. This initiative consists of industry-specific panels presenting to a group of students to provide insight into careers by industry professionals telling their stories. It allows youth to have conversations with industry experts to help formulate decisions in career exploration.

Special emphasis will be placed on providing support for youth with disabilities, homeless youth, foster and former foster youth, and expecting or parenting youth. Tailored programs will be designed to address the unique challenges these groups face. This includes accessible career counseling, job readiness training, and supportive services such as transportation and childcare. We will work closely with local organizations and agencies to ensure that these vulnerable populations receive the targeted assistance they need to overcome barriers and achieve employment success.

In rural and underserved areas, we will employ innovative outreach and service delivery methods to ensure all youth have access to our programs. This may include mobile units, virtual services, and community partnerships to reach youth in remote locations. Our goal is to ensure equitable access to career development resources and support across the entire region.

By leveraging WIOA funds strategically and focusing on comprehensive, inclusive services, the SAWDB aims to build a robust youth workforce system that provides meaningful opportunities and supports positive outcomes for all young people in Southwestern New Mexico. Through these efforts, we will work to prepare our youth for successful careers and contribute to the overall economic vitality of the region

1. Youth Services

The SAWDB, through local policy and federal regulations, addresses the 14 youth service elements and their requirements through its youth service providers.

The SAWDB's Youth and Young Adult Committee meets monthly, as required by the current WIOA grant agreement, to discuss recommendations on how the 14 service elements are to be delivered in specific geographic areas of the regions. The youth service provider is monitored under their contracted scope of work related to the delivery of the 14 required service elements and results are provided to the SAWDB's Monitoring and Performance Committee. The service providers ensure that periodic partner meetings are held to manage and enhance the program's deliverables through the term of its contract agreement with the SAWDB.

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The SAWDB recognizes that Supportive Services are key to minimizing or eliminating barriers that impede the success of youth participants in a workforce activity. The Board recognizes that with more out-of-school youth being served, there is a higher propensity for transportation, childcare, dependent care, housing, and needs-related payments. The SAWDB will allocate funds within its service providers' contracts to make supportive services available, per the local board policy, to those who qualify and are in need.

2. Tutoring/Study Skills Training

Tutoring and study skills training includes instruction and evidence-based dropout prevention as well as recovery strategies that lead to the completion of a high school diploma or equivalent (including a recognized certificate of attendance or similar document for youth with disabilities) or preparation for postsecondary credentials. Tutoring is provided online through ACT Curriculum or other educational remediation programs or through referrals to school or community-based tutoring programs to assist in increasing grade levels for school retention.

3. Alternative Secondary School Services

Alternative secondary school services include referral to formal alternative education programs or formal dropout recovery services, as appropriate. Strong partnerships are developed with Adult Education Services providers to co-enroll participants who need to complete their secondary education.

4. Occupational Skills

The SAWDB evaluates trends in the region to determine the needs of the employers and works with our partner educational institutions to develop relevant training courses. Through careful evaluation of each participant, our workforce partner will determine a strategy to assist the clients in obtaining access to such training with supportive services, including tuition assistance.

5. Work Experience

Participants are placed in paid work experience opportunities aligned with their career interests. Placements are made to learn a trade and gain the valuable experience required for long-term employment. Participants who have barriers such as a disability or access to childcare are supported through the program's supportive services or by partner organizations through a referral process to receive additional assistance. Participants complete employability skills training before placement to increase their knowledge of work. Training programs will be guided by utilizing NMDWS's Career Solutions and "Why I Work" online tool, which will provide the ability to search occupations, schools, scholarships, and jobs, in addition to completing a career

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exploration worksheet and work interest assessment. This comprehensive tool will help participants determine their career interests and work with youth program staff to develop a career pathway for training and employment placement. Work experience is monitored by the youth program case managers to ensure a meaningful experience that will lead to employment opportunities. Collaborations are made with additional community programs that provide an opportunity for further work experience for youth such as summer employment, pre-apprenticeships, internships, and on-the-job training.

Education offered concurrently with and in the same context refers to the integrated education and training model in which required education and training occur concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training. Such a program element must describe how workforce preparation activities, basic academic skills, and hands-on occupational skills are to be taught within the same time frame and connected to training in a specific occupation, occupational cluster, or career pathway. Partnerships with programs such as YouthBuild, Job Corps Centers, or Apprenticeship programs can provide this opportunity for concurrent education and workforce preparation.

6. Leadership Development Opportunities

Leadership development programs are opportunities that encourage responsibility, confidence, employability, self-determination, and other positive social behaviors such as:

- Exposure to postsecondary educational possibilities and distance learning to include supporting Tribally Controlled Colleges such as Navajo Technical University
- Community and service-learning projects including with the Alamo Navajo Chapter Government
- Peer-centered activities, including peer mentoring or peer tutoring
- Organizational and teamwork training, including team leadership training programs
- Training programs in decision-making, including prioritization and problem-solving skills
- Citizenship training programs, including life skills such as parenting and work behavior training
- Civic engagement activities that promote the quality of life in a community,
- Activities that place the youth in a leadership role such as serving on a youth leadership committee or a standing youth committee

Collaborations are developed with community partners who have opportunities to provide the leadership development opportunities listed above.

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7. Supportive Services

Supportive services are designed to enable youth to participate in WIOA activities and may include linkage to community services, referrals to healthcare, and cost assistance with transportation, childcare, housing, uniforms, work attire, work-related tools, protective gear, educational testing, and reasonable accommodations for youth with disabilities. Supportive services are provided throughout the program as needed by the participant to be successful in the completion of any of the 14 youth elements.

8. Adult Mentoring

Adult mentoring is a formal, in-person relationship between a youth participant and an adult mentor for at least 12 months that includes structured activities where the mentor offers guidance, support, and encouragement to assist in the development of the competence and character of the mentee. Adult mentoring also includes workplace mentoring matching a youth participant with an employer or employee of a company who acts as a mentor. Mentoring is integrated into the work experience activity utilizing work placement as an opportunity for employers to step into a different role and provide career awareness and exploration to the youth participant. Referrals are also made to community organizations such as Big Brothers Big Sisters and school-based mentoring programs that provide Adult Mentoring activities.

9. Follow-Up Services

Follow-up services are designed to help ensure the youth participant is successful in employment or postsecondary education/training post-program. Follow-up is provided for at least 12 months following the youth's exit from the program. Participants are contacted once per quarter to offer support services and obtain performance outcome information. A guidance counselor works directly with the youth case manager to track postsecondary participants and helps monitor performance.

10. Comprehensive Guidance & Counseling

Guidance and counseling services may include career and academic counseling, drug and alcohol abuse counseling, and mental health counseling, and are often individualized for the youth participant. Collaborations are developed with partner agencies to initiate referrals for these services.

11. Financial Literacy

Financial literacy is education or activities that assist youth to initiate checking and savings accounts at banks and making informed financial decisions; support youth learning how to manage spending, credit, and debt, including student loans, consumer credit, and credit cards. It also supports a participant's ability to understand, evaluate, and compare financial products and services; informs participants about identity theft,

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their rights regarding it, and ways they can protect themselves from it; and supports the financial literacy needs of non-English speakers using multilingual financial literacy and educational materials. Financial Literacy is provided through online training programs, partnerships with local bank institutions, or referrals to other community organizations.

12. Entrepreneurial Skills Training

Entrepreneurial Skills Training provides the basics of starting and operating a small business, taking initiative, creatively seeking out and identifying business opportunities, developing budgets, and forecasting resource needs; understanding various options for acquiring capital and the trade-offs associated with each option; and how to communicate effectively to market oneself and one's ideas. Entrepreneurial skills are provided through online training programs or referrals to other community organizations.

13. Labor Market & Career Awareness Information

Labor market information is used to tailor program services and guide youth participants into in-demand and emerging industry sectors with greater employment opportunities. Participants are provided with career awareness, exploration activities, and career counseling to make an informed decision towards further training and development of a career pathway.

14. Transition to Postsecondary Education

Services to transition to postsecondary education include information about, and preparation for, college entrance. Youth participants are assisted or educated on applying to colleges, financial aid, entrance testing, student life, pre-requisite courses, and more. Collaborations with post-secondary institutions and training programs will assist in a coordinated transition to post-secondary education, eliminating any barriers to enrollment. Most of the Native American youth are first-generation college students. They are encouraged to attend a two-year college before transitioning to a larger University. The transition from high school to postsecondary education can be difficult for some families to accept due to cultural values and traditions about family members staying home. Depending on the financial need, leveraging funds from other grants could financially assist the youth to stay in college and become successful.

The SAWDB Youth providers build strong partnerships with regional programs that serve persons with barriers that would prevent or limit their access to the workforce. Special attention is provided to youth who are most in need, i.e., youth with disabilities, homeless youth, and foster or former foster care youth. A focus on these populations is addressed through partnerships with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, juvenile justice, foster care system, schools, and other community organizations.

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Additional activities that support the 14 WIOA youth elements include but are not limited to the following:

- Comprehensive work readiness training improving employability skills
- Development of quality work experience sites to provide meaningful work experiences and skill development
- Co-enrollment with adult WIOA program for OJT and further training opportunities
- Online training to enhance occupational and employability skills

§679.560(c) Describe how the local board is planning or working to fulfill specific Youth requirements, as laid out in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, including:

- a) how the local board is providing for the 14 required Youth service elements;
- b) approach towards meeting the 20% work experience, including the use of Registered Apprenticeship as a service strategy;
- c) approaches toward meeting the 75% OSY minimum expenditure;
- d) a description of changes in the youth provider's service delivery models;
- e) a description of any changes in outreach activities around Youth; and
- f) any changes in Youth case management approach, including the use of supportive services.

The SAWDB, through the Administrator, will ensure that WIOA youth providers meet their enrollment, obligation, expenditure, and outcome targets through a robust monitoring and evaluation process. This includes regular performance reviews, data analysis, and site visits to assess compliance with contractual obligations. The Board will also implement a continuous feedback loop, where providers receive timely guidance and support to address any challenges.

To address challenges in serving out-of-school youth, the SAWDB will collaborate with providers to develop targeted outreach strategies, including partnerships with local schools, community organizations, and businesses to identify and engage eligible youth. The Board will also explore innovative solutions, such as leveraging technology for virtual engagement and offering flexible program structures that cater to the unique needs of this population. Additionally, the Board will provide technical assistance and professional development opportunities to help providers enhance their service delivery and improve outcomes.

A waiver request to allow a 50/50 expenditure ratio for PY26 has been approved by the U.S. Department of Labor, allowing 50% of WIOA Youth funds to be expended

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on in-school youth and 50% on out-of-school youth; however, the SAWDB has not yet received official notice of the approval.

1. The SAWDB requires all youth providers to implement the necessary elements in accordance with WIOA. The 14 elements are available to youth through direct service by the youth provider or through referrals to partners and other community resources. Collaborations and coordinated referral processes are put in place to ensure effective delivery and tracking of services.
2. All youth providers are monitored closely, and often, to confirm that the required 20% of formulated funds are spent on work experience activities. These activities are necessary to achieve long-term goals established with the participants to gain skills and experience that would bolster their career prospects.
3. The SAWDB will monitor youth provider expenditures to ensure compliance with the approved 50% OSY expenditure requirement. Youth providers will continue outreach and recruitment efforts through partnerships with organizations that serve out-of-school youth, including Title II Adult Education providers, juvenile justice facilities, and community-based organizations.
4. A new youth service provider has brought a different method of serving youth in the area that employs a comprehensive, cost-effective, and flexible strategy. This strategy utilizes a human-centered design to identify participant needs and employs a positive youth development framework to develop a service plan that addresses those needs. A comprehensive Objective Assessment is conducted at intake to develop an Individualized Education Plan that addresses barriers and establishes education and employment goals. Customized recruitment efforts with partners that also serve in-school and out-of-school youth are key to the effective delivery of services. Enhancing and streamlining the process between the new service provider and Title II Adult Education service providers will support co-enrollment and help individuals complete the objectives identified in their individual employment plans.
5. The SAWDB has a Communications Manager who will work with the One-Stop Operator when coordinating outreach activities in the seven-county region. Outreach materials are disseminated in our schools and throughout the communities. The Board continues to increase social media presence to reach our priority participants in outlying rural communities. Social media posts may consist of enrollment opportunities, promotional videos, success stories, and other recruitment efforts. The Board has several members who participate in community groups (boards, councils, and committees) that work with youth issues, and they often share our programs with an audience that may not be familiar with all the services offered in our region.

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The SAWDB has contracted with the youth service provider to perform the following outreach and recruitment activities:

- meet with school principal/counselor/school staff
- presentations at school staff meetings
- presentations in school classes/clubs/events
- presentations at youth community centers
- staff meetings with entities that work with out-of-school youth
- connect with alternative sentencing programs (JCC, JJD, Drug Court)
- connect with other youth-serving organizations
- collaborate with Title II Adult Education programs

6. All outreach activities are applied in conjunction with the adult programs to strengthen a co-enrollment activity. The youth provider integrates effective case management methods utilizing the Data Assessment and Plan (DAP) method to all youth participants by providing access to support services identified through the Individual Education Plan. DAP is a clinical model that includes both subjective and objective data as well as observations and all contact and progress notes. The youth case managers will continue to enter activities for supportive service when it is provided. There is a broad range of activities to assist in academic and occupational learning (through the 14 elements), developing leadership skills, and preparing for further education and training that leads to employment.

To effectively serve out-of-school youth, the SAWDB can adopt and adapt national innovations that have proven successful in other regions. Here's an expanded approach incorporating national best practices:

1. Data-Driven Targeting and Outreach

- **National Innovation:** Many successful programs use data analytics to identify and target out-of-school youth who are at risk of not re-engaging. Programs such as the YouthBuild and AmeriCorps initiatives use data to understand where out-of-school youth are concentrated and tailor outreach strategies accordingly.
- **Local Adaptation:** The SAWDB will implement a data-driven approach to map out areas with high concentrations of out-of-school youth. The SAWDB can design targeted outreach campaigns and partnerships with local schools, community organizations, and businesses to effectively reach and engage this population by analyzing local data and trends.

2. Comprehensive Support Services

- **National Innovation:** Programs like the Youth Opportunity Movement provide a holistic approach to youth services, integrating education, career training, and social services. They offer wraparound services, including mentoring, counseling, and career guidance, to address barriers that out-of-school youth face.

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Utilization of Virtual Reality Technology in the WIOA Youth Program¶

Simulated Work Environments: VR technology enables the creation of virtual work environments that replicate real-world job settings. This immersive experience allows youth participants to engage in job-specific tasks and scenarios without the need for physical presence at a workplace. For instance, a VR simulation could replicate a retail environment where participants practice customer service skills, inventory management, and point-of-sale operations.¶

Skill Development and Training: Through VR, participants can engage in targeted skill development exercises that are essential for various careers. For example, VR can simulate technical tasks in fields like manufacturing, healthcare, or IT, allowing participants to practice and hone their skills in a controlled, risk-free environment. This hands-on practice helps bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application.¶

Career Exploration: VR technology facilitates immersive career exploration by allowing youth to virtually experience different occupations and industries. Participants can explore various career paths, understand job roles, and gain insights into daily responsibilities without committing to an actual position. This exploration aids in informed decision-making regarding future career choices.¶

Soft Skills Training: VR is also effective in developing essential soft skills, such as communication, problem-solving, and teamwork. Interactive scenarios can simulate interpersonal interactions and workplace dynamics, helping participants build confidence and proficiency in these critical areas.¶

Accessibility and Flexibility: For youth in remote or underserved areas, VR provides access to high-quality training and work experience without the need for travel. This technology ensures that all participants have equal access to valuable learning experiences regardless of their geographical location.¶

Assessment and Feedback: VR systems can track participant performance and provide real-time feedback. This data-driven approach allows for personalized assessments and targeted interventions, helping participants identify strengths and areas for improvement.¶

Overall, the use of VR technology in the WIOA Youth Program enhances work experience opportunities ... [44]

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- **Local Adaptation:** The SAWDB will ensure that WIOA youth providers offer comprehensive support services. This includes partnerships with local mental health services, housing assistance programs, and career counseling to address the multifaceted needs of out-of-school youth. The SAWDB will facilitate collaborations to integrate these services into the WIOA youth programs.

3. Flexible Program Models

- **National Innovation:** Programs such as the National Youth Employment Coalition's (NYEC) "YouthBuild" and the "Jobs for the Future" (JFF) initiatives use flexible program models that adapt to the varying needs of out-of-school youth. These models include options for part-time involvement, virtual learning, and work-based learning opportunities.
- **Local Adaptation:** The SAWDB will encourage providers to implement flexible program structures that accommodate the unique needs of out-of-school youth. This includes offering online or hybrid learning options, flexible scheduling for work experience, and providing multiple pathways to education and career training.

4. Employer and Community Engagement

- **National Innovation:** Successful national programs often collaborate closely with employers and community organizations to create job placements and apprenticeships. The "California Workforce Development Board's" initiatives, for example, engage local businesses to provide real-world work experience and job opportunities for out-of-school youth.
- **Local Adaptation:** The SAWDB will facilitate strong connections between WIOA youth providers and local employers. This includes creating internships, and job placement opportunities specifically designed for out-of-school youth. Engaging local businesses in program design and implementation will ensure that training aligns with job market needs.

5. Innovative Funding and Resource Leveraging

- **National Innovation:** Programs like the "Youth CareerConnect" initiative use braided funding strategies to combine resources from various sources, including federal, state, and private funds. This approach helps to maximize available resources and support a range of services.
- **Local Adaptation:** The SAWDB will explore innovative funding mechanisms to support WIOA youth programs. By leveraging braided funding strategies, the SAWDB can combine resources from different funding streams to expand services and enhance program offerings. This approach will ensure sustainability and increase the capacity to serve out-of-school youth effectively.

6. Performance Metrics and Continuous Improvement

- **National Innovation:** Successful programs use detailed performance metrics to track progress and outcomes. For example, the "YouthBuild" programs regularly

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assess performance against key indicators and make adjustments based on findings.

- **Local Adaptation:** The SAWDB will continue to establish clear performance metrics for WIOA youth providers and implement a continuous improvement process. Regular performance reviews, outcome tracking, and feedback mechanisms will help identify areas for improvement and ensure that programs are meeting their goals effectively.

Adults & Dislocated Workers

§679.560(b)(6) and §679.560(c) Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area, including any services targeted toward adult populations with barriers, such as displaced homemakers, homeless adults, ex-offenders, single parents and pregnant women, and/or long-term unemployed.

Career Services

There are three types of “career services”: Basic career services, Individualized career services, and Follow-up services. These services can be provided in any order; there is no sequence requirement for these services. Career services, under this approach, provide local areas and service providers with the flexibility to target services to the needs of the customer.

The three categories of career services are defined as follows:

1. Basic Career Services

Basic career services must be made available to all individuals seeking services in the One-Stop delivery system, and include the following:

- Determinations of whether the individual is eligible to receive assistance from the Adult, Dislocated Worker, or Youth programs
- Outreach, intake (including identification through the State's Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services) system of unemployment insurance (UI) claimants likely to exhaust benefits, and orientation to information and other services available through the One-Stop delivery system
- Initial assessment of skill levels including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency, as well as aptitudes, abilities (including skills gaps), and supportive service needs
- Labor exchange services, including Job search and placement assistance and, (when needed by an individual) career counseling, including the provision of

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information on in-demand industry sectors and occupations (as defined in sec. 3(23) of WIOA)

- Provision of information on non-traditional employment (as defined in sec.3(37) of WIOA)
- Provision of referrals to, and coordination of, activities with other programs and services, including those within the One-Stop delivery system and, when appropriate, other workforce development programs
- Provision of workforce and labor market employment statistics information, including the provision of accurate information relating to local, regional, and national labor market areas, including job vacancy listings in labor market areas
- Information on job skills necessary to obtain the vacant jobs listed
- Information relating to local occupations-in-demand and the earnings, skill requirements, and opportunities for advancement for those jobs
- Provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of training services by program and type of providers
- Provision of information about how the local area is performing on local performance accountability measures, as well as any additional performance information relating to the area's One-Stop delivery system
- Provision of information relating to the availability of supportive services or assistance, and appropriate referrals to those services and assistance, including: childcare, child support; medical or child health assistance available through the State's Medicaid program and Children's Health Insurance Program; benefits under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Assistance through the earned income tax credit, housing counseling and assistance services sponsored through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)¹, and assistance under a State program for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and other supportive services and transportation provided through that program
- Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs not provided under WIOA
- Provision of information and assistance regarding filing claims under Unemployment Insurance (UI) programs, including meaningful assistance to individuals seeking assistance in filing a claim, using staff (on-site) who are properly trained in UI claims, filing, and/or the acceptance of information necessary to file a claim, or by phone or via other technology, as long as the assistance is provided by trained and available staff and within a reasonable time
- The costs associated with providing meaningful assistance may be paid for by the State's UI program, the WIOA Adult or Dislocated Worker programs, the

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Wagner-Peyser Employment Service, or some combination of these funding sources

2. Individualized Career Services

If One-Stop center staff determines that individualized career services are appropriate for an individual to obtain or retain employment, these services must be made available to the individual. These services must be available in all One-Stop centers. One-Stop center staff may use recent or previous assessments by partner programs to determine if individualized career services would be appropriate. These services include comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, which may include the following:

- Diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools
- In-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and
- Appropriate employment goals
- Development of an individual employment plan to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve his or her employment goals, including the list of, and information about, eligible training providers
- Group and/or individual counseling and mentoring
- Career planning (e.g. case management)
- Short-term pre-vocational services, including the development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training. In some instances, pre-apprenticeship programs may be considered short-term pre-vocational services
- Internships and work experiences that are linked to careers
- Workforce preparation activities that help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills, including competencies in utilizing resources, using information, working with others, understanding systems, and obtaining skills necessary for a successful transition into and completion of postsecondary education, or training, or employment
- Financial literacy services
- Out-of-area job search assistance and relocation assistance
- English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs

3. Follow-Up Services

Follow-up services must be provided as appropriate for participants who are placed in unsubsidized employment, for up to 12 months after the first day of employment.

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Counseling in the workplace is an appropriate type of follow-up service. Follow-up services do not extend beyond the date of exit in performance reporting.

The Adult and Dislocated Worker Program, under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, is designed to provide quality employment and training services to assist eligible individuals in finding and qualifying for meaningful employment and to help employers find the skilled workers they need to compete and succeed in business. WIOA increases individuals with disabilities access to high-quality workforce services, preparing them for competitive integrated employment, and preparing vulnerable youth, and other job seekers, for successful employment through increasing the use of proven service model services.

Employment and Training Services

1. IEP - Individual Employment Plan

An IEP provides a tangible strategy that incorporates specific steps designed to accomplish the individual participant's employment goals through a comprehensive assessment.

2. ITA - Individual Training Account

The intent of an ITA is to augment the quality of skills training to meet the needs of both employers and job seekers alike. This is done by identifying training providers whose performance qualifies them to receive WIOA funds to be used to train adults and dislocated workers.

3. On-the-Job Training (OJT)

OJTs provide financial assistance to employers who agree to train WIOA-eligible and suitable individuals. The purpose of an OJT is the placement of individuals into appropriately skilled employment.

4. Customized Training

This training is designed to meet the needs of a specific employer or group of employers. The employer pays for not less than 50% of the cost of training and must commit to employ, or continue to employ, the worker(s) upon successful completion of any form of customized training.

Services that target individuals with barriers, such as displaced homemakers, homeless adults, ex-offenders, single parents, and pregnant women will be addressed by contacting State Agencies, Criminal Justice, etc. Partners will be cross-trained and case management that meets their needs will be identified.

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5. Leadership Development Opportunities

Leadership development includes opportunities that encourage responsibility, confidence, employability, self-determination, and other positive social behaviors such as the following:

- Exposure to postsecondary educational possibilities
- Community and service-learning projects
- Peer-centered activities, including peer mentoring or peer tutoring
- Organizational and teamwork training, including team leadership training
- Training in decision-making, including prioritization and problem-solving
- Citizenship training, including life skills such as parenting and work behavior training
- Civic engagement activities that promote the quality of life in a community
- Activities that place the youth in a leadership role include serving on a youth leadership committee or a standing youth committee.

6. Supportive Services

Supportive services are designed to ensure adults and dislocated workers' successful participation in appropriate WIOA Title I employment or training activities. WIOA activities may include linkage to community services, referrals to healthcare, and cost assistance with transportation, childcare, housing, work or education-related uniforms or attire, work or education-related tools, protective gear, and educational testing.

7. Follow-Up Services

Follow-up services are available for a period of up to 12 months following exit from the program. The goal of follow-up services is to ensure job retention, wage gains, and career progress for participants who have entered employment.

8. Comprehensive Guidance & Counseling

Comprehensive guidance and counseling are tailored for each participant. This may include career and academic counseling, drug and alcohol abuse counseling, mental health counseling, and referral to partner programs for which the counselor has coordinated the referral with the partner agency on behalf of the individual.

9. Financial Literacy

Financial literacy is provided through education or activities that assist participants to initiate checking and savings accounts at banks and making informed financial decisions; to support a participant with learning how to manage spending, credit, and debt, including student loans, consumer credit, and credit cards. This training also supports a participant's ability to understand, evaluate, and compare financial products and services; informs participants about identity theft, their rights regarding it, and ways

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they can protect themselves from it; and supports the financial literacy needs of non-English speakers using multilingual financial literacy and educational materials.

10. Entrepreneurial Skills Training

This training provides the basics of starting and operating a small business, taking initiative, creatively identifying business opportunities, developing budgets, forecasting resource needs, understanding various options for acquiring capital and the trade-offs associated with each, and communicating effectively to market oneself and one's ideas.

11. Labor Market & Career Awareness Information

Services that impart information to the participants about jobs that are in demand in the local labor market may include career awareness, exploration activities, and career counseling.

12. Transition to Postsecondary Education

Includes information about and preparation for, college entrance. Also includes information about applying to colleges, financial aid, entrance testing, student life, pre-requisite courses, and more.

13. Transitional Jobs

Transitional jobs provide time-limited, paid work experience to individuals in southern New Mexico who have been chronically unemployed or have an inconsistent work history. Those jobs focus on training and employment for justice-involved individuals and emphasize transitioning youth co-enrollments to the Adult and Dislocated Worker program. Transitional jobs also establish an effective communication system with Youth and Adult service providers to inform youth participants of the occupations in demand, along with the opportunities available to enroll in adult training programs. This goal aligns the youth and adult service programs, builds relationships that promote long-term success, and connects youth to the workforce system.

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Individuals with Disabilities

§679.560(b)(13) and §679.560(c) Describe how individuals with disabilities will be served through the one-stop center system in the local area, including copies of executed cooperative agreements which define how all local service providers, including additional providers, will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the local one-stop delivery system. This includes cooperative agreements (as defined in WIOA sec. 107(d)(11)) between the LWDB or other local entities described in WIOA sec. 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 the Rehabilitation Act(29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.) (The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation within the NM Public Education Department and the Commission for the Blind) (other than sec. 112 or part C of that title (29 U.S.C. 732, 741) and subject to sec. 121(f)) in accordance with sec. 101(a)(11) of the Rehabilitation 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 and resources, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination, such as improving or creating referral processes, joint enrollment and case management.

WIOA, as well as other federal programs, requires that ~~people~~ with disabilities have access to services. The One-Stop Operator meets with workforce partners monthly to discuss strategies to enhance the delivery of services to individuals with disabilities and establish a cross-training program.

The one-stop center system design ensures comprehensive and integrated services for individuals with disabilities. This system achieves this goal through executed cooperative agreements between the SAWDB, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), the New Mexico Public Education Department, and the New Mexico Commission for the Blind, in accordance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. These agreements outline how local service providers will fulfill the integration and access requirements under WIOA sec. 107(d)(11).

To enhance service delivery, the cooperative agreements include the following components:

1. **Cross-training of Staff:** All staff across partner agencies are cross-trained to ensure they are knowledgeable about the full range of services available to individuals with disabilities. This fosters a more inclusive approach, allowing staff to provide seamless support ~~to participants~~.

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2. **Technical Assistance:** Agencies collaborate to offer technical assistance to one-stop center staff. This ensures that best practices are consistently applied and that the staff can effectively accommodate individuals with various disabilities.
3. **Resource Sharing:** There is a focus on sharing resources, including assistive technologies and accessible spaces, ensuring that individuals with disabilities have equal access to training programs, job placement services, and supportive resources.
4. **Employer Engagement:** Cooperative efforts with employers include outreach and education on the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities, job accommodations, and providing equal employment opportunities. This is designed to create stronger employer partnerships, which, in turn, can lead to increased job placements for individuals with disabilities.
5. **Joint Enrollment and Case Management:** The one-stop centers prioritize joint enrollment and case management for individuals with disabilities. This coordinated approach allows for better tracking of progress, such as measurable skill gains, credential attainment, and job placements. By working together, the agencies ensure that individuals receive wraparound services tailored to their needs.
6. **Referral Process Improvement:** The referral process among agencies is functioning effectively, ensuring individuals are connected to the appropriate services. However, there is room for improvement in follow-through and communication between agencies to ensure better outcomes. The SAWDB is committed to driving more meaningful coordination between programs, which will enhance shared results, including measurable skill gains, credential attainment, and job placements.

Efforts to continually improve coordination, communication, and collaboration are key to creating a seamless and effective service delivery system for individuals with disabilities.

The SAWDB recognizes that this directly affects how the services at America's Job Centers should be structured and delivered to ensure that the workforce partners address the needs of those with disabilities and the barriers to training, education, and employment. The One-Stop Operator will work with workforce partners to explore and implement strategies that will increase the number of individuals with disabilities in the labor force.

New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Performance Matrix

Over the past two years, the **New Mexico** Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (**NM** DVR) has utilized a performance matrix to assess its negotiated performance against

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▲ federal common measures and actual outcomes. This matrix has been instrumental in evaluating how well NM DVR is meeting its targets in key areas such as employment retention, earnings, and skill attainment for individuals with disabilities.

By regularly reviewing these metrics, NM DVR has been able to identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement, allowing for timely adjustments to better serve its clients. The data gathered from this performance matrix has also played a crucial role in informing the Board's broader strategies. It ensures that NM DVR's efforts are effectively integrated with other workforce programs, fostering a cohesive approach to delivering high-quality, coordinated services across the One-Stop system.

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Performance Negotiation

NMDVR Strategic Goals
we must meet
to maintain funding

Performance Indicator	PY2022 Negotiated Level	PY 2022 Actual Level	PY 2023 Negotiated Level	PY 2023* Actual Level	PY 2024 Expected Level	PY2024 FINAL Negotiated Level	PY 2025 Expected Level	PY 2025 FINAL Negotiated Level
Employment (2 nd Quarter After Exit)	40%	41.3%	42%	47%	43%	43%	44%	44%
Employment (4 th Quarter After Exit)	35%	40.8%	38%	42.8%	42%	41.5%	43%	42.5%
Median Earnings (2 nd Quarter After Exit)	\$4,500	\$5,033	\$4,600	\$5,255	\$4,900	\$5,080	\$5,000	\$5,120
Credential Attainment Rate	26%	37.6%	28%	28%	38%	39.1%	42%	40%
Measurable Skills Gains	32.5%	52.9%	35%	36.7%	54%	53.4%	55%	53.9%
Effectiveness in Serving Employers	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

*PY23Q3

Southwestern New Mexico has been steadily high-performing when it comes to federal measures. An innovative strategy to get partners to recognize the value of a coordinated partnership where they share participants and results is to create a performance-based incentive model that rewards collaborative efforts and shared outcomes. Here's how this could work:

1. **Shared Success Metrics and Funding Pools:** Established shared success metrics, such as measurable skill gains, job placements, and credential

attainment, that all partners must meet. This increases the level of successful outcomes as co-enrolled individuals receive high levels of wrap-around services.

2. **Cross-Agency Leadership Circles:** Form cross-agency leadership circles where senior leaders from all partners meet regularly to share insights, challenges, and successes. These circles can act as think tanks to solve common problems, create new initiatives, and ensure buy-in from top management for collaborative efforts. Allow these leadership circles to rotate hosting duties among partners, fostering a sense of ownership, accountability and commitment to the partnership.
3. **Collective Impact Demonstration Projects:** Develop pilot projects that specifically focus on coordinated services and shared participants, showcasing the power of collective impact. For instance, select a target population (e.g., individuals with disabilities or veterans) and have all partners work together using the IRT model to provide seamless service experiences from start to finish. Track the outcomes and present the findings as a case study for the value of collaboration.
4. **Partner Value Propositions:** Articulate clear partner value propositions that go beyond just funding. For example, emphasize that coordinated efforts can lead to more efficient use of resources, better participant outcomes (which reflect positively on all involved), access to shared data and insights, and the potential for larger collective funding from state or federal grants.

By linking tangible incentives to collaboration, partners will see the value in a coordinated partnership, not just in terms of participant outcomes but also in terms of the resources, funding, and recognition they can gain by working together effectively.

NM DVR Program Manager, Erik Padilla, contributed valuable input to this plan, highlighting the success of the IRT model in other areas and expressing confidence that it would be a viable solution for achieving success in the Southwestern region of the state.

The SAWDB and WIOA Administrator are committed to ensuring that the **WIOA's** Integrated Resource Team (IRT) model is effectively implemented throughout the one-stop system. Working through the One-Stop Operator (OSO), the SAWDB and WIOA Administrator will enforce the adoption of this model to enhance services for individuals with disabilities, ensuring they receive comprehensive and coordinated support tailored to their unique needs.

Understanding the IRT Model

The **WIOA** IRT model is designed to bring together multiple service providers and partners to coordinate and streamline services for individuals with disabilities. By

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▲ assembling a team that includes vocational rehabilitation counselors, workforce development professionals, educators, and other relevant stakeholders, the IRT model creates a holistic approach to service delivery. This ensures that all aspects of an individual's needs—ranging from employment and training to education and support services—are addressed collaboratively.

SAWDB and WIOA Administrator's Role in Enforcing the IRT Model

The SAWDB will work closely with the OSO to ensure that the IRT model is fully integrated into the operations of the one-stop system. Key actions they will take include:

1. **Establishing Clear Expectations:** The SAWDB and WIOA Administrator will set clear guidelines for the OSO, outlining the expectation that the IRT model will be used as a standard practice when serving individuals with disabilities. These guidelines will emphasize the importance of coordinated service delivery and the need for active collaboration among all relevant partners.
2. **Training and Cross-Training:** To enforce the IRT model, the SAWDB and WIOA Administrator will ensure that the OSO organizes regular training sessions for one-stop staff, including those from mandated partner programs. This training will focus on the principles of the IRT model, the roles and responsibilities of team members, and best practices for effective collaboration. Cross-training will also be emphasized to ensure all staff understand the resources available across the system and how to leverage them for the benefit of individuals with disabilities.
3. **Monitoring and Accountability:** The SAWDB and WIOA Administrator will implement monitoring processes to track the utilization of the IRT model within the one-stop system. The OSO will be responsible for reporting on the number of IRTs formed, the outcomes achieved for individuals with disabilities, and any barriers encountered. This data will allow the SAWDB and WIOA Administrator to assess the effectiveness of the model and make necessary adjustments to ensure its success.
4. **Facilitating Partnerships:** The SAWDB and WIOA Administrator will direct the OSO to actively foster and maintain strong partnerships between NM DVR and other one-stop partners. This includes ensuring that communication channels are open and that there is a shared commitment to the goals of the IRT model. The SAWDB and WIOA Administrator will also encourage the OSO to engage community-based organizations, employers, and other stakeholders who can contribute to the success of the IRT model.
5. **Resource Allocation:** The SAWDB and WIOA Administrator will ensure that adequate resources are allocated to support the implementation of the IRT model. This includes dedicating staff time, funding for necessary accommodations, and other resources that enable the IRTs to function

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effectively. The OSO will be responsible for managing these resources and ensuring they are used efficiently to support individuals with disabilities.

6. **Continuous Improvement:** The SAWDB and WIOA Administrator will promote a culture of continuous improvement by requiring the OSO to regularly review and refine the implementation of the IRT model. Feedback from individuals served, as well as from the IRT members, will be used to identify areas for improvement and to make necessary adjustments to the model's implementation.

Impact of the IRT Model

By enforcing the WIOA IRT model through the OSO, the SAWDB and WIOA Administrator ensure that individuals with disabilities receive personalized and coordinated support that addresses their specific needs. This approach not only enhances the quality of services but also improves employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities, helping them achieve meaningful and sustainable employment. The commitment of the SAWDB and WIOA Administrator to this model reflects a broader dedication to creating an inclusive workforce system where all individuals have the opportunity to succeed.

NM DVR and other workforce partners that serve people with disabilities are considered specialized programs under the ADA and the ADAAA, which means that a person with a disability does not have to be served by workforce programs specifically for people with disabilities if they choose not to, per their informed choice. It also means that people with disabilities have the right to access any program that they wish as long as they meet the eligibility requirements for that program with the understanding that policies, procedures, and eligibility requirements cannot directly or indirectly discriminate or weed out people with disabilities from being able to participate in federally funded programs.

This concept also highlights the spirit of WIOA in leading to the conclusion that instead of each workforce partner operating independently in serving their participants and referring participants based on their specific classification, that workforce partner staff and organizations should and must work together, even if they are not co-located, to maximize efficiency and service to the people they serve and to include people with disabilities in that endeavor. In other words, a person with a disability can be eligible for and a participant of multiple workforce programs simultaneously, and the workforce representatives serving that participant should work together in coordinating services necessary to assist that individual or employer with reaching their goals, which is to also ensure that there is not any duplication of monetary services and that all needs are being met in a timely manner to increase the chances of success of people with disabilities.

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This concept is directly related to one of the goals of the Local Plan which is to increase the number of participants co-enrolled in multiple workforce programs. This strategy is also in line with exceeding the goals of the workforce partner organizations' performance measures, which the federal government holds us accountable. In WIOA, Section 188, the ADA, or the ADAAA, states that a participant may have access to programs for which they are eligible. These acts also state that no one can be discriminated against due to their status in a protected class.

The key next steps and future endeavors to build on the progress that has already been made are as follows:

- Identifying existing ADA Coordinators for each workforce partner (By law an organization with 50 or more employees must have at least one ADA Coordinator and follow the roles of the ADA Coordinator's rules and regulations)
- If necessary, select a staff member to complete the ADA Coordinator training program (ACTCP) through the Governor's Commission on Disability
- Once, ADA Coordinators are identified or established, a transition plan, ADA grievance procedure, and self-evaluation will need to be developed for each agency. Part of this process will include the initial review and evaluation of all workforce programs to ensure ADA compliance. Note: Non-compliance with the ADA can have significant implications on the SW Workforce system and the state in general.
- To continue to provide regular trainings and support to workforce partner staff on working with people with disabilities.
- To continue to increase the number of participants co-enrolled in workforce programs by utilizing the IRT model and developing strong relationships among the staff of the SW workforce system and its partners.
- To conduct more outreach and support to employers in providing awareness and education in employing people with disabilities. Overall, there are many employers that are disability friendly, however; the rural areas need some work in understanding the benefits of considering this population for their employment pool.
- The public school system is one of the most critical workforce partners. Increasing the number of referrals from the public school systems will help the region provide pre-employment transition services to students and youth with disabilities. There has been much collaboration conducted with the schools; however, there are many students and youth within our area that the public schools are not connected to workforce programs. All students and youth with disabilities who plan on working after graduation should be referred to NM DVR

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Based on the statements above, the key focus has been training due to workforce partner organizations mentioning that they are not trained to serve people with disabilities as to the reason why they refer people with disabilities to specialized employment assistance programs, instead of attempting to work together in having an individual participate and apply for all workforce programs for which they are eligible and can receive services. I would like to note here that there is nowhere i

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and the Youth Services program at America's Job Center to support the public schools and the students.

By increasing accessibility and removing policies, procedures, organizational cultures, and mentalities that are barriers to employment, programs, and resources, we can truly improve the quality of the lives of the citizens we serve, our communities, and our economy.

Veterans

§679.560(c) and §680, Subpart E Describe the board's strategic approach to serving Veterans to improve employment outcomes for this population, including priority of service efforts.

The SAWDB places veterans and eligible spouses in a priority of service for job training programs, in accordance with Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 10-09.

WIOA services are available to veterans at America's Job Centers throughout the region. Full-time veteran representatives are based at the America's Job Center in Las Cruces and travel throughout the region to assist veterans with services leading to an educational track, employment track, or both.

The New Mexico WIOA Combined State Plan recognizes the importance of partnership with the Jobs for Veterans State Grants program (JVSG). The SAWDB works with JVSG through the One-Stop Operator and America's Job Center partners to coordinate services and ensure veterans have access to appropriate workforce services and employment opportunities.

Community awareness

Community awareness is important for reaching veterans and their eligible spouses who are unaware of the employment services available to them. As part of the SAWDB's outreach and promotional campaign, veteran reentry to employment will be promoted throughout each county of the region.

Partnership and coordination with veteran programs

As part of the ongoing process to enhance the services to veterans in the workforce system, workforce partners, the New Mexico Department of Veteran Affairs, and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs are invited to participate in periodic workforce partner meetings.

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▲ Cross-training of workforce staff

Cross-training among workforce staff is a priority to ensure that veterans and their eligible spouses are properly served. Workforce staff will be trained on the priority of services and how, under the Title I Adult program, veterans and eligible spouses will receive the highest priority of service, followed by persons receiving public assistance, low-income individuals, or those who are basic skills deficient. The Code of Federal Regulation, Section 680.650, states that veterans receive priority of service under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. As defined under WIOA sec. 3(63)(A) and 38 U.S.C. 101, receive. S.C. 4215 and described in 20 CFR part 1010. A veteran still must meet each program's eligibility criteria to receive services under the respective employment and training program. For income-based eligibility determinations, amounts paid while on active duty or paid by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) for vocational rehabilitation, disability payments, or related VA-funded programs are not to be considered as income, in accordance with 38 U.S.C. 4213 and § 683.230 of this chapter.

Pursuant to § 680.660, when a separating service member is separating from the Armed Forces with a discharge that is anything other than dishonorable, the separating service member qualifies for dislocated worker activities based on the following criteria:

- The separating service member has received a notice of separation, a DD-214 from the Department of Defense, or other documentation showing a separation or imminent separation from the Armed Forces to satisfy the termination or layoff part of the dislocated worker eligibility criteria in WIOA sec. 3(15)(A)(i);
- The separating service member qualifies for the dislocated worker eligibility criteria on eligibility for or exhaustion of unemployment compensation in WIOA sec. 3(15)(A)(ii)(I) or (II); and,
- As a separating service member, the individual meets the dislocated worker eligibility criteria that the individual is unlikely to return to a previous industry or occupation in WIOA sec. 3(15)(A)(iii).

Use of America's Job Center services

A job seeker's employment attainment depends on using the available online resources at America's Job Center. Building a good résumé, posting it in NM **JOBS**, learning and practicing good interview skills, and following the staff's advice are all important in obtaining employment.

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Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers

§679.560(c), Parts 653 and 685 Describe, as appropriate, the board's approach to serving migrant seasonal farmworkers within its respective area to increase education and employment outcomes for this population.

New Mexico's designation as a Significant State for Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFW) by the U.S. Department of Labor underscores the importance of effectively serving this population, which faces distinct challenges such as language barriers, limited access to transportation, and a general lack of awareness about available resources. Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach, and one of the most effective strategies is the use of braided funding, which involves combining resources from various funding streams to create comprehensive and innovative solutions.

In a conversation with Kerena Levario, Area Manager for Luna and Grant County, she highlighted the substantial opportunities to serve MSFWs and their families by leveraging WIOA funds in conjunction with resources from core partners in the workforce system. By braiding these funds, the SAWDB can develop and implement services that are more comprehensive and tailored to the unique needs of MSFWs. This includes offering bilingual training materials, developing mobile service units to reach remote communities, and partnering with local organizations to enhance outreach efforts.

The impact of braided funding on rural communities, particularly those with high MSFW populations, cannot be overstated. For instance, combining WIOA funds with other federal, state, and local resources allows the development of tailored programs that address the specific needs of MSFWs, such as providing access to English as a Second Language (ESL) classes, job training, and supportive services. By coordinating these resources, the Board can implement innovative solutions that directly bring education and job training to farmworkers in the fields or community hubs, eliminating the barriers to transportation and accessibility.

Moreover, braided funding can support the creation of apprenticeship programs and career pathways specifically designed for the children of farmworkers, particularly those who are out-of-school youth. These programs can provide critical skills training that aligns with local economic needs, offering these young individuals a viable path to sustainable employment in the agriculture, manufacturing, and healthcare sectors, which are vital to the region's economy.

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The long-term impact of these efforts on rural communities is profound. By investing in the education and training of MSFWs and their families, the SAWDB is enhancing their immediate employment prospects and contributing to the overall economic development of these rural areas. This approach fosters a more skilled workforce, reduces unemployment, and strengthens the local economy, creating a ripple effect that benefits the entire community.

Using braided funding to support innovative solutions in serving MSFWs in rural New Mexico can potentially transform these communities. By addressing the unique challenges faced by this population and providing them with the resources and opportunities they need to succeed, the SAWDB can create lasting change that will benefit both the individuals served and the broader community.

To address the monitoring findings regarding the lack of WIOA Title I and other services provided to Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs), the SAWDB, through the One-Stop Operator, can take decisive actions in partnership with the State Monitor Advocate. Here's how they can drive and commit to this initiative:

1. **Strategic Partnership with the State Monitor Advocate**

- **Formal Collaboration:** Establish a formal partnership with the State Monitor Advocate to create a coordinated approach to addressing the gaps in services for MSFWs. This partnership should include regular meetings, shared goals, and a clear action plan to ensure compliance with WIOA Title I requirements.
- **Leverage Expertise:** The State Monitor Advocate can provide valuable insights into the unique challenges faced by MSFWs and help tailor services to meet their needs. The SAWDB should utilize this expertise to refine strategies and ensure that programs are culturally and linguistically appropriate.

2. **Immediate Corrective Action Plan**

- **Develop and Implement a Corrective Action Plan:** In response to the monitoring findings, the SAWDB, in collaboration with the One-Stop Operator and State Monitor Advocate, should develop a corrective action plan that outlines specific steps to address the identified deficiencies. This plan should include timelines, responsible parties, and measurable outcomes to ensure accountability.
- **Focus on Compliance:** The corrective action plan should prioritize compliance with WIOA Title I and ensure that MSFWs and their families have access to

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all required services, including job training, career counseling, and supportive services. The SAWDB should commit to regular progress reviews and adjustments as needed.

3. *Enhanced Outreach and Service Delivery*

- **Targeted Outreach Campaigns:** The SAWDB, through the One-Stop Operator, can work with the State Monitor Advocate to design and implement targeted outreach campaigns to inform MSFWs about the available WIOA services. This may involve bilingual outreach materials, community events, and partnerships with local organizations that already have strong connections with the MSFW community.

4. *Capacity Building and Training*

- **Staff Training:** The SAWDB should ensure that all staff within the one-stop system receive specialized training on serving MSFWs, which can be developed in collaboration with the State Monitor Advocate. This training should cover cultural competency, understanding the unique barriers MSFWs face, and effective outreach strategies.

5. *Continuous Monitoring and Improvement*

- **Regular Monitoring:** The SAWDB, with the support of the One-Stop Operator and in partnership with the State Monitor Advocate, should establish a system of continuous monitoring to ensure that services for MSFWs are being provided as required. This includes tracking participation, service delivery, and outcomes to identify and address any ongoing issues promptly.
- **Feedback Mechanisms:** Implement mechanisms to collect feedback directly from MSFWs and other stakeholders to ensure that the services provided are meeting their needs. Use this feedback to make data-driven adjustments to programs and strategies.

By taking these steps, the SAWDB, through the One-Stop Operator and in partnership with the State Monitor Advocate, can drive meaningful change in how services are delivered to MSFWs in Southwestern New Mexico. This approach addresses the immediate compliance issues identified in the monitoring findings and creates a sustainable framework for serving this important population in the long term.

The SAWDB has established a priority to meet the needs of farmworkers and seeks to provide the services offered by the workforce system. Seasonal farmworkers do not need to visit an America's Job Center when their seasonal employment ends to file for unemployment because they can use a toll-free number or computer. This reduces the opportunity to make contact and offer workforce services for re-employment. Therefore,

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▲ outreach to farmworkers is necessary to provide them with the services available at America's Job Center, including the benefit of having a trained and skilled workforce and how WIOA can help with training reimbursements. It is also a priority to develop strategies with the National Farmworker Jobs Program and other workforce partners working with migrant and seasonal farmworkers.

In addition to the customary outreach services available, service providers should supply information on the benefits of training, which ultimately translates to higher earning potential and increased quality of life.

The SAWDB examines the barriers to training for farmworkers with its workforce partners and determines how the barriers, including transportation needs, may be overcome.

Native Americans

§679.560(c) and Part 684 Describe, as appropriate, the board's approach to serving Native Americans within its respective area to increase education and employment outcomes for this population.

The Alamo Navajo Chapter of the Navajo Nation is in Socorro County. The SAWDB currently contracts with the Alamo Navajo School Board to deliver WIOA Youth services on the Alamo Navajo Reservation. An objective for the next four years is to continue providing community awareness of services to adults and dislocated workers and to expand the work experience opportunities for youth in Magdalena and the City of Socorro. Work opportunities are extremely limited on the Alamo Navajo reservation. Community members need transportation to travel 60 miles one way each day. Partnerships with the public and private sectors will be explored within the communities to expand the academic and employment opportunities for Native Americans.

Along with service providers, workforce partners, local governments, and other community-based organizations, the SAWDB will examine the barriers to training, including transportation needs. Based on the examination, the workforce partners and service providers will create and implement a feasible plan.

The Alamo Navajo School Board (ANSB) is a non-profit 501(c) 3 organization. ANSB operates under resolutions from the Alamo Navajo Chapter and the Navajo Tribe. ANSB was organized within the Alamo Navajo Chapter to establish and operate Federal and State programs that serve the people of Alamo under Contracts, Grants, or Cooperative or Joint Powers Agreements.

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Poverty and unemployment have been insurmountable obstacles to Alamo Community members who have not been in the mainstream and have little to no experience interacting with mainstream society. Historically, clients who went off-reservation for employment and/or post-secondary education had difficulty completing these programs due to barriers created by lack of transportation, affordable housing, childcare, basic-skill deficiencies, and other barriers. Many clients requesting assistance with postsecondary education or training are single parents with young children or older clients with families. They do not have supportive services to live off-reservation, maintain their program of education, and maintain their family responsibilities. In addition, mainstream institutions usually do not have personal counseling services to assist clients in maintaining their educational program as well as accessing the supportive services necessary for their retention and success.

The isolation, setting, and environment of the Alamo Navajo Reservation all have a major impact on the educational goals and aspirations of the Alamo Community. The Reservation consists of 63,109 acres of arid rocky land in west-central New Mexico. Alamo is one of the most isolated reservation communities in the entire state. A paved road, Highway 169, connects the Reservation with the nearest town, Magdalena. Magdalena (pop. 800) is located 32 miles south of the Alamo Navajo Chapter. Socorro is the county seat, 70 miles away, and the only nearby town of appreciable size. To seek services, clients must travel to Albuquerque or Socorro. Travel time to Albuquerque alone is 5 hours round-trip.

The lack of vehicles or vehicles in good repair and the rising cost of fuel also contribute to this problem. Geographic separation from the mainstream life of the state has caused a communications and services gap for the Alamo Navajo people. The distance to services for postsecondary education, staff development, and curriculum diversity can be financially and physically prohibitive for community members who are already educationally and financially disadvantaged.

As seen in the following table, the population of Alamo represents over 11% of the total Socorro county population and the Native American population in the county primarily resides on the Alamo Navajo Reservation. The data documents the isolation and poverty of the Alamo Community in relation to the rest of the county, the rest of the state, and the rest of the Navajo Nation.

	Native American	Socorro County	New Mexico	Navajo Nation	USA
Population	1,988	15,815	2,115,266	423,412	335,893,238

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AVG Household Income	\$24,118	\$57,726	\$49,906	\$33,323	\$77,345
% Unemployed	22.5%	4.5%	4.0%	48.5%	4%
% Not in Labor Force	63.5%	53.2%	28%	56%	37.5%
% Native American	98.43%	3.9%	12.8%	96%	2.09%
% Living in Poverty	70.96%	31.43%	31.96%	40%	11.5%
% < HS Education	33.9%	43.51%	26.03%	40.27%	87%
Some College	12.44%	23.27%	23.27%	30.12%	
Associate Degree	3.58%	17.85%	8.94%	9.6%	
Bachelor's Degree	2.33%	6.36%	15.81%	9.4%	
Master's Degree	2.02%	40.4%	12.72%	4.2%	12.8%
% Limited English	36.04%	34.58%	32.99%	18%	21.7%
Public Assistance	9%	4.1%	50%	19%	12.4%
Food Stamps	41.4%	21%	21%	28.5%	12%
Median Age	22	36.4	37.1	38.7%	39.7

Source: Alamo Navajo School Board

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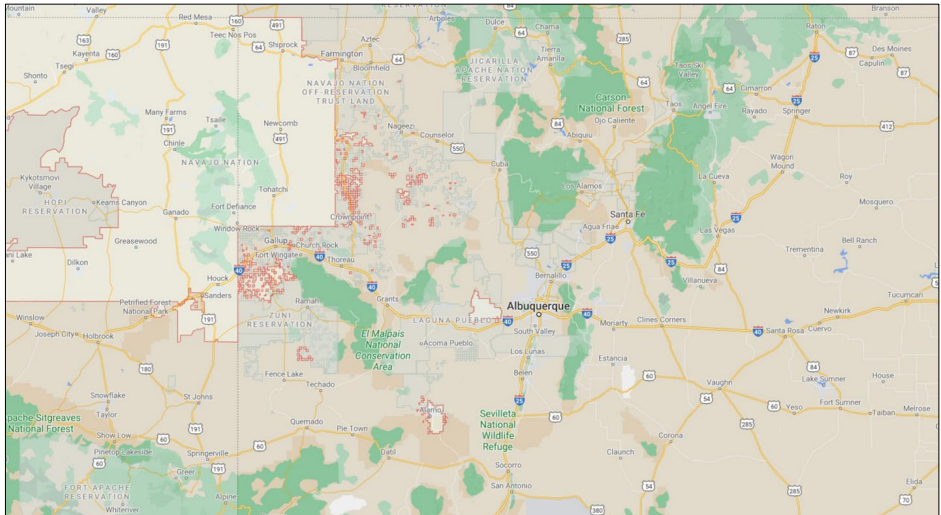
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The following map shows the size and location of the Alamo Navajo community in comparison to the Greater Navajo Nation. Socorro is the nearest city and Albuquerque is the nearest major city.



Individuals with Low Income

[§679.560\(c\)](#) and [§680](#), Subpart E Describe how the board will identify and work with low-income individuals, including any plans to coordinate locally with the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program to serve this population, as well as to serve TANF exhaustees.

The SAWDB identifies target populations by analyzing labor market data and the local economy weighed against local demographic data to assess program priorities and service limitations. This population includes public assistance recipients and those who are basic skills deficient. The analysis informs the development of programs, service design strategies, and opportunities that will align with the best interest of job seekers and employers. The Board works with service providers to design programs to increase access to, and opportunities for, the employment, education, training, and support services that individuals need to succeed in the labor market, particularly those with barriers to employment.

This work is accomplished by increasing the service providers' and workforce partners' capabilities to serve youth and adults with limited skills, limited or no work experience,

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and barriers to employment and/or training. The SAWDB seeks to expand access to education and training opportunities for those in the TANF program and other low-income individuals. This goal will be accomplished through the Board's One-Stop Operator, who will coordinate services and develop methods with the TANF service provider to better serve low-income individuals at the America's Job Center. Cross-training for staff among various workforce partners will be conducted to better understand and employ effective employment-based activities for serving low-income individuals.

Working with the TANF program, the Board will seek to improve its strategy and process to improve its service alignment across the workforce system.

The SAWDB's key functions are to ensure that the workforce system aligns its planning and policies that can support low-income individuals to have better access to its Core programs through a unified process of serving low-income populations.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requires a priority of service to low-income individuals. The policy has been established and partnerships with human services are in place to provide accessibility to the workforce system for those who are low-income. During the next several months, through the SAWDB's service provider, methods for better access to low-income individuals will be explored.

Older Individuals

[§679.560\(c\) Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate WIOA title I workforce investment activities with the Senior Community Service Employment Program \(Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965\) to serve the employment needs of older individuals.](#)

Numerous factors may influence why older individuals are continuing to work into later years. These factors may include changes in personal, social, and economic circumstances, or merely a desire to remain socially engaged in their community. Medical advances have also resulted in a rise in life expectancy, potentially resulting in the need for individuals to return to the workforce if retirement funds run out and no longer cover living expenses.

Older individuals with low skills encounter barriers to education and employment and require work experience training that will lead to higher-skilled and higher-paying employment opportunities. The SAWDB will coordinate with the Senior Community

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Service Employment Program (SCSEP) to develop strategies to provide effective employment-based activities for older individuals within the workforce system.

The Board will also align its actions with the Combined State Plan and those of the Aging and Long-Term Services Department and its goals: (1) to assist income-eligible persons, age 55 or older, to obtain employment (2) to provide community service through paid, part-time, training positions. Currently, SCSEP participants are located at the America's Job Center and assist in the welcome function to help job seekers enroll and access job opportunities through NM JOBS.

Workforce partners will be trained to understand the barriers that older individuals encounter and how to address them. Title II Adult Education, Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation, and other partners are essential to the delivery of services for older individuals as they work together to assist individuals to address barriers to education and employment. The partners will also research and analyze the literacy and numeracy data by county to develop actional steps. SCSEP, along with the SAWDB's One-Stop Operator, will provide cross-training to the workforce partners. Through this joint planning and system design with SCSEP, Workforce partners will be trained to understand the barriers older individuals encounter older individuals will have better access to training and be more competitive in the workplace.

The New Mexico Department of Aging and Long-Term Services is an important partner within the workforce system. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act seeks partnerships that can address the workforce needs of all adults.

As part of the ongoing process to enhance the workforce system through the collaboration of partners, systems will be studied, and protocols will be written to address the needs of older adults.

The Board has supported the SCSEP program by establishing work sites for participants and serving as a program work site. SCSEP participants have received On-the-Job Training (OJT) in technical and administrative support. Partner representatives attend partner meetings and are invited to collaborate on job fairs to align participants with potential employers. With America's Job Centers as a work site, SCSEP participants' roles include greeting and checking in customers at the front desk, managing the resource room, assisting with account creation, and shadowing career consultants. The goal is to expand this initiative.

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Individuals with Low Literacy Levels

§679.560(b)(12) Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate WIOA title I workforce investment activities with adult education and literacy activities under WIOA title II. Describe the joint planning processes planned or underway that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with receiving adult education services, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, sharing resources, sharing of information, cooperative efforts to improve or create referral processes, joint enrollment and case management. This description must also include how the LWDB will carry out the review of local applications submitted under title II consistent with WIOA Secs. 107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and WIOA sec. 232.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requires a priority of service to basic-skills deficient individuals. In collaboration with K-12 programs, Adult Education Service (AES) partners, and the private sector, strategies will be developed to address the low literacy levels in the Southwestern area. Research on best practices in and outside of New Mexico will be explored and examined for implementation in the workforce system.

The SAWDB is actively engaged in collaborative planning with partners to expand the region's access to workforce services. The Board acts as the convener for the region to ensure consistency with the Local Plan and to advise on the alignment of resources with additional adult education and literacy providers.

The SAWDB has developed agreements with partner agencies and providers to carry out this requirement within the one-stop delivery system. The agreements are made to offer system-wide development and training as well as the development of applicable policies and procedures.

Activities with Adult Education and Literacy under WIOA Title II are available in the metropolitan areas of the state but are limited in most rural counties. The SAWDB and Core partners have created leveraged resources amongst its programs to offer adult education services for the participants.

In addition to programs offered by the Adult Literacy partners, a range of career and training services will be available to individuals with low literacy levels who have been established as a priority for receiving services because they are basic-skills deficient. The delivery of AES services is determined by current occupations in demand as well as economic conditions in our region.

By utilizing systems such as WorkKeys, Key Train, and online training resources, the Board can access data on the current needs of the clients related to education. This

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information is shared with the SAWDB AES partners to determine if the availability and types of training offered are appropriate and meet the demands of the employers.

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F. Coordination of Services Across Programs

Coordination with Wagner-Peyser Services

§679.560(b)(11) Provide a description of plans, assurances, and strategies for maximizing coordination, improving service delivery, and avoiding duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) services and other services provided through the one-stop delivery system; coordination will reflect current federal guidance on Employment Service staffing and service delivery in American Job Centers.

The SAWDB plans to improve the alignment of services with the Core and additional workforce partners by working with Wagner-Peyser and other partners to enhance methods for the delivery of services. Traditionally, the services offered to individuals have been delivered under the Wagner-Peyser program and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act program, which include unemployment insurance services via telephone and the internet.

The SAWDB, through the One-Stop Operator, has developed a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), which establishes the customer flow process to minimize service duplication and enhance service quality. The SOP identifies the processes for workforce staff to follow and outlines the procedures for initial greeting and the customer triage and referral process. Each team has its functions and mission statement, as shown below.

A Unified Business Team was created to facilitate skill/career development and assist motivated customers in becoming self-sufficient. Customers will explore new and enhanced existing career skills that are in demand by area employers. Customers will be able to sustain employment through successfully marketing their skills. The Team provides job readiness and skill-development services that develop qualified job seekers to meet area employers' needs.

All Southwestern region America's Job Centers have a customer flow plan in which all partners share in these functions. The functions are in place to eliminate duplication of services and improve the services delivered.

Coordination with Rapid Response Activities

§679.560(b)(7) Describe how the local board coordinates with NMDWS Rapid Response, including early notification of potential layoffs, coordination for both WARN and non-WARN events, participation in onsite or virtual Rapid Response orientations, and procedures for sharing event information with the Dislocate Worker Unit and local AJC partners to ensure timely re-employment services.

The SAWDB coordinates with the NMDWS Rapid Response team when potential layoffs or other dislocation events occur in the Southwestern Area. NMDWS Rapid Response staff coordinate directly with the affected employer to schedule the Rapid Response event and notify the appropriate local workforce contacts. Local workforce staff and partners then coordinate their participation and make arrangements to attend the event.

This coordination supports timely delivery of reemployment services and other workforce resources to affected workers, as well as early intervention and layoff aversion efforts when appropriate. Rapid Response activities may be conducted onsite or virtually and are coordinated for both WARN and non-WARN events.

In coordination with the State (DWS) Rapid Response team, and as stated in Training and Employment Guidance Letter No. 19-16, "the local board will assist to promote economic recovery and vitality by developing ongoing, comprehensive approaches to identifying, planning for, or responding to layoffs and dislocations, and preventing or minimizing their impacts on workers, businesses, and communities." A successful Rapid Response system must include:

- Informational and direct reemployment services for workers, including but not limited to: information and support for filing unemployment insurance claims; information about the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program; information on the impacts of layoff on health coverage or other benefits; information on and referral to career services; reemployment-focused workshops and services; and training.
- Delivery of solutions to address the needs of businesses in transition, provided across the business lifecycle (expansion and contraction), including comprehensive business engagement and layoff aversion strategies and activities designed to prevent or minimize the duration of unemployment.
- Convening, brokering, and facilitating the connections, networks, and partners to ensure the ability to provide assistance to dislocated workers and their families such as home heating assistance, legal aid, and financial advice.

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Deleted: A description of how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities;

Deleted: The SAWDB will work closely with the Statewide Rapid Response team when there is a mass layoff in the Southwestern Area to help affected employees get training, whether in the form of tuition assistance or job training.

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- Strategic planning, data gathering, and analysis designed to anticipate, prepare for, and manage economic change.

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Coordination with Secondary and Postsecondary Education System

§679.560(b)(9) Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services;

The SAWDB coordinates closely with secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to create a streamlined, unified approach that enhances services for job seekers and students while avoiding duplication of efforts. This coordination is fundamental to fostering strong educational and workforce pathways that serve the needs of local employers and regional workers.

The SAWDB works with high schools, community colleges, universities, and other educational institutions to ensure that education al programs align with current and emerging labor market demands. These efforts include creating linkages between secondary education programs, such as career and technical education (CTE) programs, and postsecondary opportunities to help students transition smoothly from high school to college or directly into the workforce. The Board promotes career pathways that guide students from education into high-wage, high-demand jobs within the region's growing industries, ensuring that they are equipped with the skills employers require.

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In collaboration with its core partners and educational institutions, the SAWDB also uses Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) to help fund postsecondary education programs, including bachelor's degree programs, associate degrees, certificates, and other industry-recognized credentials. This financial support allows individuals to gain the education and skills necessary to thrive in their chosen fields. ITAs provide crucial funding for a wide range of programs that serve both traditional students and adult learners, including those that prepare participants for in-demand occupations across sectors such as education, healthcare, information technology, and manufacturing.

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By promoting co-enrollment in education and workforce programs, the Board works to ensure participants receive comprehensive support as they pursue their educational and career goals. Through regular collaboration with educational institutions and

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workforce partners, the SAWDB identifies strategies to avoid duplicating services and resources, thus maximizing the effectiveness of each program.

The SAWDB integrates industry feedback into program development to ensure that training programs are not only aligned with current industry needs but are also adaptable to emerging trends such as automation, artificial intelligence, and remote work.

As the region continues to experience growth in industries like agriculture, healthcare, information technology, and manufacturing, these coordinated efforts allow the workforce system to respond dynamically to changing conditions and ensure that educational and workforce investment activities remain relevant and effective in meeting the needs of students and employers.

Coordination with Core Programs

§679.560(b)(2)(iii) Describe how the local board will work with entities carrying out core programs to improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable).

The SAWDB improves access to recognized postsecondary credentials by coordinating with core program partners, educational institutions, and training providers to connect individuals with education and training opportunities that align with industry standards and employer needs. These partnerships are particularly important for individuals with barriers to employment, helping them gain the skills needed to enter and advance in high-demand industries.

To facilitate this access, the SAWDB emphasizes partnerships with educational institutions and training providers, including community colleges, universities, and technical schools that are on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). These institutions offer a variety of programs designed to provide students with credentials that align with industry standards and employer demands. By working closely with these institutions, the Board ensures that the training programs available are directly connected to the needs of the local economy and provide pathways to meaningful employment.

One of the key methods employed by the SAWDB to improve access to these credentials is through the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs). ITAs are leveraged to provide financial assistance for individuals pursuing postsecondary education and

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training, helping them to enroll in programs that lead to recognized credentials. These credentials include bachelor's degrees, associate degrees, certificates, and industry-recognized certifications that are designed to be portable and stackable. This means that individuals can build on their credentials over time, increasing their qualifications and enhancing their employability in a range of industries.

For example, a participant may begin by earning a certificate in a specialized trade, such as welding, and later stack additional certifications or pursue an associate or bachelor's degree to advance their career in manufacturing or construction management. The portability of these credentials ensures that workers can move between employers or industries with the assurance that their qualifications will be recognized and valued.

To enhance access further, the SAWDB works with core partners, including workforce, adult education, vocational rehabilitation, and other support programs, to provide wraparound services that help individuals overcome barriers to education and training. These services include career counseling, financial aid assistance, job placement support, and referrals to supportive services such as childcare and transportation assistance. The goal is to remove any obstacles that might prevent participants from enrolling in and completing credential programs.

The SAWDB also promotes co-enrollment in core programs to ensure that participants benefit from a holistic approach to their education and career advancement. By co-enrolling individuals in programs such as WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth programs, and Title II Adult Education programs, participants receive coordinated support and resources, maximizing their chances of success.

The SAWDB also invests in the development of apprenticeship programs, which combine on-the-job training with classroom instruction, leading to industry-recognized credentials. These apprenticeships provide a direct pathway to employment while allowing participants to earn credentials that are portable and stackable, further supporting career advancement opportunities.

The SAWDB is committed to continuously strengthening relationships with education and training providers and ensuring that participants have access to the resources they need to achieve recognized postsecondary credentials that open doors to high-demand, high-wage careers in Southwestern New Mexico.

Coordination of Supportive Services

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§679.560(b)(10) Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate WIOA title I workforce investment activities with the provision of transportation and other appropriate supportive services in the local area.

The policy issued by the SAWDB outlines guidelines for supportive services provided to participants enrolled in WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs. These services are designed to assist participants in successfully completing their employment or training activities. Supportive services are offered only when they are necessary for a participant's participation in career or training activities, and when other resources are unavailable. Participants must meet eligibility requirements and follow procedures for requesting and receiving these services.

Examples of Supportive Services:

Transportation Assistance:

- **Mileage reimbursement:** Participants who travel 25-75 miles in a single day will receive the maximum daily amount of \$25.00. Participants who travel 76-150 miles in a single day will receive the maximum daily amount of \$50.00. Participants who travel 151 miles or more in a single day will receive the maximum daily amount of \$75.00.
- **Bus passes:** Provided based on training or work schedules, distributed monthly or daily for job searches.
- **Vehicle repairs:** Repair costs may be covered if linked to employment or training, but must meet certain documentation requirements.

Housing and Utility Assistance:

- **Rent assistance:** One-time rent assistance per program year, covering overdue payments, with a signed lease required for verification.
- **Utility assistance:** Gas and electric utility assistance, also limited to one-time per program year, with documentation like a shut-off notice required.
- **Short-term housing:** Assistance for individuals attending training more than 60 miles from their home, or emergency shelter for participants in training.

Childcare Assistance:

- Childcare payments up to \$35/day per child, provided the participant lacks other available childcare and has custody of children under 13. Childcare must be provided by a certified or licensed provider.

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Job-Related Assistance:

- **Clothing, footwear, tools and equipment:** Necessary clothing, footwear, tools or equipment required by an employer or training provider, with documentation verifying the need.

Background checks:

- Paid if required for employment or educational purposes.

Medical Assistance:

- Minor health services such as physical exams, eye exams, eyeglass prescriptions, or hearing aids may be covered. Services must be necessary for training or employment and not available through other resources.

Technology Assistance

- Laptop or computer software

Other Services:

- **Driver's license and ID fees:** Support for obtaining or renewing government-issued identification, such as a driver's license or birth certificate.
- **Needs-related payments:** Financial assistance to help cover living expenses while participating in training programs for eligible adults and dislocated workers.

Expanded List of Services for Youth Participants:

- Assistance with transportation, housing, childcare, and work-related uniforms or tools.
- Referrals to community services or medical care providers.
- Needs-related payments for youth aged 18-24 who are in training programs.

Coordination of Follow-up Services

§679.560(c) Provide a description of the board's follow-up policy and procedures for each of the targeted groups in Section G.

The SAWDB's follow-up services policy aligns with WIOA's regulations to ensure that America's Job Center staff remain in contact with existing customers after their last activity. Service providers will receive the guidance needed for follow-up services for WIOA Adult, Dislocated Workers, and Youth ~~participants~~. The policy became effective on July 1, 2017.

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1. Youth

Follow-up services are critical services that are provided following a youth's exit from the program to help ensure the youth is successful in employment and/or post-secondary education and training. Follow-up services may include regular contact with a youth participant's employer, including assistance in addressing work-related problems that arise.

Follow-up services for youth may also include the following program elements:

- Supportive Services
- Adult mentoring
- Financial literacy education
- 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
- Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training

Follow-up services must be provided to all participants for at least 12 months unless the participant declines to receive them. Information from the Youth follow-ups must be entered into NM JOBS, every quarter, following exit. All contacts and attempts to contact an individual for a follow-up must be entered into NM JOBS. Evidence of a minimum of two attempts to contact an individual who is unavailable must be documented in NM JOBS to constitute a follow-up.

Follow-up services must be provided, as appropriate, including workplace counseling, for participants in Adult or Dislocated Worker workforce investment activities who are placed in unsubsidized employment, for up to 12 months after the first day of employment. As a requirement for applying for supportive services under WIOA, other related resources in the area (including One-Stop partners) must first be explored. Applicants and participants shall secure documentation of denial from all other available community resources to which the case manager referred the applicant. Such efforts shall be documented in the participant's file. To prevent duplication of costs and effort, participants must first exhaust available related services before WIOA services are authorized.

To improve the efficiency of follow-up services, the SAWDB strongly supports the State's initiative to implement an aligned case management system across people, processes, and technology, and to improve service delivery. New Mexico has joined the Aligned Case Management (ACM) Institute, an initiative facilitated by the USDOL ETA's Office of Workforce Investment and NASWA's Workforce Information Technology

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Support Center (WITSC). The mission of the ACM Institute is “to enhance service delivery and customer experience within the public workforce system through the creation of a replicable framework and an on-demand toolkit of resources, leveraging interoperable data and modern technology.” This initiative is in the New Mexico WIOA Combined State Plan as Alignment Strategy 4.

Coordination of Service Priorities

§679.560(b)(21) Describe the direction given by the Governor (NMDWS) and the LWDB to the one-stop operator to 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 of the WIOA DOL Rule.

The SAWDB, in accordance with WIOA sec. 134(c)(3)(e) and §680.600 of the WIOA DOL Rule, establishes Priority of Service to be implemented by the One-Stop Operator for participants who are low-income, on public assistance, or who are basic-skills deficient. The Board establishes a Priority of Service for veterans or eligible spouses of veterans, who are followed by other individuals who are NOT low-income, on public assistance, basic-skills deficient, veterans or spouses of veterans, but meet WIOA’s eligibility requirements. The priority of services always exists, regardless of funding.

The SAWDB will ensure that the service provider incorporates the Priority of Service into its application process for every individual receiving career or training services and that the service provider’s management self-monitors its program for compliance.

The One-Stop Operator will ensure that the Priority of Service requirements are being met by conducting a review and monitoring of the process not less than six times per year. The Board will conduct desk reviews at least four times per year by sampling participants to ensure compliance.

Order of Priority

In accordance with TEGL 03-15, priority will be provided in the following order:

- First, to veterans and eligible spouses who are also included in the groups given statutory priority for WIOA adult formula funds. This means that veterans and eligible spouses who are also recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic-skills deficient will receive first priority for services provided with WIOA adult formula funds

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Key aspects of this coordination effort include:¶

Unified Messaging and Branding:¶

America’s Job Center offices are presented as the central hub for all partner services under a unified brand to make it easier for customers to identify and access services. All partners use common outreach materials and language to promote a consistent message about the availability of services.¶

Example: Flyers promoting workshops and job fairs feature the America’s Job Center logo alongside non-collocated partner programs like Vocational Rehabilitation and Adult Education. These materials emphasize the full range of services available to individuals, such as job placement assistance, training opportunities, and support services like childcare.¶

Collaborative Outreach Plans:¶

The LWDB provides clear direction for joint outreach plans that engage all partners, including Title I (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs), Title II (Adult Education and Literacy), Title III (Wagner-Peyser), Title IV (Vocational Rehabilitation), and others such as TANF, SNAP E&T, and Veterans Services. Partners meet regularly to develop outreach strategies aimed at shared customer populations, ensuring that resources are pooled and efforts are not duplicated.¶

Example: A coordinated outreach effort might focus on veterans who are unemployed or underemployed.

Through this effort, outreach is targeted to veterans via partnerships with local Veterans’ organizations, veteran job fairs, and community events, and all partners ensure veterans are aware of available services like skills training, job search assistance, and support ... [45]

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- Second, to non-covered persons (that is, individuals who are not veterans or eligible spouses) who are included in the groups given priority for WIOA adult formula funds
- Third, to veterans and eligible spouses who are not included in WIOA's priority groups
- Last, to non-covered persons outside the groups given priority under WIOA

Coordination of Outreach Efforts

§679.560(c) Describe how the board will coordinate outreach efforts across partner programs for shared customers and target populations.

The SAWDB, through the One-Stop Operator, coordinates outreach across partner programs to connect shared customers and target populations with appropriate workforce services. This coordination includes joint outreach activities, referrals, community engagement, and communication among partner programs to expand awareness of available services and reduce duplication of outreach efforts.

Title I - Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs

Coordination with Title II providers focuses on reaching individuals with low literacy and limited English proficiency. This approach emphasizes integrating basic education with workforce development and highlighting educational opportunities that lead directly to career advancement.

Title II - Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) Programs

Coordination with Title II providers focuses on reaching individuals with low literacy and limited English proficiency. This approach emphasizes integrating basic education with workforce development and highlighting educational opportunities that lead directly to career advancement.

Title III - Wagner-Peyser Employment Services

For Wagner-Peyser Employment Services, outreach focuses on expanding awareness of job search assistance, labor market information, and reemployment services, particularly in rural and underserved areas. Coordination helps ensure these services are widely available and effectively promoted across the workforce system.

Title IV - Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

Individuals with disabilities are a priority for outreach coordinated with Vocational Rehabilitation, with an emphasis on specialized services and inclusive workforce

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The SAWDB has given the Service Providers direction to give priority to participants that are low-income, on public assistance, or are basic-skills deficient. This process follows the WIOA sec. 134(c)(3)E and 680.600 of the WIOA DOL Rule, stating that WIOA establishes a priority requirement with respect to funds allocated to a local area for adult employment and training activities.

Deleted: The SAWDB, working through the One-Stop Operator, will ensure that a cohesive and comprehensive outreach strategy is implemented across all WIOA-mandated partners to effectively serve shared customers and target populations.

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Deleted: Through the One-Stop Operator, the SAWDB will guide outreach efforts for Title I programs, ensuring that individuals most in need—such as economically disadvantaged adults, dislocated workers, and youth—are identified and connected with essential job training and career services. The Board will set clear expectations for outreach to underrepresented groups, ensuring they have access to the resources that support their entry or reentry into the workforce.

Deleted: The SAWDB will work with the One-Stop Operator to coordinate outreach with Title II providers, focusing on individuals with low literacy and limited English proficiency. The SAWDB will emphasize the importance of integrating basic education with workforce development, ensuring that outreach efforts highlight educational opportunities that lead directly to career advancement.

Deleted: The SAWDB will ensure that the One-Stop Operator collaborates closely with Wagner-Peyser programs to expand outreach, particularly in rural and underserved areas. This collaboration will focus on making job search assistance, labor market information, and reemployment services widely available and effectively promoted across all platforms.

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opportunities. This coordination helps ensure individuals have access to the resources they need to achieve employment.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

Outreach efforts with TANF focus on connecting their participants with workforce services, including training, education, and employment services that support the transition to economic self-sufficiency.

Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

Highlighting employment opportunities that value the experience of older workers is a key focus of outreach with SCSEP. These strategies also promote the availability of community service positions that can lead to sustained, unsubsidized employment.

Perkins Career and Technical Education (CTE)

Through coordination with Perkins CTE programs, outreach focuses on students and adults pursuing technical education. This approach promotes CTE as a pathway to high-demand careers and aligns outreach with regional economic development priorities.

Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Programs

Coordinated efforts with CSBG programs focus on low-income individuals and families and connect these populations with workforce services that support stability and economic mobility. Outreach includes integrating support services, such as housing and childcare, with employment opportunities.

Unemployment Insurance (UI)

For UI programs, outreach focuses on identifying individuals who may benefit from workforce services and promoting reemployment services and training opportunities to help UI recipients transition back into the workforce.

Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Employment and Training Programs

Focusing on individuals receiving housing assistance is a priority when coordinating outreach with HUD programs. The goal is to connect individuals with employment services while supporting access to stable housing that contributes to long-term self-sufficiency.

Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFW)

Special emphasis is placed on reaching Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers, with outreach strategies addressing the unique needs of this population, including language barriers and the transient nature of their work. Coordination with partners serving MSFWs

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Deleted: The SAWDB, through the One-Stop Operator, will prioritize outreach to individuals with disabilities by coordinating efforts with VR programs. The Board will ensure that outreach strategies emphasize the availability of specialized services and advocate for inclusive workforce opportunities, ensuring that all individuals have access to the resources they need to achieve employment.

Deleted: With TANF now integrated into the one-stop system, the SAWDB will direct the One-Stop Operator to develop outreach strategies that connect TANF participants with a broad range of workforce services. The SAWDB's vision includes promoting training, education, and employment services that help TANF recipients transition to economic self-sufficiency.

Deleted: The SAWDB will guide the One-Stop Operator in enhancing outreach to older workers through coordination with SCSEP. Outreach initiatives will be designed to highlight employment opportunities that value the experience of senior workers and promote the availability of community service positions that can lead to sustained, unsubsidized employment.

Deleted: The SAWDB will ensure the One-Stop Operator collaborates with Perkins CTE programs to target students and adults pursuing technical education. The Board will stress the importance of promoting CTE as a key pathway to high-demand careers, ensuring that outreach efforts align with regional economic development priorities.

Deleted: Through the One-Stop Operator, the SAWDB will ensure that outreach to low-income individuals and families is comprehensive, leveraging CSBG programs to connect these populations with workforce services that support stability and economic mobility. The Board will emphasize joint outreach efforts that integrate support services, such as housing and childcare, with employment opportunities.

Deleted: The SAWDB will direct the One-Stop Operator to work with UI programs to identify individuals who can benefit from workforce services. The Board's approach will include targeted outreach to promote reemployment services and training opportunities, helping UI recipients transition back into the workforce more quickly.

Deleted: The SAWDB will ensure that the One-Stop Operator coordinates with HUD programs to reach individuals receiving housing assistance. Outreach efforts will be designed to link stable housing with employment services, supporting the Board's vision of helping individuals achieve long-term self-sufficiency.

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supports culturally sensitive outreach and connects farmworkers with education, training, and job placement services.

Coordination of Professional Development Activities

§679.560(c) Describe how professional development activities will be coordinated across all partner programs staff.

The SAWDB, through the One-Stop Operator, coordinates professional development activities across partner programs to enhance the skills and knowledge of staff, improve service delivery, and foster a cohesive workforce system. The focus is on creating a continuous learning environment where staff from different programs can share expertise, learn new techniques, and stay updated on industry trends and regulatory changes. Coordination of these activities is vital for maintaining high standards of service and ensuring that staff are equipped to meet the needs of diverse populations.

Key elements of the coordination of professional development activities include:

1. Joint Training Initiatives:

- Joint training sessions that bring together staff from various partner programs, including WIOA Title I (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs), Title II (Adult Education and Literacy), Title III (Wagner-Peyser), Title IV (Vocational Rehabilitation), TANF, SNAP E&T, Veterans Services, and others. These sessions are designed to address common areas of need and ensure that all staff have a comprehensive understanding of the services offered across the workforce system.
- Example: A training session on customer service best practices might involve staff from America's Job Centers, Adult Education providers, and Vocational Rehabilitation agencies. This session could cover topics such as effective communication techniques, cultural competency, and strategies for working with individuals with disabilities or language barriers.

2. Cross-Training Programs:

- Cross-training is a critical component of professional development, allowing staff to gain a working knowledge of the services and processes of other partner programs. This ensures that staff can provide accurate information and referrals to customers, enhancing the overall customer experience.
- Example: America's Job Center staff might be cross-trained on the eligibility criteria and services available through TANF and SNAP E&T programs, while TANF caseworkers might be trained on WIOA Title I services and job

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Deleted: The SAWDB will place special emphasis on reaching Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers, directing the One-Stop Operator to collaborate with partners who serve this population. The Board's vision includes outreach strategies that address the unique needs of MSFWs, such as language barriers and the transient nature of their work. The Board will ensure that outreach efforts are culturally sensitive and that MSFWs are fully integrated into the workforce system, with access to tailored education, training, and job placement services.

Deleted: By working through the One-Stop Operator, SAWDB will ensure that all WIOA-mandated partners are engaged in a unified outreach strategy that effectively serves shared customers and target populations. This coordinated approach will maximize the impact of the workforce system, align with the Board's vision, and promote economic inclusion and opportunity for all individuals in the community.¶

Deleted: The SAWDB ensures that professional development activities are coordinated across all partner programs to enhance the skills and knowledge of staff, improve service delivery, and foster a cohesive workforce system. The focus is on creating a continuous learning environment where staff from different programs can share expertise, learn new techniques, and stay updated on industry trends and regulatory changes. Coordination of these activities is vital for maintaining high standards of service and ensuring that staff are equipped to meet the needs of diverse populations.

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placement resources. This cross-training enables staff to guide customers through the workforce system more effectively, regardless of their initial point of contact.

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3. Use of Technology and Online Learning:

- Technology is leveraged to provide ongoing professional development opportunities through online learning platforms, webinars, and virtual workshops. This approach ensures that all partner program staff, including those in rural areas, have access to training regardless of their location.
- Example: An online course on the latest labor market trends in Southwestern New Mexico might be made available to all partner staff, allowing them to better understand the local job market and provide relevant career advice to customers. Webinars on changes to federal regulations or new program initiatives can also be recorded and shared with staff for flexible learning.

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4. Regular Partner Meetings and Workshops:

- Regular meetings and workshops provide opportunities for partner program staff to come together to discuss challenges, share best practices, and participate in professional development activities. These meetings foster collaboration and ensure that all partners are aligned in their approach to workforce development.
- Example: Quarterly partner meetings might include a workshop on effective case management techniques, where staff from different programs can discuss strategies for managing caseloads, improving follow-up with customers, and coordinating services. These workshops also provide an opportunity for staff to network and build relationships that enhance collaboration.

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5. Specialized Training for Target Populations:

- Professional development activities are tailored to the specific needs of staff working with targeted populations, such as individuals with disabilities, veterans, migrant and seasonal farmworkers, youth, and others. This specialized training ensures that staff are equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively serve these groups.
- Example: Staff working with individuals with disabilities might receive training on assistive technology, disability awareness, and strategies for supporting individuals in competitive employment. Similarly, staff working with veterans might receive training on understanding military culture, navigating veteran-specific benefits, and providing job placement services tailored to veterans.

6. Leadership Development and Succession Planning:

- Leadership development and succession are emphasized as part of the professional development strategy. This includes training for current and emerging leaders within the partner programs to ensure a strong leadership pipeline and continuity of services.
- Example: A leadership development program might include workshops on effective management, strategic planning, and conflict resolution. These programs help prepare mid-level managers and frontline staff for future leadership roles, ensuring that the workforce system has capable leaders at all levels.

7. Evaluation and Continuous Improvement:

- The effectiveness of professional development activities is regularly evaluated through feedback from participants, performance metrics, and customer satisfaction surveys. This evaluation helps identify areas for improvement and ensures that professional development activities remain relevant and impactful.
- Example: After a training session on new job search technologies, staff might be surveyed to assess their confidence in using the tools and the impact on customer outcomes. This feedback is used to refine future training sessions and address any gaps in knowledge or skills.

Coordination of Referrals

§679.560(c) Describe how the board will coordinate customer referrals across partner programs.

In coordination with the One-Stop Operator, the Administrative Entity developed an online referral system accessible through the EmployNM website. The system was designed to allow all partners, including those without access to NM JOBS, to refer customers and participants to additional program services and support New Mexico's Aligned Case Management (ACM) initiative, identified as Alignment Strategy 4 in the New Mexico WIOA Combined State Plan.

Concurrently, the State obtained funding to develop and implement a statewide aligned case management initiative. To avoid duplicating efforts and systems, SAWDB did not fully implement its locally developed referral system and instead transitioned its focus to supporting the State's UPin Project.

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The coordinated professional development activities across all partner programs ensure that staff are well-prepared to deliver high-quality services to customers. By fostering a culture of continuous learning, cross-training, and collaboration, the SAWDB helps to create a more integrated and effective workforce system. These efforts ultimately enhance the ability of partner programs to meet the diverse needs of job seekers and employers in Southwestern New Mexico, ensuring that the workforce system is responsive, innovative, and capable of driving economic growth in the region.

Deleted: The SAWDB is committed to ensuring seamless and efficient coordination of customer referrals across partner programs within the one-stop system. Using the NMWCOS online referral system allows for real-time tracking and management of referrals, ensuring that customers are directed to the services they need without unnecessary delays.¶

¶

One-Stop Operator, Giselle Palomares shared the following information:¶

"Job seekers are referred to other programs depending on the platform that program requires. Some partner programs have their own referral form online and require that form to be filled out when referring a job seeker and some partners prefer a referral via email. The partner program may have in place a time frame of when they are able to contact the job seekers once their referral has been received."¶

To utilize the NMWCOS referral system, all partners are required to complete specific software training. This training ensures that all staff members are proficient in using the system to its full potential, allowing for accurate and efficient referrals. Partners not currently using NMWCOS must gain access from NMDWS and are also required to complete Security Awareness Training (SAT) annually. The SAT ensures that all data is handled securely and that partners are aligned with the state's standards for information security.¶

Service providers within the one-stop system are responsible for developing a comprehensive referral process that guarantees customers are promptly connected to the appropriate services. This process is designed to align services across multiple delivery systems and partners through a unified plan, ensuring that performance outcomes are consistent across... [46]

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Through UPin, New Mexico is establishing a coordinated approach to service delivery across workforce, education, human services, and other partner programs. The platform is intended to strengthen communication and referral management by allowing partners to track referrals, monitor outcomes, share appropriate information, and conduct follow-up activities. SAWDB's participation in the statewide initiative supports improved coordination, reduces duplication of services, and provides a more seamless experience for individuals accessing services throughout the region.

Coordination with Other Partner Programs

\$679.560(c) Describe any other services provided in the one-stops to support the local workforce development system and customers. Include any coordination plans or activities the board has with any other partner programs such as, AmeriCorps, Job Corps, Youth Build, Mission: Graduation, Innovate Educate, etc.

The SAWDB, along with its One-Stop Operator and service providers, offers a range of services to support the local workforce development system and its customers. These services are enhanced through coordinated efforts with various partner programs, such as Job Corps, Youth Build, and other community-based initiatives. The Board has established memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with the National Farmworker Jobs Program and the low-income housing program in Doña Ana County to ensure aligned services and activities.

The SAWDB also engages with economic development offices and other agencies to develop collaborative strategies that leverage resources and reduce service duplication. For example, Job Corps has previously allocated workspace at America's Job Center in Las Cruces, providing its participants with access to resources such as the NM JOBS, résumé writing services, job search assistance, and On-the-Job Training (OJT) programs. Additionally, workspaces are available for Job Corps and other partners in America's Job Centers in Deming, Silver City, Socorro, and Truth or Consequences, New Mexico.

This collaboration ensures that Job Corps youth and other program participants can seamlessly integrate into the workforce development system, benefitting from the comprehensive services offered at the centers. The SAWDB remains open to forming new partnerships with organizations that align with its workforce development mission, continually seeking opportunities to enhance service delivery.

The SAWDB's One-Stop Committee plays a crucial role in these efforts by recommending policies and providing guidance to the Administrative Entity and One-

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In coordination with the One-Stop Operator, the Administrative Entity developed an online referral system accessible through the EmployNM website. This system will allow all partners, even those who do not currently have access to WCOS, to refer customers and current participants to other program services. The referral process is one of the greatest factors in the State's initiative for aligned case management, as referenced in the New Mexico WIOA Combined State Plan as Alignment Strategy 4.

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Stop Operator on coordinating with partner programs. The primary objective is to ensure that all workforce partners work in harmony, delivering streamlined services to customers and maximizing the effectiveness of the workforce development system in the region.

The SAWDB, its One-Stop Operator, and its service providers service hundreds of customers every week. With so much contact with customers comes the need to coordinate services with partners, such as Job Corps, Youth Build programs, and other community-based programs. In connecting with these programs, the Board's Administrative Entity will continue to engage with economic development offices and other agencies to develop strategies for services, leverage resources, and minimize the duplication of services.

The SAWDB will continue to explore and be receptive to developing relationships with other organizations that support the mission of workforce development within the region.

The SAWDB's One-Stop Committee will recommend policy to the Board and offer guidance to the Administrative Entity and One-Stop Operator on the coordination with other partner programs. The focal point of the policy is to ensure that the workforce partners are coordinating their efforts to provide a streamlined service to customers.

The SAWDB's Administrative Entity and several of the America's Job Center partners have participated in providing technical information to The Bridge of Southern New Mexico, a community-based organization, in their development of a workforce talent strategic plan, titled the Doña Ana County/Borderplex Joint Regional Workforce Talent Development Strategic Plan. Through a community collaboration of organizations, the group worked together to identify and understand the barriers to success, plus identify eight industries and their occupational pathways.

The New Mexico National Guard Youth Challenge Academy, a state-supported program, is a 17 ½ month program that starts with a demanding 22-week quasi-military residential phase for cadets in Roswell, New Mexico. It is followed by a year of mentoring support to help the cadets maintain positive lifestyles. The program is for young men and women, ages 16 to 18, who are not currently attending school or do not have enough credits to graduate from high school. The SAWDB will work with the program to develop a pathway to transition youth who reside in the Board's seven-county area under the WIOA out-of-school youth program. This partnership will leverage federal and state resources and seek to develop more significant positive outcomes that lead to career training and job placements for the youth in the region.

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One-Team Approach

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act calls for a fully integrated model with Adult Education and Family Literacy, and Vocational Rehabilitation to better serve individuals and employers. The One-Team Approach is a “We” concept of how staff think about their workforce partners as one team.

Management from the different partners will develop training programs and practices to incorporate this approach into the workforce system’s daily practices.

ADMINISTRATIVE ELEMENTS

G. Fiscal and Performance Management

§679.560(b)(14) Identify the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in WIOA sec. 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III).

Disbursal of Funds

The South Central Council of Governments is responsible for the disbursal of grant funds described in WIOA sec. 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III). The South Central Council of Governments shall disburse the grant funds for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act activities at the direction of the SAWDB.

§679.580(b)(2)(ii) (a) Explanation of any changes in the financing available to support WIOA title I and Partner-provided WIOA services.

Funding

The U.S. Department of Labor provides funding to the State of New Mexico, which allocates funds to the four local regions using a formula. The increases and decreases from one program year to another are solely based on the formula methodology.

Funding by Program Year					
PROGRAM ALLOCATION	PY22/FY23	PY23/FY24	PY24/FY25	PY25/FY26	PY26/FY27
Administration (10% of Total)	\$439,601	\$510,373	\$472,139	\$429,063	\$396,668
Adult	\$952,829	\$1,143,028	\$1,035,554	\$936,664	\$864,414
Dislocated Worker	\$1,543,938	\$1,855,275	\$1,868,436	\$1,701,444	\$1,555,278
Youth	\$1,459,648	\$1,595,050	\$1,345,255	\$1,223,463	\$1,150,314
TOTAL ALLOCATION	\$4,396,016	\$5,103,726	\$4,721,384	\$4,290,634	\$3,966,674

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Funds are allocated to each of the four local workforce boards by a formula based on factors described in the U.S. Department of Labor's Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 16-19 for the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Allocations. New Mexico TEGL 16-19 requirements use prior-year data from the New Mexico Department of Workforce Solutions' (NMDWS) Economic Research & Analysis Bureau.

§679.560(b)(15) Provide a detailed description of the competitive process that will be used to award the subgrants and contracts for WIOA title I activities. (Please provide a copy of the board's procurement policy or policies, including conflict of interest provisions as a part of Attachment A.)

Competitive Process

The SAWDB follows the New Mexico State Procurement Code 13-1-1 through 13-1-199 NMSA 1978, and in conjunction with the requirements under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, such as, but not limited to, the procurement of one-stop operators and service providers.

The Code of Federal Regulations, Section 662.410 states the following on how the One-Stop Operator is selected.

- (a) "The Local Board, with the agreement of the chief elected official, must designate and certify One-Stop Operators in each local area.
- (b) The One-Stop Operator is designated or certified:
 - (1) Through a competitive process,
 - (2) Under an agreement between the Local Board and a consortium of entities that includes at least three or more of the required One-Stop partners identified at §662.200, or
 - (3) Under the conditions described in §§662.420 or 662.430. (WIA sec.121(d), 121(e) and 117(f)(2))
- (c) The designation or certification of the One-Stop Operator must be carried out in accordance with the "sunshine provision" at 20 CFR 661.307."

§679.580(b)(2)(iv) (b) Include a chart of past, current, and expected service levels for Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth for PYs 2024 and 2027. (c) Include changes in strategies to meet local performance goals, as well increased service levels.

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\$679.560(b)(16) Provide the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor (NMDWS) and chief elected official consistent with WIOA sec. 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the local board for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under WIOA title I subtitle B, and the one-stop delivery system in the local area, in Attachment E. (Refer to Section III of these guidelines, Process for Plan Modifications, for information on required updates to this section.)

The local plan will apply current federal performance guidance, including the March 25, 2024, final rule defining Effectiveness in Serving Employers as Retention with the Same Employer, and the Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) documentation updates in TEGL 10-16, Change 3 / OCTAE PM 17-2, Change 3, with performance validation consistent with TEGL 23-19, Change 3.

Local Performance Levels

The following tables show the final performance levels for PY24 and PY25.

PY24 Local Performance Levels										
The following table displays the PY24 performance levels for the Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs.										
Program	Employment Q2		Median Earnings		Employment Q4		Credential Attainment		Measurable Skill Gains	
Adult	98.29%		96.89%		95.15%		91.65%		114.43%	
	ACTUAL	GOAL	ACTUAL	GOAL	ACTUAL	GOAL	ACTUAL	GOAL	ACTUAL	GOAL
	77.65%	79.00%	\$8,477.73	\$8,750.00	76.12%	80.00%	52.24%	57.00%	76.67%	67.00%
	66 / 85	-	Cohort 66	-	102 / 134	-	35 / 67	-	92 / 120	-
Dislocated Worker	114.07%		100.03%		100.15%		69.73%		121.83%	
	ACTUAL	GOAL	ACTUAL	GOAL	ACTUAL	GOAL	ACTUAL	GOAL	ACTUAL	GOAL
	83.84%	73.50%	\$8,176.92	\$7,500.00	79.49%	73.50%	38.24%	60.00%	79.01%	65.00%
	83 / 99	-	Cohort 83	-	62 / 78	-	13 / 34	-	143 / 181	-
Youth	85.29%		81.43%		91.55%		61.92%		63.64%	
	ACTUAL	GOAL	ACTUAL	GOAL	ACTUAL	GOAL	ACTUAL	GOAL	ACTUAL	GOAL
	57.14%	67.00%	\$3,664.54	\$4,500.00	58.59%	64.00%	31.58%	51.00%	35.00%	55.00%
	64 / 112	-	Cohort 59	-	75 / 128	-	18 / 57	-	49 / 140	-

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PY25 Local Performance Levels

The following table displays the PY25 performance levels for the Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs.

Program	Employment Q2		Median Earnings		Employment Q4		Credential Attainment		Measurable Skill Gains	
Adult	96.66%		75.20%		99.49%		151.87%		116.88%	
	ACTUAL	GOAL	ACTUAL	GOAL	ACTUAL	GOAL	ACTUAL	GOAL	ACTUAL	GOAL
	76.36%	79.00%	\$6,579.78	\$8,750.00	79.59%	80.00%	86.11%	57.00%	78.31%	67.00%
	84 / 110	-	Cohort 66	-	78 / 98	-	31 / 36	-	65 / 83	-
Dislocated Worker	107.48%		111.41%		104.51%		141.84%		86.54%	
	ACTUAL	GOAL	ACTUAL	GOAL	ACTUAL	GOAL	ACTUAL	GOAL	ACTUAL	GOAL
	78.98%	73.50%	\$8,355.55	\$7,500.00	76.81%	73.50%	85.11%	60.00%	56.25%	65.00%
	139 / 176	-	Cohort 108	-	106 / 138	-	80 / 94	-	54 / 96	-
Youth	96.52%		113.24%		92.59%		101.86%		44.66%	
	ACTUAL	GOAL	ACTUAL	GOAL	ACTUAL	GOAL	ACTUAL	GOAL	ACTUAL	GOAL
	64.67%	67.00%	\$5,095.67	\$4,500.00	59.26%	64.00%	52.00%	51.00%	24.56%	55.00%
	108 / 167	-	Cohort 68	-	80 / 135	-	26 / 50	-	28 / 114	-

The negotiated performance levels for PY24 and PY25 are in the following table.

This will be updated with PY26 negotiated performance levels when available.

Negotiated Local Performance Levels

The following table displays the negotiated PY24/PY25 performance levels for the Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs.

Performance Measure - PY24-PY25	Adult	Dislocated Worker	Youth
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	79.0%	73.5%	67.0%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	80.0%	73.5%	64.0%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$8,750	\$7,500	\$4,500
Credential Attainment 4th Quarter After Exit	57.0%	60.0%	51.0%

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Measurable Skills Gain	67.0%	65.0%	55.0%
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§679.560(b)(17) Describe the actions the LWDB will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing workforce development board.

To work toward fulfilling the needs of employers in the area, the SAWDB will need to coordinate with its key workforce partners and employers to identify the needs and expected outcomes within the region.

Deleted: The Board may establish a makeshift committee to implement the region's Career Pathways Plan.

Throughout its years of performance, the SAWDB met and/or exceeded its performance measures in entered employment, average six-month earnings, retention, entered employment or education for youth, measurable skill gains, and credentials earned for the Adult program. The credential attainment performance has dipped for the Dislocated Worker and Youth programs, and staff is working with service providers to identify and remedy this issue. The Board has been very successful in many facets and will continue to pursue improvements in its performance and the performance of its service and training providers. An example of innovation that pursues high performance is Youth Industry Forums, a modified version of the SEEDS initiative that board members and staff learned about from Workforce Solutions Cameron while attending a Texas Workforce Conference. At an Industry Forum, the Youth program partners with a local school that hosts an industry-specific panel. The panel of local industry professionals provides students with insight into different careers through their personal stories. These forums will allow the Southwestern region to highlight career exploration by facilitating conversations between students and industry experts.

The SAWDB will also periodically examine its vision, structure, future initiatives, and partnerships as it develops strategies for its programs and how it can best support economic development and the employers in the region. It will convene stakeholders, align its partner program, and seek to increase capacity among partners.

At the board level, the SAWDB has incorporated professional development items on its meeting agenda to educate its members on the workforce system. Testimonials are also incorporated into the meetings. Both participants and employers will continue to provide SAWDB members with first-hand accounts of their experience in the WIOA program.

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§679.350, WIOA §106(e)(2) and §107(c)(2) Subsequent Local Board Certification

The SAWDB has submitted its Subsequent Local Board Certification application, which is currently under review by NMDWS.

§679.560(b)(18) Describe how training services outlined in WIOA sec. 134 will be provided through the use of individual training accounts, including, if contracts for training services will be used, how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of individual training accounts, 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.

In accordance with WIOA Section 134(b), Local Employment Training Activities, funds allocated under the Act for adults and dislocated workers will provide for Career Services, Individual Training Accounts, On-the-Job Training, and Customized Training. When training contracts are used, they will be coordinated with Individual Training Accounts in accordance with local policy and customer choice requirements. Individuals will be screened for eligibility, as provided in the Act. Individuals will receive an orientation to services, an assessment of skill levels and supportive service needs, labor exchange services, referrals to partner programs, labor market information, and a list of eligible training providers, with customer choice instructions for those entering training programs.

The SAWDB will require service providers to maintain a customer choice document, signed by the participant, outlining the customer choice requirements, as required by the Act. This requirement will be monitored annually.

§679.560(c) Boards may implement a pay-for-performance contract strategy for certain elements, for which the board may reserve and use not more than 10 percent of the total funds allocated to the board under WIOA Section 128(b). Describe any plans the board may have to use pay-for-performance contracts to communicate performance expectations to service providers.

As a preliminary phase to issuing a request for proposals involving pay-for-performance contracts, the SAWDB may explore the benefits and methods of issuing such contracts with its Administrative Entity and legal counsel. The Board may request technical assistance from NMDWS to ensure that it follows federal and state regulations, as it relates to pay-for-performance contracts.

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§679.560(c) The local board grant agreements require boards to achieve or exceed a Minimum Training Expenditure Requirement of 40%. Local boards should obligate a minimum of 80% and expend a minimum of 40% of current year funding by the end of the third quarter of the program year. Please report on the local board's expected obligation and expenditure rates for PY 2026.

The SAWDB prepares a 15-month budget beginning in July and ending in September of the following year. Local boards are allowed two years to use their funds. The SAWDB intends to achieve or exceed the minimum training expenditure requirement of 40%, as well as achieve or exceed the minimum annual obligation and expenditure requirements of 80% and 40%, respectively.

The SAWDB has traditionally used at least 50% of its Adult and Dislocated Worker funds for training. The Board intends to maintain training expenditures at or above the 40% minimum requirement. The Board plans to achieve this requirement by establishing minimum expenditure levels in its service provider's contract. The Board will also use a monthly desk review process to ensure that expenditures are consistent with the contractual level. Information will be reviewed by the SAWDB's Monitoring/Performance Committee and report the information to the Board. If the service provider is not meeting the minimum requirements, the SAWDB's Administrative Entity will request an action plan outlining the service provider's steps to remedy the deficiency.

§679.560(b)(20) Describe how one-stop centers utilize the State's current case management and labor exchange platforms (e.g., ReadyNM and any NMDWS-designated systems), and how local intake, co-enrollment, data-sharing, and reporting practices align with State system upgrades and security standards.

America's Job Centers utilize NM JOBS, the State's current case-management and labor-exchange system, to support workforce services, customer intake, case management, employment services, referrals, and reporting. NM JOBS provides a range of resources for job seekers, employers, and America's Job Center staff, including job matching, résumé development, labor market information, labor market facts, employment and wage data, apprenticeship and internship information, and access to employment and career resources.

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Deleted: The SAWDB currently has the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act's Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth (Title IB) programs integrated with the Wagner-Peyser program in the One-Stops located in Deming, Las Cruces, Silver City, Socorro, and Sunland Park, New Mexico.¶

Deleted: The Board has determined that there are significant barriers in the way customers are serviced among the different partners and programs. The WIOA Wagner-Peyser and Title IB programs (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) have and will continue to use NMWCOS, which is capable of registering individuals into one system. The issue lies with the New Mexico Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and Commission for the Blind and Adult Education Services partners because they use different online client management software that does not interface with NMWCOS.¶
The SAWDB, through its One-Stop Operator, will promote the use of the NMWCOS with workforce partners for referrals, intakes, and case management. They will also evaluate systems and propose an interface system that will work for all partnering programs....

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Job Seekers

For job seekers, NM JOBS provides access to job searches, résumé development, career resources, apprenticeship and internship information, a list of eligible training providers, and Unemployment Insurance services. Individuals can create, update, and maintain résumés and use labor market information, labor market facts, and employment and wage data to explore occupations, wages, employment opportunities, education and experience requirements, and future employment outlook. The system also provides access to resources such as Why I Work, which helps individuals determine the income needed to support their desired lifestyle and explore occupations with wages that may meet that income level. Information about registered apprenticeship and internship opportunities provides additional pathways for individuals to gain experience, develop skills, and advance their careers.

Employers

Employers can use NM JOBS to post job openings, search for qualified candidates, and access résumés of individuals seeking employment. The system provides tools to match job postings and skill requirements with potential candidates and provides access to labor market information, labor market facts, and employment and wage data that can assist employers with recruitment, workforce planning, and developing competitive job opportunities. Employers can also access information about registered apprenticeships and resources for developing an apprenticeship program to meet their workforce needs.

America's Job Center Staff

America's Job Center staff use NM JOBS to register individuals, document services, maintain case-management information, support assessments and employment plans, coordinate services and referrals, and maintain information needed for program and performance reporting. Staff can also generate reports showing services provided by region, office, and program, along with population and demographic information. Staff can use the system's labor market information and other resources to assist customers with career planning, job searches, training and apprenticeship opportunities, and employment decisions.

H. Definitions

§679.560(c) Because the State has chosen not to define "additional assistance," as it relates to WIOA Youth program eligibility, each local board has the responsibility for determining its own definition of this eligibility category. If the local board wishes to use

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▲ this eligibility category, a local policy must be developed that specifies what conditions must be met for a youth to require “additional assistance” and what documentation is needed to demonstrate this eligibility category. In each area, not more than five percent of the in-school-youth under WIOA Section 129(3)(B) may be eligible under “individual who requires additional assistance” to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment. If applicable, provide the definitions the board uses for “requires additional assistance” and a copy of the related local policy as a part of **Attachment A**.

The SAWDB created Policy 18-03.2 Youth Requires Additional Assistance for the WIOA Youth program. This Board defines a person who requires “additional assistance” as “an individual (including a youth with a disability) who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or secure and hold employment.” A copy of this policy is listed under Attachment A and contains what conditions must be met for youth to require “additional assistance” and what documentation is needed to demonstrate this eligibility category.

§679.560(c)The state defines “basic skills deficient” for Adults and Youth as follows.

- For Adult – An individual who is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual’s family, or in society.
- For Youth – An individual who computes or solves problems, reads, writes, or speaks English at or below the eighth-grade level on a generally accepted standardized test or comparable score on a criterion-referenced test.

▼ Please describe the process the board uses to test individuals for basic skills deficiency.

The SAWDB authorizes its service providers to use WorkKeys Conversion Table for determining basic-skills deficiency (BSD) for Adult and Dislocated Workers individuals. A score of 4 or below is considered basic-skills deficient. For youth, the Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE) is used and anything below 8.9 is considered basic-skills deficient. The TABE is administered at intake to all youth participants and is used to determine the need for educational assistance and/or eligibility reasons. The assessment is administered through the Online TABE system through DRC INSIGHT. Youth participants are initially assessed with the locator test that determines the appropriate level of the TABE 11/12 the participant will continue with. TABE results administered by partner agencies for referred participants are used if assessed is within the last six months. Tutoring is provided to participants testing basic skills deficient to

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increase skills and a post-TABE is administered within 6 months to determine a measurable skill gain of at least one educational functioning level. Post-TABE can continue up until one year of program participation. With the need for remote services, the youth provider is in the process of certifying youth staff to conduct remote proctoring of the TABE assessment.

As stated in WIOA Section 3 Basic Skills Deficient is defined as follows:

BASIC SKILLS DEFICIENT.—The term “basic skills deficient” means, with respect to an individual— (A) who is a youth, that the individual has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test; or (B) who is a youth or adult, that the individual is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society.

I. **Note on Regional Planning**

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act identifies specific requirements for any planning that will occur across local areas, i.e. “regional areas.” This requirement does not apply in New Mexico as the New Mexico WIOA State Combined State Plan designates our existing four local areas as the regional planning areas.

WIOA Implementation Highlights

Include a section highlighting WIOA implementation accomplishment to date.

America’s Job Center Rebranding and Outreach

Implemented the regional transition from New Mexico Workforce Connection to America’s Job Center and expanded public awareness through the distribution of America’s Job Center-branded promotional materials throughout the seven-county region. The branded items received strong positive feedback from community members and were widely distributed at regional workforce events.

Website Accessibility

Expanded accessibility of the SAWDB’s regional website, EmployNM, through implementation of the Recite Me Accessibility Toolbar and continued efforts to bring the website into compliance with applicable federal accessibility requirements.

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Deleted: ; however, LWDBs are encouraged to describe regional economies in their local area and provide strategies of how unique regional economies will be addressed.

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Strengthened Workforce Partnerships

Strengthened collaboration with WIOA co-located and non-co-located workforce partners to improve coordination and access to services throughout the region.

Expanded Community Partnerships

Expanded relationships with community-based organizations serving individuals with diverse needs and barriers to employment, including underserved populations such as the unhoused community.

School and Local Government Partnerships

Strengthened partnerships with schools and local government partners to support recurring workforce and career-readiness events in Deming, Las Cruces, and Silver City. The City of Deming, Luna County, and the City of Las Cruces provide venues and support for regional job fairs and other workforce events.

Sector Strategy Development

Participated in DWS-led sector strategy development efforts designed to strengthen the region's capacity to develop and implement sector strategies. The SAWDB hosted a regional sector strategy event and continues to work with DWS to build knowledge and capacity in this area.

Apprenticeship Outreach

Partnered with DWS apprenticeship staff to provide regional employers with information about developing and implementing registered apprenticeship opportunities. DWS apprenticeship experts conducted information sessions to help employers understand the apprenticeship process and available resources.

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J. Assurances

#	Assurance	Indicate Yes / No
1.	The LWDB obtained input into the development of the Local Plan and provided an opportunity for comment on the plan by representatives of local boards and chief elected officials, businesses, labor organizations, institutions of higher education, the entities responsible for planning or administering the core programs and other programs included in the Plan, other primary stakeholders, and the general public, and the Local Plan is available and accessible to the general public.	Yes
2.	The LWDB has established a policy identifying circumstances that may present a conflict of interest for a local board member, or the entity or class of officials that the member represents, and procedures to resolve such conflicts.	Yes
3.	The LWDB has established a policy to provide to the public (including individuals with disabilities) access to meetings of local boards and local boards, and information regarding activities of local boards, such as data on board membership and minutes.	Yes
4.	The LWDB has established fiscal control and fund accounting procedures necessary to ensure the proper accounting for funds paid to the local boards for adult, dislocated worker, and youth programs to carry out workforce investment activities under chapters 2 and 3 of subtitle B.	Yes
5.	The Federal funds received to carry out a core program will not be expended for any purpose other than for activities authorized with respect to such funds under that core program.	Yes
6.	Service providers have a referral process in place for directing Veterans with Significant Barriers to Employment (SBE) to DVOP services, when appropriate.	Yes
7.	The LWDB has implemented a policy to ensure a process is in place for referring veterans with significant barriers to employment to career services provided by the JVSG program's Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist.	Yes
8.	The LWDB established procedures that set forth criteria to be used by chief elected officials for the appointment of local workforce investment board members.	Yes
9.	Priority of Service for covered persons is provided for each of the Title I programs: and	Yes
10.	The LWDB has taken appropriate action to secure compliance with the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 2900 and WIOA 184(a)(3).	Yes

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#	Assurance	Indicate Yes / No
11.	<u>The LWDB maintains, posts, and distributes the 'Equal Opportunity Is the Law' notice and ensures complaint procedures under 29 CFR Part 38 are accessible to participants, applicants, staff, and the public.</u>	<u>Yes</u>
12.	<u>The LWDB implement a Language Access Plan, provides auxiliary aids/services, and ensures electronic and information technology used by AJCs is accessible, consistent with 29 CFR Part 38.</u>	<u>Yes</u>
13.	<u>The LWDB retains financial and program records for the period required by the Uniform Guidance, including 2 CFR 200.334, and ensures records are available for monitoring and audit.</u>	<u>Yes</u>

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ORIGINAL RECORD OF ASSURANCES AND SIGNATURES ON FILE AT
600 HWY 195, ELEPHANT BUTTE, NM 87935

Signatures:

Chief Elected Official Chair

Date

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SAWDB Chair

Date

K. Attachments

Attachment A Provide on a flash drive, copies of all LWDB policies relevant to the implementation of WIOA. (Refer to Section III of these guidelines, Process for Plan Modifications, for information on required updates to this section.)

The following policies are current in the Southwestern region and housed on the America's Job Center Southwestern Area regional website:

<https://www.employnm.com/policies-regulations>

To view the policies, use the hyperlinks below.

- 13-01.1 [Contract Signature Authority Policy](#)
- 14-1 [Electronic Signature Policy](#)
- 15-1 [Contract Procedure Policy](#)
- 17-01.1 [Oversight Monitoring Policy](#)
- 17-03.5 [On-the-Job Training Policy](#)
 - [On-the-Job Training Policy Addendum #1](#)
 - [On-the-Job Training Guidance Letter DWS 18-006](#)
- 17-08.7 [Individual Training Account Policy](#)
 - [ITA Addendum No. 1 – Film Industry and Digital Media](#)
 - [SWAGL 15-1.4 ITA Waiver Request Letter](#)
 - [SWAGL 17-02 Occupation in Demand/Labor Market Analysis](#)
 - [PY26 LLSIL Memo](#)
- 17-09.7 [Supportive Services Policy](#)
 - [SWAGL 19-02 Laptop Purchases](#)
 - [SWAGL 25-01 Mileage Reimbursement](#)
- 17-11.1 [Eligible Training Provider List Policy](#)
 - [Attachment I: ETPL Definitions](#)
 - [Attachment II: Training Program Approval Workflow](#)
 - [Attachment III: Training Program Initial Eligibility Performance Required Scenarios](#)
- 17-16.2 [Self-Sufficiency Policy](#)
- 17-17.2 [One-Stop Delivery System Policy](#)
- 17-18.3 [Follow-Up Services Policy](#)
- 17-19.2 [Electronic Files Content & Records Management Policy](#)
- 17-20.1 [Incumbent Worker Training Activities Policy](#)
- 17-21.1 [Performance Policy](#)
 - [Attachment I: TAG](#)
- 17-22.1 [Conflict of Interest Policy](#)
- 18.01.1 [Contract Approval Authority Policy](#)

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18-02.1 [Co-Enrollment Policy](#)

18-03.2 [Youth Requires Additional Assistance Policy](#)

18-04.2 [Youth Activities and Eligibility Policy](#)

[Youth Activities Policy Addendum #1](#)

18-05.2 [Referral Process Policy](#)

18-06.1 [Veteran's Referral Process Policy](#)

18-07.2 [Use of Assessments Policy](#)

[18-07.2b Test Benchmarks for NRS EFL](#)

18-08 [SAWDB Meeting Accessibility Policy](#)

18-09 [Governance Policy](#)

18-10.1 [Grievance and Complaint Policy](#)

18-11.1 [Internet Usage and Equipment Policy](#)

18-12 [Workforce Center Purchases Policy](#)

18-13.2 [Incentive Policy](#)

18-14 [Eligibility Policy](#)

[Basic Skills Deficiency Definition for Adults/DW and Youth](#)

19-01.3 [Customized Training Policy](#)

19-02.1 [Required Information in Communications Policy](#)

19-03.1 [Supplemental Wage Data Policy](#)

19-04.1 [Transitional Jobs Policy](#)

21-01.1 [Individual Career Services Policy](#)

24-01 [Stevens Amendment Policy](#)

24-02 [Firewall Policy](#)

24-03 [Priority of Service Policy](#)

[DWS 16-005 One-Stop Common Identifier](#)

[SWAGL 20-01 Workforce Center Requisition and Purchase Order Process](#)

[SWAGL 20-02 Information Technology for Computers](#)

[SAWDB Financial Policies Manual](#)

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Attachment B Provide a full roster of local board membership, including the group each member represents. Include a list of all standing committees, along with a description of the purpose of each committee. (Refer to Section III of these guidelines, Process for Plan Modifications, for information on required updates to this section.)

The SAWDB consists of 23 members. The following is a full roster of the SAWDB membership including the group each member represents. You will also find a list of all standing committees, and a description of the purpose of each committee. Click here to view online: <https://www.employnm.com/sawdb-membership-admin>

NAME	SECTOR
Cassie Arias-Ward	Agency Partner: Economic Development
<u>Tricia Brainard</u>	<u>Agency Partner: Adult Education & Literacy</u>
Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez	Agency Partner: HUD
<u>Alisa Estrada</u>	<u>Private Sector: Health Care and Social Assistance</u>
Jacqueline S. Fryar	Private Sector: Retail Trade
<u>Mailette Lopez</u>	<u>Agency Partner: Registered Apprenticeship & Private Sector: Construction</u>
Magdaleno Manzanarez	Agency Partner: Education and Training
<u>Ross Marks</u>	<u>Private Sector: Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation</u>
Marcos Martinez	Agency Partner: WIOA Title III
<u>Tiffany Martinez</u>	<u>Private Sector: Health Care and Social Assistance & Agency Partner: Workforce</u>
Michael Olguin, Jr.	Private Sector: Finance and Insurance
<u>Joshua Orozco</u>	<u>Private Sector: Manufacturing</u>
Erik Padilla	Agency Partner: Vocational Rehabilitation
<u>Gentry Roberts</u>	<u>Agency Partner: Registered Apprenticeship</u>
<u>Christopher Rodriguez</u>	<u>Private Sector: Educational Services</u>
<u>Anton Salome</u>	<u>Private Sector: Other Services</u>
Debbie Schoonover	Agency Partner: <u>Union</u>
<u>JC Trujillo</u>	<u>Private Sector: Health Care and Social Assistance</u>
Mary Ulrich	Agency Partner: Education and Training
<u>Michelle Velarde</u>	<u>Agency Partner: Veterans</u>
<u>Jeff Waugh</u>	<u>Private Sector: Accommodation and Food Services & Agency Partner: Education and Training</u>
<u>Mona Rae Waugh</u>	<u>Private Sector: Health Care and Social Assistance</u>
Gary Whitehead	Private Sector: Real Estate and Rental and Leasing

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Standing Committees and Descriptions

The SAWDB currently has seven standing committees:

- Disabilities Committee
- Executive Committee
- Monitoring/Performance Committee
- One-Stop Partner Committee
- Planning Committee
- Policy Committee
- Youth and Youth Adult Committee

Disabilities Committee: This committee will provide information and assist with operational and other issues relating to the provision of services to individuals with disabilities, including issues relating to compliance with section 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding providing programmatic and physical access to the services, programs, and activities of the one-stop delivery system, as well as appropriate training for staff on providing supports for or accommodations to, and finding employment opportunities for, individuals with disabilities.

Executive Committee: This committee has the responsibility for reviewing and coordinating the work of the other committees prior to the Chair of those committees reporting to the SAWDB. This committee is accountable to and reports all actions taken to the Board. Any action taken by the Executive Committee must be in accordance with the SAWDB's mission statement and is subject to ratification by the Board.

Monitoring/Performance Committee: The responsibility of this committee is to oversee and evaluate workforce development areas and local programs for compliance with rules and regulations to determine program success or failure. Additionally, it will review and approve state and local performance goals, review monitoring and performance reports, make recommendations for recognition, award incentive grants for program success, take corrective action, and/or impose sanctions for non-compliance or program failure. The goal of this committee is to ensure the continuous improvement of State training programs.

One-Stop Partner Committee: This committee will facilitate the integration of all the America's Job Centers in the Southwestern area. They will make efforts to minimize program duplication, facilitate coordination and communication between agencies, employers, and training providers. The committee will research and identify employment and training activities, services available, and facilitate the interaction between the

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government and private sector to ensure they do not overlap and are effective and efficient to promote a clear strategy leading to program success.

Planning Committee: This committee has responsibility for reviewing and making recommendations pertaining to workforce development planning and operation. This includes reviewing state and local plans, resources for those workforce areas, and identification of education needs for services and training. The Planning Committee shall develop a Local Plan with Board approval and CEO concurrence and annually review and update said plan as necessary, as outlined in the Local Plan.

Policy Committee: This committee is responsible for reviewing and recommending local board policy to the SAWDB that supports the objectives of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. The local policies provide direction to service providers, other partners within the public workforce system, and the public. The committee reviews requests for new policies, modifications, or rescissions. The committee will meet semi-annually or more frequently.

Youth and Young Adult Committee: This committee will provide recommendations to the SAWDB on matters related to the WIOA Youth program, its related policies, measures, and practices. The committee shall also review the youth services provider's performance reports, to include quarterly performance measures.

Attachment C Provide a list of the one-stop centers in the local area, including addresses and phone numbers. Indicate the one-stop operator for each site and whether it is a comprehensive or satellite center. Include a list of the one-stop partners physically located at each of the one-stop centers in the local board area, and the services provided by these partners.

Click here to view online: <https://www.employnm.com/offices>

OFFICE LOCATION	PARTNER AGENCIES
Alamo Navajo Reservation Alamo Navajo School SAWDB Highway 169, Mile Marker 26 Alamo, NM 87825 575-854-2543 ext. 1403 Managed by: ANSBI DESIGNATION TYPE: Satellite	Alamo Navajo School SAWDB, Inc.

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OFFICE LOCATION	PARTNER AGENCIES
America's Job Center – Deming 322 E. Oak St. Deming, NM 88030 575-546-0192 One-Stop Operator: Equus DESIGNATION TYPE: Satellite	• NMDWS • Equus • MET
America's Job Center – Las Cruces 226 S. Alameda Blvd. Las Cruces, NM 88005 575-524-6250 One-Stop Operator: Equus DESIGNATION TYPE: Comprehensive	• NMDWS • Equus • MET
America's Job Center – Silver City 420 W. Broadway St. Silver City, NM 88061 575-538-3737 One-Stop Operator: Equus DESIGNATION TYPE: Satellite	• NMDWS • Equus
America's Job Center – Socorro 198 Neel Ave. Socorro, NM 87801 575-835-0067 One-Stop Operator: Equus DESIGNATION TYPE: Satellite	• NMDWS • Equus
America's Job Center – Sunland Park 1500 Appaloosa Dr. Ste. A-160 Sunland Park, NM 88063 575-618-1249 One-Stop Operator: Equus DESIGNATION TYPE: Satellite	• NMDWS • Equus • MET
America's Job Center – Truth or Consequences 1705 N. Date St. Truth or Consequences, NM 87901 575-956-9200 One-Stop Operator: Equus DESIGNATION TYPE: Satellite	• Equus • *NMDWS visits once a week

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KEY SERVICES PROVIDED BY AGENCY PARTNERS

- Job candidate search
- Learn strategies for finding a job
- Prepare for job interviews
- Effective résumé
- Learn how to start your own business
- Explore your career interests
- Learn about jobs and careers suitable for you
- Learn about jobs in demand and rates of pay
- Get information about employer in local area
- Learn what employers expect from their employees
- Get an assessment of your skills
- Job referral and placement
- Veteran employment services
- ACT WorkKeys
- ACT Career Ready 101
- Individual Training Accounts
- On-the-Job Training
- Occupational training
- Labor market information
- Out-of-area job search assistance
- Pre-screened job applicants
- Search for veteran candidates
- Training cost reimbursements for your business
- Recruiting strategies
- Job Corps services
- WIOA youth services
- Adult Education and Literacy services
- Vocational Rehabilitation services

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Attachment D Provide copies of any draft or completed cooperative agreements, resource-sharing agreements, and memoranda of understanding relevant to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

Click here to view online: <https://www.employnm.com/policies-regulations>

- [MOU: PY26 SAWDB & AJC Partners](#)
- [MOU: City of Las Cruces](#)
- [MOU: Community Action Agency of Southern NM](#)
- [MOU: Motivation, Education, and Training \(MET\)](#)
- [MOU: Tierra del Sol Housing Authority](#)

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Attachment E Provide the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor (NMDWS) and chief elected official consistent with WIOA sec. 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the local board for measuring the performance of the local Fiscal Agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under WIOA title I subtitle B, and the one-stop delivery system in the local

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area, for PY~~26~~ and PY~~27~~. (Refer to Section III of these guidelines, Process for Plan Modifications, for information on required updates to this section.)
[Click here to view Section G. of this plan for the negotiated performance measures.](#)

Public Comment

~~The 30-day public comment period for the PY2024-PY2027 Local Workforce Plan Modifications begins on August 31, 2026, and ends on September 30, 2026.~~ The legal notice for public comment was published in the following newspaper, of general circulation and sent to WIOA service providers within the Southwestern region of New Mexico, as well as on the www.employnm.com website.

- Albuquerque Journal

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