

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Executive Summary

Your executive summary should be brief (e.g. 3- 6 pages) and must include the following:

Board Background and Leadership:

- Provide a brief overview of your Board's leadership, vision/mission, service region(s) covered, and activity/stakeholder engagement undertaken to develop this Plan.

Vision for the Local Area:

1. Workforce System Building
2. Community Engagement
3. Business Engagement
4. Talent Pipelines
5. Career Education
6. Measurable Impact/WIOA Innovation

Commitment to Aligning with the Four Core Strategic Pillars:

- Detail opportunities to align your local area's strategy with the State Plan's Four Core Strategic Pillars.
- Provide specific examples of current or planned initiatives that support these pillars, demonstrating your commitment to achieving state-level goals.
- Include a focus on collaboration, innovation, and measurable outcomes to ensure alignment with state priorities

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Section I: Economic Analysis

This section should include an analysis of economic elements consisting of the regional economic conditions, including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations and the employment needs of businesses in those industry sectors and occupations. The analysis should also explain how the LWDB compares to the region and any unique contributors to or differentiating factors from the regional economic conditions and business needs described in your Regional Plan.

Local Boards may utilize an existing analysis previously commissioned by the Local Board as long as it addresses the provisions of this Section. Local Boards are encouraged to use the Growth Industry Tool available on the Maryland Labor website and the Growth Occupation Tool as an aid to examine employment, growth, and employment concentration for the Local Area.

Tools for Analysis

To identify existing and emerging industries and occupations, various methods such as projections and location quotients can be used. For convenience, the Growth Industry Tool (GIT) and **Growth Occupation Tool (GOT)** are available to assist with this analysis: <https://www.labor.maryland.gov/lmi/wiagrowthind/got.shtml>

Employment needs can be assessed using employer surveys or real-time Labor Market Information (LMI), including job skills, opening counts, and advertised certifications. Access real-time LMI at <https://mwejobs.maryland.gov/vosnet/Default.asp>

Regional Economic Conditions

Montgomery County is part of the Silver Spring-Frederick-Rockville, MD statistical division within the Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV metropolitan statistical area, commonly referred to as the Capital Region. As a key member of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) region, Montgomery County plays a vital role in a dynamic economic landscape shaped by federal government activity, a robust base of science and engineering institutions, and a thriving technology sector. The county benefits from proximity to Washington, D.C., which contributes to its status as a hub for innovation, policy research, and international tourism.

Montgomery County's population increased by 9,680 residents between 2018 and 2023 and is projected to grow by 4,857 through 2028. Despite pandemic-related challenges, the county's workforce has demonstrated resilience. While employment declined by 15,144 jobs between 2018 and 2023, projections indicate a recovery of 4,240 jobs by 2028. With a median household

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

income of \$125,600, Montgomery County residents earn significantly more than the national median of \$75,100.

The county's labor force participation rate has shown signs of stabilization, with targeted industries like healthcare, technology, and professional services expected to drive future growth.

Montgomery County Overview

Population: 1,058,474 | The population grew by 9,680 over the last 5 years and is projected to grow by 4,857 over the next 5 years

Employment (2023): 533,201 | Jobs decreased by 15,144 over the last 5 years but are projected to grow by 4,240 over the next 5 years

Median Household Income (2022): \$125.6k | Median household income is \$50.4K above the national median household income of \$75.1K above the national average earnings of \$83.3K per job

The Capital Region, encompassing Montgomery, Frederick, and Prince George's counties, is home to a diverse and dynamic population of 2,299,295 as of 2023. Over the past five years, the region has experienced steady population growth, increasing by 83,431 people. This trend is expected to continue, with a projected population growth of 63,740 over the next five years. In terms of employment, the region currently supports 1,019,542 jobs, though the number of jobs has seen a slight decline of 6,632 over the past five years. However, the outlook for the future is positive, with job growth projected to increase by 27,066 over the next five years. The region's average earnings per job are \$94.6K, with regional average earnings increase of \$11.3K per job. This data underscores the region's economic potential and the evolving labor market trends that will shape workforce development efforts in the coming years.

Capital Region Overview

Population (2023): 2,299,295 | The population grew by 83,431 over the last 5 years and is projected to grow by 63,740 over the next 5 years

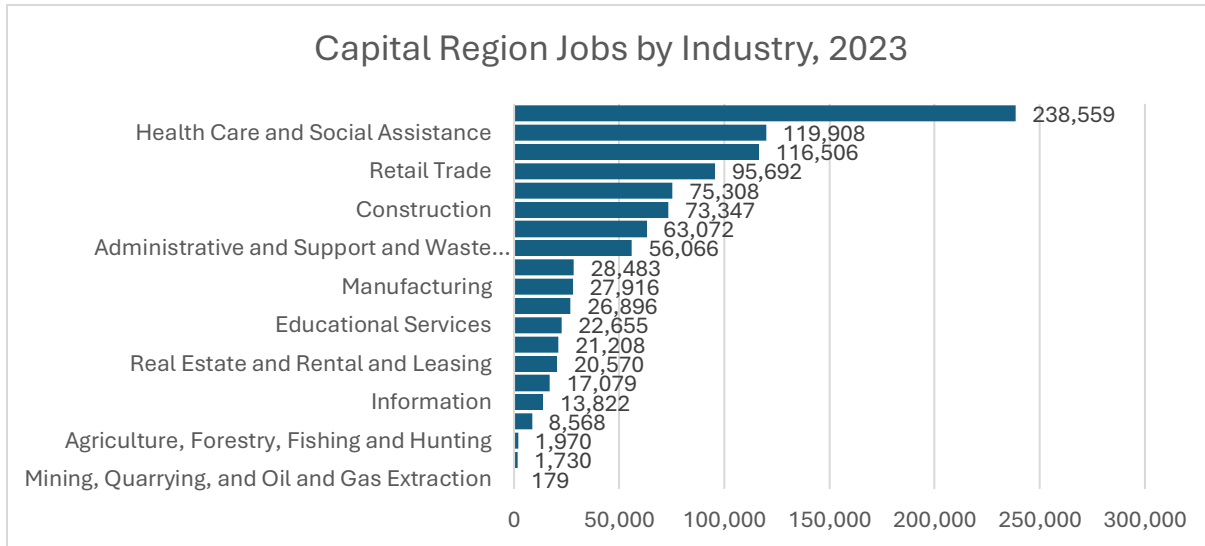
Employment (2023): 1,019,542 | Jobs decreased by 6,632 over the last 5 years but are projected to grow by 27,066 over the next 5 years

Avg. Earnings Per Job (2023): \$94.6K | Regional average earnings per job are \$11.3K

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Regional Industry Snapshot



The Capital Region's economy presents a diverse industrial landscape with significant variations in performance across sectors. The region's employment decreased slightly by 0.6% between 2018 and 2023, losing 6,638 jobs, but projections suggest a recovery with a 2.6% growth rate, adding 27,066 jobs by 2028. Notably, the Government sector anchors the region's economy, contributing the highest employment with 238,559 jobs in 2023. This sector also demonstrates robust growth, with a 7.7% increase from 2018 to 2023 and a projected 7.2% rise through 2028, supported by high average earnings of \$141,011 per job and a concentration level of 1.59.

The Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services industry is another major contributor, employing over 116,500 workers in 2023 and boasting the highest employment concentration (2.19). This sector added 6,438 jobs between 2018 and 2023 (5.8% growth) and is expected to grow by another 2.8% by 2028, reflecting the region's focus on innovation and technology. Health Care and Social Assistance continues to grow steadily, with a modest 1.6% increase from 2018 to 2023 and a stronger 6.4% projected growth to 2028, driven by rising demand for healthcare services.

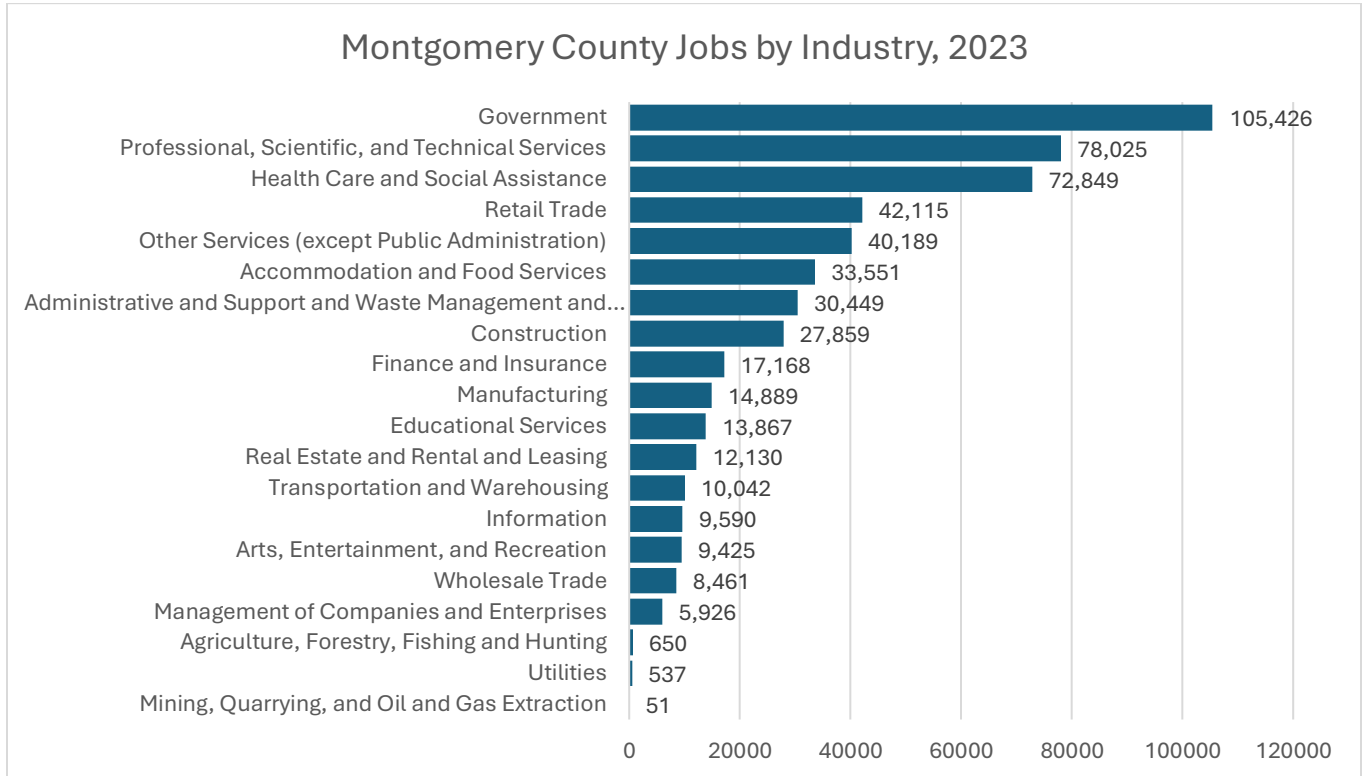
Conversely, several industries face challenges. Administrative and Support Services and Accommodation and Food Services experienced declines of 8.6% and 7.2%, respectively, between 2018 and 2023, reflecting broader structural shifts and pandemic-related disruptions. Similarly, Other Services and Retail Trade saw notable job losses, with Retail Trade shedding 4,857 jobs (-4.8%) over the same period. Despite these setbacks, growth in emerging areas such as Transportation and Warehousing (10.8% from 2018 to 2023) and Manufacturing (4.5%) highlights opportunities for diversification and resilience in the regional economy.

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Overall, the Capital Region's economy is characterized by a blend of traditional strengths in government and professional services, alongside emerging opportunities in logistics and manufacturing. Targeted workforce development strategies, coupled with investments in education and training, will be essential to address challenges in struggling industries and align the region's labor force with the demands of high-growth sectors.

Regional-Local Industry Alignment



MONTGOMERY COUNTY ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Montgomery County is an integral part of the Capital Region, benefiting from proximity to Washington, D.C., and robust industry clusters in government, technology, and healthcare. The county experienced a 2.76% decline in total employment between 2018 and 2023, losing 15,144 jobs, but projections indicate a modest recovery with 4,240 new jobs by 2028. Median household income in Montgomery County stands at \$125,600, significantly higher than the national average of \$75,100, reflecting its high concentration of skilled, high-earning occupations.

The county's diverse economy is supported by federal government employment, professional services, healthcare, and a growing biotech sector. Efforts to revitalize sectors like retail and administrative support are critical as these industries face long-term declines.

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

INDUSTRY SNAPSHOT

The table below outlines Montgomery County's industry performance across key metrics:

Government, Professional Services, and Health Care dominate Montgomery County's economy. Together, these sectors account for over 45% of total employment.

- Government employs the largest number of workers (105,426) with strong projected growth of 5% by 2028.
- Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services demonstrates the highest employment concentration (2.07) and offers high average earnings of \$141,731.
- Health Care and Social Assistance is projected to grow by 7%, driven by increasing demand for healthcare services and an aging population.

Declining sectors include Retail Trade (-3%), Administrative Support (-7%), and Construction (-4%), reflecting structural challenges and shifts in consumer behavior. Conversely, growth in Manufacturing (+7%) and Transportation and Warehousing (+13%) indicates opportunities in emerging areas like advanced manufacturing and logistics.

Montgomery County Jobs by Industry, 2023

Industry	% Change 2018-2023	2023 Jobs	Projected % Change 2023-2028
Government	6%	105,426	5%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	4%	78,025	2%
Health Care and Social Assistance	4%	72,849	7%
Retail Trade	-8%	42,115	-3%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	-19%	40,189	-6%
Accommodation and Food Services	-9%	33,551	2%
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	-14%	30,449	-7%
Construction	-4%	27,859	-4%
Finance and Insurance	-12%	17,168	-11%
Manufacturing	13%	14,889	7%
Educational Services	1%	13,867	2%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	-15%	12,130	-6%
Transportation and Warehousing	22%	10,042	13%
Information	-13%	9,590	-13%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	-12%	9,425	3%
Wholesale Trade	11%	8,461	4%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	-20%	5,926	-6%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	6%	650	-32%
Utilities	-12%	537	-7%

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	-6%	51	-22%
---	-----	----	------

Largest Subsectors of Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services, 2023

Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services Industry (NAICS Code 54) Subsector	2023 Jobs	Projected % Change 2023-2028
Computer Systems Design Services	12,665	10%
Administrative Management and General Management Consulting Services	8,928	-3%
Research and Development in Biotechnology (except Nanobiotechnology)	7,199	8%
Custom Computer Programming Services	6,533	-5%
Engineering Services	5,638	0.02%
Research and Development in the Physical, Engineering, and Life Sciences (except Nanotechnology and Biotechnology)	5,194	12%
Offices of Lawyers	5,027	-0.05%
Research and Development in the Social Sciences and Humanities	4,866	-5%
Offices of Certified Public Accountants	2,488	-8%
Other Scientific and Technical Consulting Services	2,394	-6%

The Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services sectors in Montgomery County is diverse and growing, with a strong focus on high-skill, high-wage subsectors. In 2023, the Computer Systems Design Services subsector led the industry with 12,665 jobs, projected to grow by 10% by 2028. Research and Development in Biotechnology is also a key subsector, with 7,199 jobs in 2023 and an expected growth of 8%. Engineering Services, another important subsector, provides 5,638 jobs, with minimal projected growth. On the other hand, some subsectors, including Custom Computer Programming Services and Research and Development in the Social Sciences and Humanities, are projected to experience job losses, with declines of 5% and 6%, respectively. These fluctuations in subsector growth suggest a need for workforce planning that aligns training and education programs to adapt to the evolving demands of technology, biotechnology, and consulting industries.

Top Occupations of Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services, 2023

Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services Industry (NAICS Code 54) Staffing Patterns	2023 Jobs	% of Total Jobs in the Industry
General and Operations Managers	3,735	4.8%
Management Analysts	3,626	4.6%
Software Developers	3,624	4.6%
Lawyers	3,180	4.1%
Project Management Specialists	3,126	4.0%
Accountants and Auditors	2,758	3.5%
Computer Occupations, All Other	1,786	2.3%
Computer and Information Systems Managers	1,759	2.3%
Managers, All Other	1,710	2.2%

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Sales Representatives of Services, Except Advertising, Insurance, Financial Services, and Travel	1,697	2.2%
--	-------	------

The Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services sectors is characterized by a concentration of high-level managerial, technical, and consulting roles. General and Operations Managers (3,735 jobs, 4.8% of the workforce), Management Analysts (3,626 jobs, 4.6%), and Software Developers (3,624 jobs, 4.6%) represent the largest occupations within the sector. Additionally, Lawyers and Project Management Specialists also play a critical role, comprising 4.1% and 4.0% of the workforce, respectively. The prominence of managerial and analytical roles highlights the need for skilled workers in leadership, project management, and IT across the professional services landscape. As the sector is projected to grow, a focus on developing leadership, technical expertise, and consulting capabilities will be essential in addressing future workforce needs.

Top Occupations of R&D in Biotechnology, 2023

Research and Development in Biotechnology (NAICS Code 541714) Staffing Patterns	2023 Jobs	% of Total Jobs in the Industry
Medical Scientists, Except Epidemiologists	715	9.9%
Natural Sciences Managers	584	8.1%
Biological Scientists, All Other	426	5.9%
General and Operations Managers	234	3.2%
Project Management Specialists	216	3.0%
Chemists	200	2.8%
Microbiologists	190	2.6%
Managers, All Other	189	2.6%
Biochemists and Biophysicists	173	2.4%
Life, Physical, and Social Science Technicians, All Other	170	2.4%
Statisticians	168	2.3%
Software Developers	166	2.3%
Business Operations Specialists, All Other	131	1.8%
Biological Technicians	127	1.8%
Physicists	124	1.7%

Montgomery County's Research and Development in Biotechnology sector is a vital part of the regional economy, employing 7,199 individuals in 2023, with an 8% growth forecast by 2028. Medical Scientists, Except Epidemiologists (715 jobs, 9.9%) are the largest occupation group, followed by Natural Sciences Managers (584 jobs, 8.1%) and Biological Scientists, All Other (426 jobs, 5.9%). The demand for specialized roles such as Chemists, Microbiologists, and Biochemists and Biophysicists indicates a robust need for highly skilled professionals in research and development. Given the growth potential in this field, there is an opportunity for workforce development programs to enhance training in advanced sciences, research methodologies, and regulatory frameworks to meet the demands of the biotechnology sector.

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Top Occupations of Healthcare and Human Services, 2023

Research and Development in Healthcare and Social Assistance (NAICS Code 64) Staffing Patterns	2023 Jobs	% of Total Jobs in the Industry
Registered Nurses	5,795	8.0%
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	5,781	7.9%
Nursing Assistants	4,705	6.5%
Medical Assistants	2,845	3.9%
Childcare Workers	2,641	3.6%
Medical and Health Services Managers	2,583	3.5%
Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	2,366	3.2%
Physicians, All Other	1,899	2.6%
Receptionists and Information Clerks	1,816	2.5%
Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	1,639	2.2%
Dental Assistants	1,351	1.9%
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	1,156	1.6%

In the Healthcare and Human Services sector, which includes Healthcare and Social Assistance industries, Montgomery County employs a wide range of workers, with significant demand for direct care providers. The largest occupation is Registered Nurses (5,795 jobs, 8.0%), followed by Home Health and Personal Care Aides (5,781 jobs, 7.9%) and Nursing Assistants (4,705 jobs, 6.5%). Other essential roles include Medical Assistants and Childcare Workers, who account for 3.9% and 3.6% of the workforce, respectively. The high demand for healthcare workers highlights the region's need for continued support in training and certifying individuals in nursing, personal care, and medical assistance. Additionally, with ongoing healthcare system expansion, there is potential for increased job opportunities in management, secretarial, and supportive roles like Medical and Health Services Managers and Medical Secretaries.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Section II: Strategic Planning

Part 1: Aligning Maryland's Strategic Pillars

A. This section should speak to the Four Core Strategic Pillars below and include your strategy to work with the entities that carry out the core programs to align resources available to the Local Area, to achieve strategic vision and goals.

Maryland's Four Core Strategic Pillars:

1. Supercharge Key Sectors - Setting statewide sector priorities, identifying skill needs, and driving industry leadership and partnership to shape and deliver workforce solutions.
2. Advance Equity and Access - Ensure equitable access to quality training and employment opportunities for all Marylanders.
3. Prepare the Future Workforce - Transform and expand career-connected learning opportunities to ensure every young person has access to a family-sustaining career pathway, regardless of their plans to obtain a college degree.
4. Improve System Alignment and Accountability- Revisit system-wide performance goals, expectations, coordination, accountability, and feedback loops to ensure workforce system partners are working together efficiently and effectively.

Maryland is guided by four strategic pillars designed to strengthen the state's workforce development efforts and foster long-term economic growth. These pillars focus on key areas such as supercharging key sectors, advancing equity and access to opportunities for Marylanders, preparing the future workforce through career-connected learning, and improving system alignment and accountability. By prioritizing collaboration with industry leaders, ensuring inclusive access to training and employment, creating pathways for youth to build successful careers, and refining the coordination of workforce partners, WorkSource Montgomery is working diligently to create a more dynamic, accessible, and effective workforce development system. WorkSource Montgomery will align with the state's overarching goals while tailoring efforts to the specific needs and characteristics of the local area served by engaging and collaborating with core partners.

B. This section should include a description of the local area's plan to work with providers to facilitate the development of career pathways, including co-enrollment in core programs and academic training programs when appropriate.

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

WorkSource Montgomery (WSM) has engaged in a Measurable Equity initiative with the goal that all Montgomery County residents will have access to career pathways leading to equitable and sustainable economic mobility. This initiative requires WSM to operate in a data-driven, high-impact space, ensuring that strategy formulation and implementation are tailored to address disparities and support the needs of under-resourced communities.

To achieve this, WSM collaborates with a range of providers to facilitate the development of career pathways, integrating academic training programs, co-enrollment opportunities, and supportive services. These efforts focus on aligning programs across core workforce system partners, including Montgomery College, community organizations, and regional training providers.

WSM leverages data to establish an equity-centered collaborative improvement approach. By disaggregating data by race, ethnicity, gender, and geography, WSM identifies specific barriers and opportunities within economically disadvantaged communities. Using tools like Opportunity Mapping, WSM visualizes inequities to guide targeted interventions that ensure comprehensive access to career pathways. This approach promotes coordinated efforts among providers and ensures that training aligns with in-demand skills and industry requirements.

Key elements of WSM's plan include:

- **Creating a shared vision of success:** WSM fosters collaboration among workforce providers, education partners, and community organizations to build cohesive career pathway models tailored to local industry needs.
- **Promoting an equitable and inclusive system:** The organization works with providers to integrate co-enrollment opportunities, enabling individuals to access multiple core programs and training services concurrently, such as pairing workforce preparation with adult education or technical skills training.
- **Establishing measurable outcomes for workforce partners:** By aligning partners and resources, WSM ensures that career pathways include stackable credentials, work-based learning opportunities, and clear progressions toward employment. Shared measures and funding strategies help streamline service delivery and promote system capacity.

WSM also collaborates closely with providers to enhance academic and vocational training programs. Examples include Montgomery College's Workforce Development and Continuing Education division, which offers a range of career-focused training programs, and the LYFE program, which provides paid training and wraparound services for minorities and justice-impacted individuals. Through co-enrollment and integrated services, WSM ensures that job

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

seekers, particularly those facing barriers, can simultaneously access education, workforce training, and supportive services to advance their careers.

This coordinated, equity-centered approach enables WSM to build an inclusive workforce ecosystem that provides residents with meaningful, accessible pathways to high-demand careers while addressing the unique challenges of Montgomery County's diverse population.

C. Describe how your local area's workforce development programs, including programs provided by partner agencies, support this strategic vision

Montgomery College is a public community college with three campuses in Montgomery County, located in Rockville, Germantown, and Takoma Park/Silver Spring, as well as two off-campus sites in Gaithersburg and Wheaton. As of Fall 2024, the college serves 18,835 credit students. It was ranked in 2024 among the top 10 community colleges in the United States by WalletHub, securing the tenth spot nationally and the top spot in Maryland. Moreover, in 2022, Montgomery College's online Associate in Computer Science program was recognized as the best in the country for online associate degrees in the field by Intelligent.com. The college also offers top programs in Cybersecurity and Criminal Justice. Additionally, the Workforce Development and Continuing Education (WDCE) division provides a variety of courses aimed at enhancing workforce skills, including professional and management development, Microsoft Office Suite training, and other resources, with locations in Gaithersburg and Wheaton.

Montgomery County has a robust network of workforce development programs designed to support the strategic vision of creating equitable opportunities for residents to access high-quality education, training, and employment. WorkSource Montgomery (WSM) is a leading provider of workforce development services in the county, offering a range of services through American Job Centers in Germantown and Wheaton. These centers provide job search assistance, training, and other resources at no cost to residents, job seekers, and employers. Additionally, the SkillUp® Montgomery program, launched by WSM, offers county residents free access to over 7,000 online courses in various fields to upskill and prepare for industry-recognized certifications.

Montgomery County has also launched several innovative programs and initiatives to strengthen its workforce ecosystem. The Montgomery County Community Workforce Network, consisting of over 30 community organizations, collaborates to support job seekers effectively. In January 2024, the county introduced the LYFE (Launch Your Future Employment) program, a paid training initiative specifically designed for minorities and justice-impacted individuals. Further, Montgomery County opened one of the state's first re-entry-only American Job

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Centers, the Justice Empowerment Job Center, in April 2024, providing tailored support to returning citizens to reduce recidivism and promote sustainable employment.

WSM has deployed the Mobile Job Center (MJC) over 120 times, engaging more than 1,500 residents across various communities. The county also provides career coaching services to over 45,000 Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) students annually, spanning grades 6 through 12, to guide them toward future career opportunities.

Partner agencies also play a significant role in supporting strategic vision. For instance, CASA de Maryland offers vocational training, employment placement, and other services to low-income families, particularly within the Latino and immigrant communities. Programs provided by regional partners, such as MedCerts for healthcare training and the Finishing Trades Institute for construction pre-apprenticeship and registered apprenticeship training, expand the array of opportunities available to job seekers. While WSM works closely with providers listed on the State Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), it also collaborates with non-ETPL providers using non-WIOA funds to ensure accessibility to a broader range of training options.

Additionally, funding from sources like the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), the Montgomery County budget, MD Labor grants, and private foundations enables WSM to braid resources and deliver comprehensive programming. The county's focus on technology-driven tools, such as virtual platforms and enhanced websites, ensures resources are accessible and user-friendly for job seekers, businesses, and community partners.

These coordinated efforts exemplify Montgomery County's strategic approach to workforce development, ensuring that programs and partnerships are aligned to support equitable economic mobility and meet the needs of businesses and residents alike. Through a combination of innovative programming, community collaboration, and robust funding strategies, the county remains committed to fostering a skilled, inclusive, and future-ready workforce.

D. Describe how the local area will ensure consistent implementation of activities and services that align with the State's four core strategic pillars:

1. Supercharge Key Sectors
 - What strategies will you use to map skills and training assets and identify gaps?

The Montgomery County Workforce Development Board is focused on advancing jobseekers in their career paths. In order to supercharge key sectors, the board will map skills and training assets and identify gaps through several strategies. These include:

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

- Utilizing labor market data: there will be ongoing analysis of local labor market data and trends, job postings, and in-demand skills to identify emerging industry needs.
- Leveraging industry alliances: collaborating with sector-based industry partnerships (such as Life Sciences, IT, and more), will ensure that training programs are in alignment with employer demands
- Expanding sector connector programs: using programs to connect employers and training providers will ensure alignment between job requirements and training outcomes
- Analyzing skills gaps: reviewing training curricula and outcomes will ensure that the training programs meet the needs of employers
- Enhancing EARN Maryland initiatives: using grant funding to develop training programs that target skill gaps in the workforce
- Coordinating with education institutions: working with local high schools and colleges to create pathways for students
- Hosting stakeholder engagement events: facilitating forums with partners and employers will gather insights into skill demands and training gaps in the industries
- Utilizing mobile job centers: extending services to underserved communities will ensure that training resources are accessible to diverse populations

2. Advance Equity and Access

The Montgomery County Workforce Development Board (LWDB) is committed to advancing equity and access by addressing labor force participation inequities, expanding access to supportive services, and promoting diversity and inclusion in hiring, retention, and upskilling efforts.

- What steps will you take to apply an equity lens to address labor force participation inequities and gaps?

The LWDB integrates equity as a core principle in workforce planning and program delivery. The Measurable Equity Initiative ensures that all programs, policies, and data are reviewed to guarantee equitable access to resources and services. This initiative includes training staff on cultural competency and implicit bias to ensure services are delivered inclusively and respectfully.

To address labor force participation inequities, the LWDB prioritizes outreach to underrepresented populations, including justice-impacted individuals, English learners, and residents in low-income neighborhoods. Programs like the LYFE (Launch Your Future

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Employment) initiative and the Justice Empowerment Job Center aim to reduce barriers by providing tailored career coaching, paid work experiences, and direct connections to employers.

In May, WSM launched the first Fair Chance Symposium & Job Fair for Veterans. This groundbreaking event, which featured panel discussions, workshops, and on-site fair-chance employers, aimed at supporting justice-involved individuals. Additionally, the WSM's Montgomery County Correctional Facility (MCCF) Reentry Team was honored at the Department of Correction and Rehabilitation's 50th Annual Awards Ceremony at Montgomery College. This recognition celebrated the team's efforts in supporting rehabilitation and successful reentry for justice-involved individuals.

- How will you expand access to supportive services for job seekers facing barriers to employment and/or training?

WorkSource Montgomery has implemented several strategies to expand access to supportive services for job seekers facing employment and training barriers. These include:

- Mobile Job Centers (MJC): Deployed over 120 times in FY2024, these centers bring workforce services to underserved communities, engaging over 1,500 residents.
- Community Workforce Network (CWN): Comprising 30+ organizations, the CWN ensures comprehensive support for job seekers, including childcare assistance, transportation support, and financial counseling.
- Financial Empowerment Center: In partnership with the United Way, this center provides financial literacy training and supportive resources to help job seekers achieve economic stability.

- What initiatives will you implement to support employers in recruiting, hiring, retaining, and upskilling employees from diverse populations?

The LWDB collaborates with local businesses to foster inclusive hiring and upskilling practices. Through the Sector Connector Programs, employers receive customized training solutions, including on-the-job training subsidies and incumbent worker training grants. These initiatives are tailored to support diverse talent pools, ensuring employers can meet their workforce needs while promoting equity.

The LWDB also offers consultation services to help employers develop recruitment and retention strategies that prioritize diversity. Programs like Summer RISE expose high school

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

students to career opportunities, preparing them to enter industries traditionally underrepresented by diverse populations.

3. Prepare the Future Workforce ▪ What strategies will the LWDB implement to increase participation in Registered Apprenticeships (RA) and the attainment of industry-recognized credentials among high school students?

The Montgomery County Workforce Development Board (LWDB) has prioritized increasing participation in Registered Apprenticeships (RA) and the attainment of industry-recognized credentials among high school students through several targeted programs and partnerships. These efforts align with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) to prepare youth for sustainable careers in high-demand industries.

One of the cornerstone initiatives is the Launch Your Future Employment (LYFE) program, designed for Montgomery County residents aged 16-24 who are not currently enrolled in school or formal education. LYFE offers a 16-week paid work experience that integrates supportive services, career exploration, and job readiness training. Working with career advisors, participants will gain the necessary skills to transition into full-time employment, further education, or apprenticeship opportunities.

Another impactful initiative is Summer RISE, a collaborative effort with Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). This five-week, 50-hour summer program is tailored for MCPS juniors and seniors, providing them with experiential learning opportunities to explore organizational structures, employer expectations, and career pathways. The program's flexible delivery modes—virtual, in-person, or hybrid—ensure accessibility for diverse student populations.

The LWDB also partners with the Latin American Youth Center (LAYC) and Identity, Inc. to provide employment and training services to out-of-school youth through its Young Adult Programs. These initiatives offer paid work experience, occupational skills training, leadership development, and comprehensive support to address barriers to employment. By focusing on entrepreneurial skills and financial literacy, these programs prepare participants for both immediate and long-term career success.

Additionally, the Montgomery County Career Advisory Program (MoCo CAP), a collaboration with MCPS, Montgomery College, and the Universities at Shady Grove, emphasizes early college and career readiness. Through career coaches placed in middle and high schools, students gain insights into industry needs and develop the skills necessary to meet college and career readiness standards by the 10th grade.

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Collectively, these strategies and programs provide Montgomery County youth with robust pathways to attain industry-recognized credentials and explore apprenticeship opportunities, positioning them for success in the local workforce and beyond.

4. Improve System Alignment and Accountability ▪ How will the local area, working with the entities that carry out the core programs, align available resources to achieve the strategic vision and goals? ▪ How will you monitor and evaluate the use of resources to ensure they are contributing to the desired outcomes?

Montgomery County's Workforce Development Board (WDB) and WorkSource Montgomery (WSM) collaborate closely with entities carrying out core programs under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) to align resources effectively. These efforts ensure the strategic vision and goals of economic mobility, equity, and workforce innovation are achieved. Through multi-stakeholder engagement and innovative programming, Montgomery County fosters a seamless workforce development system designed to meet the needs of businesses, job seekers, and community partners.

The county prioritizes program design and innovation that address gaps for underserved populations, connecting them to emerging and in-demand industries. Initiatives such as creating tailored training programs for returning citizens in cybersecurity and increasing women's representation in IT and manufacturing align with the State Plan's emphasis on equitable economic opportunities and workforce diversity. By bridging these gaps, Montgomery County aims to create a workforce that is inclusive and responsive to the region's economic demands.

The following strategies will be used to achieve alignment and ensure accountability:

- **Stakeholder Collaboration:** Convene regular forums with businesses, community organizations, and educational institutions to coordinate services and share best practices. For example, WSM's Sector Connector programs and industry-led alliances focus on key sectors like healthcare, IT, and biotechnology.
- **Resource Optimization:** Utilize shared data platforms, such as the Maryland Workforce Exchange and dashboards, to streamline service delivery and maximize resource utilization.
- **Equity and Access Initiatives:** Commit to the Measurable Equity Initiative, ensuring policies and programs are accessible and inclusive, particularly for underrepresented populations.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

In addition to the above strategies, the following program designs and innovations will be utilized:

- **Specialized Programs for Underserved Populations:** Establish training and re-entry programs for returning citizens, particularly in high-growth industries like cybersecurity, leveraging partnerships with local employers and training providers. For example, the Justice Empowerment Job Center provides justice-impacted individuals with direct access to training and employment opportunities.
- **Increase outreach and support for women entering traditionally male-dominated fields** like IT and manufacturing through mentorship programs, financial assistance for certifications, and partnerships with organizations such as Per Scholas and Maryland Women in Technology.
- **Bridging Education and Employment:** Develop career pathways for youth, low-income individuals, and English language learners by connecting them to apprenticeships, work-learning experiences, and certifications tailored to in-demand industries such as life sciences and advanced manufacturing.

These strategies will be monitored and resources used will be evaluated through a few methods. Performance metrics, for example, will be used to track program outcomes using WIOA performance indicators such as credential attainment and employment retention rate. This data will be regularly reviewed. In addition, there will be quarterly forums with partners and customer surveys to measure satisfaction and identify opportunities for continuous improvement. Aligning the budget allocations with strategic priorities will ensure that the funding supports programs that have a measurable impact on the workforce goals.

To ensure accountability in service delivery, there will be enhanced coordination across the American Job Centers (AJCs) using a unified service tracking system. Stakeholder input will be sought out by involving businesses and community leaders. Expanding the use of virtual platforms and mobile units like the Mobile Job Center (MJC) will ensure that underserved areas are reached more effectively.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Part 2: Sector Strategies for Emerging and In-Demand Industries

A. This section should include an analysis of the knowledge and skills needed to meet the needs of the local businesses, including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

WorkSource Montgomery (WSM) and the Workforce Development Board (WDB) leverage a comprehensive analysis of the regional workforce, incorporating labor force data, employment/unemployment trends, and educational and skill levels. This occupational analysis enables WSM to align workforce development initiatives with the needs of local employers while creating pathways for job seekers to maximize their employment and earning potential.

Montgomery County's diverse industrial landscape features several in-demand industry sectors, each with unique knowledge, skills, and employment needs:

In the Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services sector, there is an occupational need for software developers, management analysts, project management specialists, and IT security professionals. These positions need both technical and soft skills such as computer programming, data analysis, and leadership and communication. For these positions, the necessary qualifications include security clearances, Project Management Professional (PMP) certifications, and advanced degrees in technical disciplines.

In the Biotechnology and Life Sciences sector, there is an occupational need for medical scientists, biological technicians, and biostatisticians. These roles require both technical and soft skills, including biochemical assays, bioinformatics, laboratory techniques, research, collaboration, and problem-solving. Necessary qualifications for these positions include advanced degrees in life sciences and certifications in laboratory practices.

In the Healthcare and Social Assistance sector, there is high demand for registered nurses, nursing assistants, and home health aides. These roles require technical skills such as clinical procedures, patient care, and health technology use, alongside soft skills like empathy, adaptability, and communication. Qualifications for these positions include Registered Nurse (RN) licenses, Basic Life Support (BLS) certifications, and vocational training.

In the Hospitality and Tourism sector, there is a need for customer service representatives, hospitality managers, and food service workers. These roles demand technical skills such as event management and culinary expertise, as well as soft skills like customer service,

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

teamwork, and adaptability. Certifications in hospitality management or culinary arts are key qualifications for these positions.

In the Construction and Manufacturing sectors, there is a demand for skilled tradespeople, project managers, and logistics specialists. These roles require technical skills such as construction techniques, CAD software proficiency, and logistics planning, coupled with soft skills like problem-solving and project management. Necessary qualifications include trade certifications, OSHA training, and degrees in engineering.

WSM's strategic plan enhances the effectiveness of the Maryland workforce system through targeted programs and initiatives designed to meet the needs of these key industries:

- Sector Connector Programs: Providing industry-aligned training in IT, healthcare, biotechnology, and other high-demand fields.
- Skill Development Initiatives:
 - The LYFE program offers youth career exploration and job readiness training.
 - Online learning platforms, such as SkillUp® Montgomery, provide access to thousands of training courses.
- Employer Partnerships: Engaging businesses to co-design training programs that produce industry-ready talent.
- Equity and Inclusion: Prioritizing access for underrepresented groups, including justice-impacted individuals and low-income residents

Economic Trends and Implications

- The county's largest sectors—government, professional services, and healthcare—are projected to grow steadily, with healthcare expected to increase by 7% due to aging populations.
- Emerging industries like biotechnology and cybersecurity offer high-wage opportunities, requiring specialized training.
- Declines in retail and administrative services highlight the need for upskilling displaced workers into growing sectors.

This targeted approach ensures Montgomery County's workforce development system aligns with employer needs, aligning training and resources to creating pathways for sustainable employment while addressing economic challenges and opportunities.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

B. This section should include an analysis of the workforce in your Area, including current labor force employment (and unemployment) data, and information on labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce in your Area, including individuals with barriers to employment. *

Current Labor Force Employment and Unemployment Data

Montgomery County is home to a diverse and highly educated labor force. According to recent data, the employment rate has shown resilience with the job recovery expected to be steady over the next five years. Although there are challenges, the unemployment levels are lower than the national average, which shows that the workforce environment is competitive and stable.

Labor Market Trends

The county's economy is influenced by the following key sectors:

- Government remains the largest employer, with 102,480 jobs in 2022, projected to grow by 6% by 2027.
- Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services is a high-growth sector, driven by demand for IT and cybersecurity professionals, with 82,347 jobs in 2022 and a projected 5% growth.
- Healthcare and Social Assistance continues to expand, fueled by an aging population, adding 9% more jobs by 2027.
- Emerging industries, such as biotechnology and life sciences, are bolstered by the county's proximity to federal institutions like the NIH and FDA.

Conversely, there are declines in the industries of retail trade and administrative services, showing the need to upskill displaced workers.

Educational and Skill Levels

The workforce in Montgomery County is notably well educated. Approximately 60% of the population holds a bachelor's degree or higher, supporting the high-skill requirements of the county's major industries. Targeted training programs, such as WSM's SkillUp® Montgomery, provide access to thousands of online courses, addressing skill gaps in IT, healthcare, and professional services.

Barriers to Employment

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Several groups face challenges in accessing sustainable employment. These include low-income residents, English language learners, and justice-impacted individuals. These groups often require additional support, such as language training, re-entry programs, and wraparound services. Programs like the LYFE initiative and Justice Empowerment Job Center have been instrumental in addressing these barriers, providing targeted support for youth and re-entry populations.

Strategic Approaches to Workforce Development

WorkSource Montgomery is actively aligning workforce strategies with the needs of local businesses by:

- **Engaging Employers:** Partnerships with industry leaders to co-design training initiatives ensure relevance to market needs.
- **Developing Career Pathways:** Sector Connector programs create targeted opportunities in IT, biotechnology, and healthcare.
- **Fostering Equity:** A commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion ensures that underserved populations gain equitable access to workforce services.

Montgomery County's workforce system continues to evolve, leveraging labor market insights and community feedback to address economic challenges and build a resilient, skilled labor force.

C. This section should include an analysis of the workforce development activities (including education and training) in your Area, including an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of such services and the capacity to provide such services, to address the identified education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers in your Area.

Montgomery County's workforce development system, led by WorkSource Montgomery (WSM) and the Workforce Development Board (WDB), supports a comprehensive range of services aimed at addressing the education and skill needs of the workforce and meeting the employment demands of local employers.

Its strengths include alignment with key industries, robust training and education services, targeted support for diverse populations, integrated service delivery, and business engagement.

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Montgomery County's workforce system is strongly aligned with priority industries such as government, professional services, healthcare, IT, and biotechnology. The strategic focus on these industries enhances the system's relevance and ability to meet employer demands. Programs like SkillUp Montgomery offer over 7,000 online courses and certifications; this provides flexible learning for job seekers. Initiatives like Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), On-the-Job Training (OJT), and apprenticeships also strengthen the workforce skills and address gaps in high-demand sectors.

Diverse populations receive targeted support through programs like the LYFE initiative and Dual Track Re-Entry Program; these address the unique needs of justice-impacted individuals, minorities, and youth. The Justice Empowerment Job Center and Financial Empowerment Center also provide comprehensive support for marginalized communities.

WSM's American Job Centers (AJCs) serve as hubs for coordinated services, offering job search assistance, career counseling, occupational skills training, and employer connections.

Despite these strengths, there are some weaknesses and challenges that Montgomery County is addressing. These include:

- **Industry-Specific Challenges:**
 - Declining sectors, such as retail and administrative services, highlight the need for targeted upskilling and reskilling programs for displaced workers.
- **Service Capacity Gaps:**
 - Despite a well-documented service structure, bottlenecks in inter-agency coordination and service delivery processes may limit efficiency.
 - Surveys and customer feedback indicate opportunities for improvement in addressing service flow inefficiencies and resource allocation.
- **Barriers to Accessibility:**
 - Certain populations, including those with language barriers, disabilities, or limited digital literacy, face challenges in accessing available workforce services. Enhanced outreach and tailored services are necessary to address these gaps.

WorkSource Montgomery (WSM) has showcased a strong capacity to address the needs of both the workforce and employers through several key initiatives. Innovative training models, such as the Mobile Job Center and the Metrix Learning platform, have expanded access to essential training and career development resources, enabling more individuals to gain the skills needed for sustainable employment. Scalable programs, including the Dual Track Re-Entry program and the Grant Relief for Onboarding Workers (GROW) initiative, demonstrate WSM's ability to

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

adapt to emerging workforce challenges and meet the demands of evolving industries. Additionally, strategic collaborations with partners like Montgomery College, United Way, and the Latino Economic Development Center have significantly increased WSM’s reach and impact, fostering a more inclusive and comprehensive workforce development system.

D. This section should describe how your area will align workforce programs, services, and resources to a career pathways model.

- How will you identify and focus on sectors such as cybersecurity, healthcare, clean energy, infrastructure, and manufacturing?
- How will you engage with employers to understand their workforce needs and priorities?
- What strategies will you use to collaborate with partners to recruit successful training and apprenticeship program training providers to the ETPL?
- What strategies will you use to encourage employers to participate in workforce development initiatives?
- How will you support employers in developing and implementing on-the-job training programs?

Montgomery County's workforce development initiatives are centered around aligning programs, services, and resources to a career pathway that addresses local employer needs and provides sustainable employment opportunities for residents. WorkSource Montgomery (WSM) targets high-demand sectors such as cybersecurity, healthcare, clean energy, infrastructure, and manufacturing by utilizing labor market analysis and industry-led partnerships. WSM utilizes labor market data to identify emerging job trends and skills gaps in the county’s priority industries. Labor market analysis also ensures training programs are aligned with high-growth industries. Initiatives like the Sector Connector Program also ensure that training programs are industry relevant.

Montgomery County actively engages employers to ensure workforce development initiatives are aligned with their evolving needs. Regular employer feedback is collected through quarterly forums and roundtables, providing a platform for employers to share insights on workforce requirements and industry trends. Additionally, customized employer services are offered through the American Job Centers (AJCs), including tailored solutions like applicant screening, job fair participation, and assistance with job postings.

In-Demand Industry-Sector & Knowledge & Skills Analysis

All Industries			
Top Specialized Skills	Top Common Skills	Top Software Skills	Top Qualifications

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Project Management	Communication	Microsoft Office	Valid Driver's License
Computer Science	Select row	Microsoft Excel	Registered Nurse (RN)
Marketing	Select row	Microsoft PowerPoint	Security Clearance
Auditing	Select row	Microsoft Outlook	Top Secret-Sensitive Compartmented Information (TS/SCI Clearance)
Data Analysis	Select row	Python (Programming Language)	Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification
Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services			
Top Specialized Skills	Top Common Skills	Top Software Skills	Top Qualifications
Project Management	Communication	Microsoft Office	Top Secret-Sensitive Compartmented Information (TS/SCI Clearance)
Computer Science	Management	Microsoft Excel	Security Clearance
Agile Methodology	Research	Python (Programming Language)	Project Management Professional Certification
Data Analysis	Operations	Microsoft PowerPoint	Secret Clearance
Equities	Writing	SQL (Programming Language)	Top Secret Clearance
Biotechnology/Life Science			
Top Specialized Skills	Top Common Skills	Top Software Skills	Top Qualifications
Biology	Research	R (Programming Language)	Security Clearance
Data Analysis	Communication	Python (Programming Language)	Valid Driver's License
Biochemical Assays	Presentations	Microsoft Office	American Society For Clinical Pathology (ASCP) Certification
Molecular Biology	Management	Microsoft Excel	Secret Clearance
Immunology	Writing	Microsoft PowerPoint	American Medical Technologists (AMT) Certification
Health Care and Social Assistance			
Top Specialized Skills	Top Common Skills	Top Software Skills	Top Qualifications
Nursing	Communication	Microsoft Office	Registered Nurse (RN)
Medical Records	Management	Microsoft Excel	Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification
Billing	Customer Service	Microsoft Outlook	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification
Treatment Planning	Leadership	Microsoft PowerPoint	Valid Driver's License
Electronic Medical Record	Writing	Microsoft Word	Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Hospitality			
Top Specialized Skills	Top Common Skills	Top Software Skills	Top Qualifications
Marketing	Management	Microsoft PowerPoint	Master Of Business Administration (MBA)
Project Management	Communication	Microsoft Excel	Valid Driver's License
Auditing	Customer Service	Microsoft Office	Certified Information Systems Security Professional
Finance	Operations	Web Browsers	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification
Housekeeping	Leadership	Microsoft Outlook	First Aid Certification

Collaboration with partners is essential to expand training opportunities and enhance workforce programs. Expanding the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) involves actively recruiting training providers and promoting partnerships with WSM on initiatives such as the EARN Maryland grant. Furthermore, strategic partnerships with institutions like Montgomery College, the United Way, and the Latino Economic Development Center amplify access to high-quality training programs.

To encourage employer participation in workforce development initiatives, WSM implements various strategies. Incentive programs, such as the GROW initiative, offer wage subsidies to employers for hiring and training new employees. Targeted promotion of workforce benefits highlights advantages like access to pre-screened candidates and subsidized training opportunities, effectively fostering employer engagement.

Support for employers extends to the development and implementation of on-the-job training (OJT) programs. These programs include customized OJT plans tailored to specific employer needs and financial support in the form of wage reimbursements of up to 90% for training new hires, ensuring mutually beneficial outcomes for employers and employees.

Building on a comprehensive understanding of labor force data, Montgomery County addresses key barriers to employment to create inclusive workforce opportunities.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Labor Force Analysis

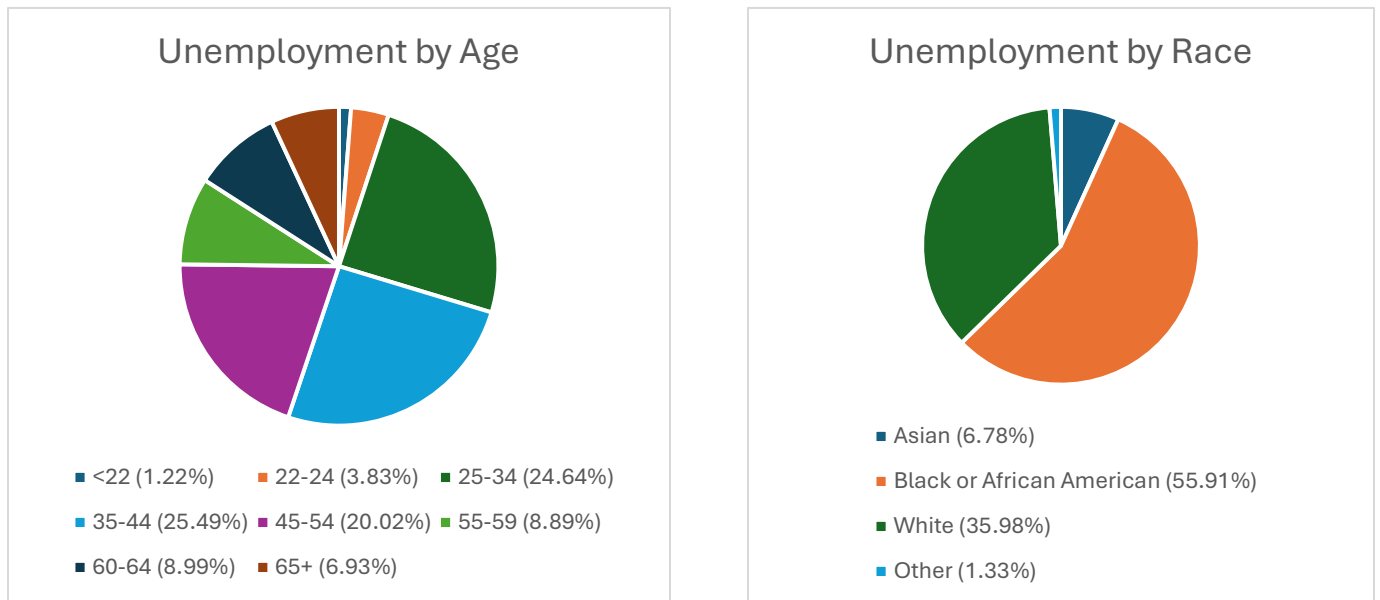
Annual Household Income Distribution

Annual Household Income	% of Households
Less than \$10,000	4.1%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	1.7%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	2.8%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	2.9%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	6.7%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	11.4%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	10.5%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	17.1%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	12.8%
\$200,000 or more	30.0%

The Annual Household Income Distribution in Montgomery County reflects a predominantly affluent community, with 30% of households earning \$200,000 or more annually. However, income disparity is evident, as approximately 7.7% of households earn less than \$35,000 annually, highlighting the need for targeted workforce development initiatives to support low-income families. The largest proportion of households falls within the \$100,000 to \$149,999 income range, representing 17.1% of the population. This data underscores the importance of aligning workforce programs to address the needs of both high-earning professionals and those facing economic challenges, ensuring equitable access to career pathways and sustainable employment opportunities.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Unemployment



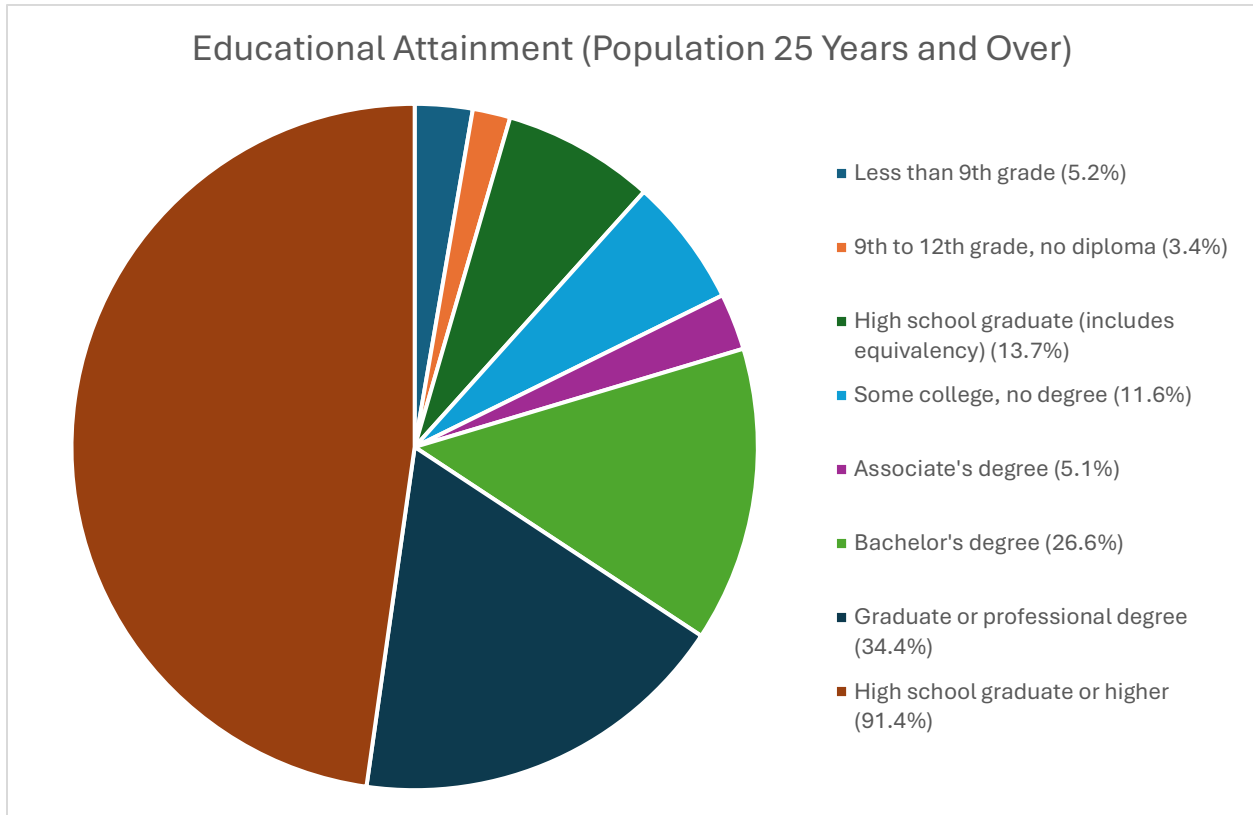
The Unemployment by Age and Race charts provide valuable insights into workforce disparities in Montgomery County.

- Unemployment by Age: The highest unemployment rate is observed among the 25-34 age group (24.64%), followed by the 35-44 age group (25.48%), indicating a need for career development opportunities and support tailored to younger and mid-career professionals. The 60-64 and 65+ age groups show lower unemployment rates, suggesting a stable employment status among older populations.
- Unemployment by Race: The data reveals disparities among racial groups, with Black or African American individuals experiencing the highest unemployment rate (5.91%), followed by Asian individuals (6.78%). These figures emphasize the need for targeted workforce initiatives that address racial equity and ensure that opportunities are accessible to underrepresented groups.

These insights should guide workforce development strategies to prioritize equity and inclusivity while addressing age and racial disparities in employment.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Educational Attainment



Source: 2023 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

The Educational Attainment data for Montgomery County highlights a well-educated population, with 91.4% of individuals aged 25 and over having completed high school or higher levels of education. Notably, 34.4% have achieved a graduate or professional degree, and 26.6% hold a bachelor's degree, indicating a workforce with advanced qualifications.

However, gaps remain, as 5.2% of the population has less than a 9th-grade education, and 3.4% did not complete high school, which may limit their employment opportunities. Addressing these disparities through targeted educational programs and workforce training initiatives could help bridge skill gaps and enhance career pathways for underrepresented populations, fostering greater economic inclusivity in the region.

A holistic career pathways model underpins WSM's approach, addressing barriers to employment such as transportation and childcare challenges. Programs like SkillUp® Montgomery and the LYFE initiative equip participants with foundational skills for entry-level roles while providing pathways to advanced certifications and sustainable careers.

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

These targeted strategies ensure that workforce services in Montgomery County are well-aligned with employer needs, creating robust pathways to quality employment opportunities for residents and fostering economic growth in the region.

Individuals With Barriers to Employment

Veterans

Multiple populations in Montgomery County face barriers to employment beyond unemployment and low educational attainment. In 2023, over 36,000 veterans resided in Montgomery County, totaling 4.5% of the adult population (25 years of age and older). In general, Montgomery County's veterans achieved higher levels of education than the nonveteran population, with 22.4% completing some college or an associate's degree and 63.7% earning a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 16.7% and 61% for the nonveteran population. Veterans had a significantly higher rate of disability (24.2%) than non-veteran adults (11.3%). As of 2023, a smaller percentage of veterans reported income levels below the poverty line (4.1%) than did nonveterans (7.2%), and the veteran unemployment rate (2.8%) was below that of nonveterans (3.9%).

Speakers of Non-English Language

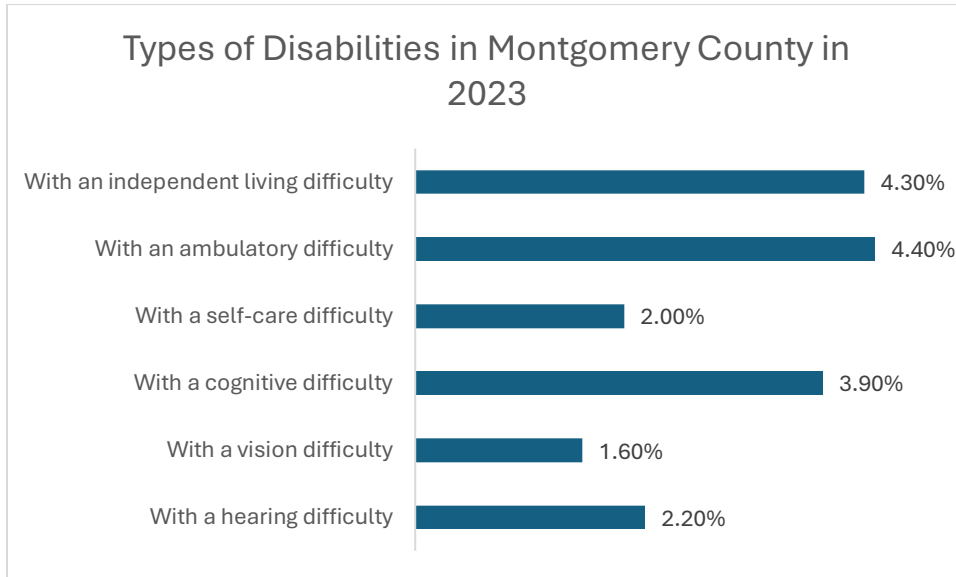
According to Census Bureau 2023 estimates, English is the only language spoken in 56.6% of Montgomery County homes, compared to 77.5% nationwide. Of the households in which English is not the only spoken language, 40.8% speak Spanish, 24.9% speak other Indo-European languages, 21.7% speak Asian and Pacific Island languages and 12.6% speak another language¹. While these numbers do not necessarily suggest a higher-than average number of English language learners in the county or a substantial number of individuals facing substantial cultural barriers, they may suggest some need to identify programs and make resources available to assist these populations.

¹ American Community Survey 2023 1-Year Estimates

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Individuals with Disabilities

According to 2023 Census data, 9.4% of Montgomery County residents lived with a disability. This compares to 11.6% of the state of Maryland and 13.6% of the nation².



Ex-Offenders

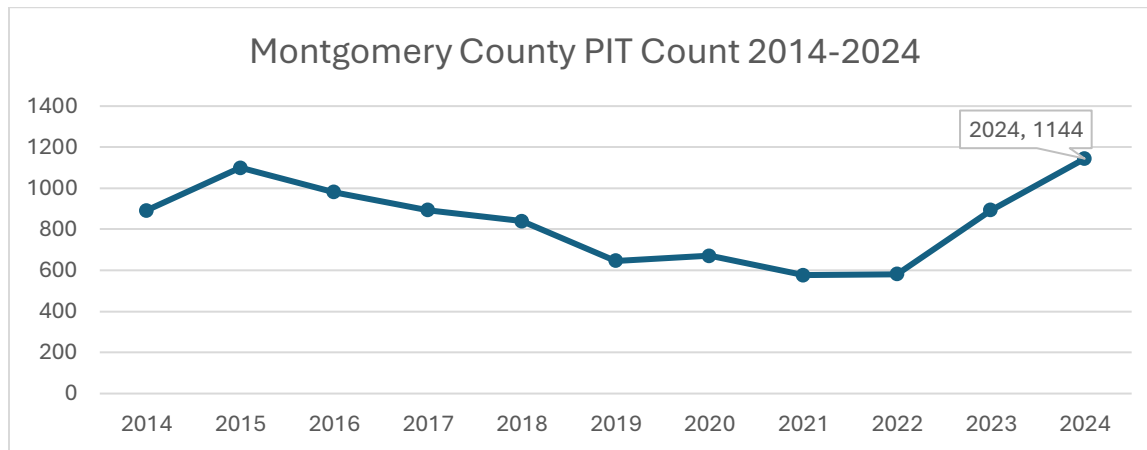
Between FY 2019 and FY 2024, 655 Montgomery County residents were released from Maryland Department of Corrections custody, an average of 109 individuals per year.³ Montgomery County is one of six Maryland counties with a local reentry agreement with the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS) under which the counties take custody of state-sentenced inmates for the final year of their incarceration. This allows inmates the opportunity to better connect with their families and reentry resources and workforce development opportunities in their local communities.

Homeless Individuals & Families

² American Community Survey 2023 1-Year Estimates

³ Data collected from Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services and from Maryland Department of Offender Case Management System. https://www.dpscs.state.md.us/community_releases/DPSCS-Community-Releases.shtml. These data reflect only releases from State custody and do not include data regarding releases from local detention centers

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY



The Point-in-Time count in January 2024 showed an increase of 28% from 2023. This number includes 153 unsheltered individuals, or approximately 31% of single adults experiencing homelessness. This is also an increase of 23% in unsheltered homelessness from 2023. The increase in these numbers is consistent with both regional and national increases in homelessness, though Montgomery County had the second greatest increase in the number of persons experiencing homelessness from 2023-2024 in the DC region, after the District of Columbia itself⁴.

Low-Income Individuals & Families

Although Montgomery County is among the most affluent counties in the country, many residents and families still face low-income, poverty, and resulting difficult living and working conditions. About 7.0% of Montgomery County residents are considered to be in poverty. Of those living below the poverty level, 20.2% are children, 61.1% are between the ages of 18 and 64, and 18.6% are 65 years of age or older.

⁴ Washington Area COG 2024 “Homelessness in Metropolitan Washington”

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Section 3: American Job Center Delivery System

A. A List the AJCs in your area, including address and phone numbers. Provide the One-Stop Operator for each site and whether it is a comprehensive or satellite center.

AREA AMERICAN JOB CENTERS

WorkSource Montgomery (WSM) employment services specified under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) are available to Adults and Dislocated Workers either directly at the American Job Centers (AJCs) or through collaboration with core partners. Training services are offered in partnership with an extensive network of public and private training institutions, including school districts, vocational-technical centers, community colleges, private proprietary schools, and four-year public and private educational institutions. The Workforce Development Board (WDB) ensures the delivery of employment and training services that encompass basic services, individual services, and training services.

As outlined in the Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) 4-15, WSM's Comprehensive AJC exemplifies the characteristics of a high-quality AJC. Montgomery County's Workforce Development System is currently undergoing transformative changes. These changes necessitate a paradigm shift in workforce service delivery, emphasizing collaboration, service alignment, and customer-centric strategic design.

Montgomery County has a longstanding history of leveraging both government and community programs to assist employers, unemployed individuals, and underemployed residents. WSM's vision is to convene and facilitate coordination of existing workforce services while augmenting service delivery to address any identified gaps. By fostering a robust and coordinated workforce ecosystem, employers and job seekers will have enhanced access to the resources they need to contribute to and sustain a strong economy driven by quality talent.

WSM collaborates with core WIOA partners to manage three Job Centers in Montgomery County:

Wheaton—Comprehensive

Operator: Eckerd Connects

Location: 11510 Georgia Ave., First Floor Wheaton, MD 20902

Phone: 301.929.6880

TTY: 301.962.4083

wheaton@worksourcemontgomery.com

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Hours of Operation:

Monday – Thursday: 8:30 am – 5pm

Friday: 8:30 a – 3pm

Germantown—Affiliate

Operator: Eckerd Connects

Location: Up-County Regional Services Center, 12900 Middlebrook Road, First Floor,
Germantown, MD 20874

Phone: 240.406.5485

germantown@worksourcemontgomery.com

Hours of Operation:

Monday – Thursday: 8:30 am – 5pm

Friday: 8:30 am – 3pm

East County H.I.R.E. Center—Affiliate

Operator: WSM (not WIOA-funded)

Location: 3300 Briggs Chaney Road, Silver Spring, MD 20904

Phone: 240.777.8412

Fax: 301.685.5569

eastcounty@worksourcemontgomery.com

Hours of Operation:

Monday – Thursday: 9am – 5pm

Friday: 9am – 3pm

Montgomery County Correctional Facility (MCCF) Job Center—Affiliate

Operator: WSM (not WIOA-funded)

Location: 22880 Whelan Ln, Boyds, MD 20841

Phone: 240.242.9181

Hours of Operation:

Monday – Friday: 9am – 5pm

Financial Empowerment Center

Operator: WSM (not WIOA-funded)

Location: 11510 Georgia Ave, Wheaton, MD 20904

Phone: 202.655.4957

Hours of Operation:

Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday – 9am – 5pm

By appointment only:

Mondays – 9am to 5pm

Fridays – 9am to 3pm

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Justice Empowerment Center

Operator: WSM (not WIOA-funded)

Location: 11510 Georgia Ave, Wheaton, MD 20904

Phone: 240.283.1500

Hours of Operation:

Monday – Thursday: 9am – 5pm

Friday: 9am – 3pm

Virtual Job Center

Operator: N/A

Location: [LINK HERE]

Phone: N/A

Hours of Operation: N/A

Mobile Job Center

Operator: N/A

Location: Varies

Phone: N/A

Hours of Operation:

Calendar: <https://worksourcemontgomery.com/home/community-impact/mobile-job-center/#calendar>

Request Form: <https://worksourcemontgomery.com/home/community-impact/mobile-job-center/#MJCRequestForm>

Out of School Youth Services: L.Y.F.E. Empowerment Center

Operator: N/A

Location: 2221 Broadbirch Drive, Office #148, Silver Spring, MD 20904

Phone: N/A

Hours of Operation:

Monday – Friday: 8:30am – 5pm

B. Describe your customer flow system and process used in the Local Area. This description should include eligibility assessment, individualized training plans, and case management.

CUSTOMER FLOW

WSM and its core partners are in the process of redesigning the customer flow in the Montgomery County Job Centers, in tandem with a physical redesign of the comprehensive Montgomery County Job Center in Wheaton. The new focus of the customer flow will be the

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

customers' experience in receiving services, in addition to ensuring all job seekers receive quality access, regardless of skill level, barriers, or demographic background.

As customers walk into the Montgomery County Job Center, a greeter provides a warm welcome. Front desk staff are trained to determine whether any customers are veterans. Customers who self-attest to veteran status shall receive priority of service from that point forward. If a customer self-attests to veteran status, staff will complete the MD Labor's Significant Barrier to Employment (SBE) Checklist to determine whether the veteran qualifies as having one or more SBEs.

When the Personalized Needs Assessment is completed, veterans choose from the following options:

1. If the customer qualifies as SBE and requires intensive services to overcome a barrier to employment, AJC staff assists in setting up an appointment for him/her to meet with a Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialist.
2. If the customer does not require intensive services, he/she is then referred to Basic Career Services resources, WIOA Title I resource, an AJC Job Service Specialist, or another resource as determined appropriate, based on the Personalized Needs Assessment.

Currently, WSM and the core have multiple points of access. This includes walk-in services, call-in services, and referrals from partner agencies. WSM has embedded and online referral forms to be utilized by partners to submit referrals for career center services. Additionally, the Mobile Job Center provides services within the community to expand the access of services throughout Montgomery County for customers requiring special accommodation or those who do not have access to reliable transportation to a local job center.

The new intake process provides different avenues for initial intake that best meets the customers' needs. New customers will be introduced to the services in the center through a customized intake process directed by the customers' needs and desired services. WorkSource Montgomery completed a redesign of the intake process that includes a PowerPoint/video on the computer, a workshop-style orientation to the center (currently offered), or a customized one-on-one intake.

As part of the intake process, customers will be triaged and channeled into three categories to enhance and customize service options by either WIOA or Wagner-Peyser staff members:

1. Work Ready—WIOA Basic Career Services through Wagner-Peyser services, which include job search resources, labor market information, access to job service specialists, workshops, and job opportunity e-blasts.

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

2. Work Ready, Needs Training—WIOA Training Services through blended service offerings. Services include workshops and occupational training services. The WDB will explore expedited service delivery for this category.
3. Needs Intensive Support—WIOA Individualized Career Services through Title I services. Services include skill development (to include both technical and essential workplace skills), career guidance, job readiness skills, and barrier mitigation.

Individuals who fall into the second or third categories will be connected to a WIOA orientation offered multiple times throughout the week at Montgomery County Job Center locations to access individualized employment and training services. Eckerd Connects is currently reviewing the best ways to ensure all WIOA partners are included in the customer flow process. Currently, many of the WIOA partners have a physical presence in the comprehensive Montgomery County Job Center in Wheaton.

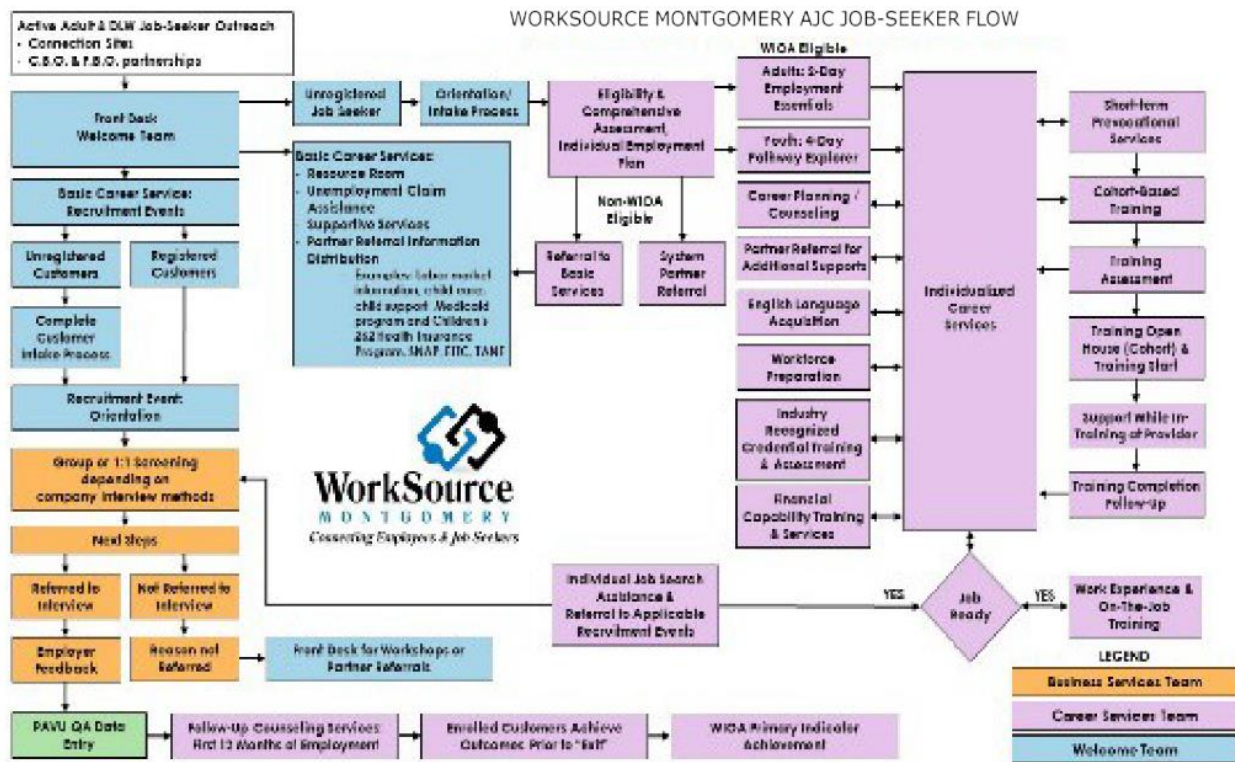
Job Corps has a staff member who conducts outreach out of the center, and MD Labor and the adult subcontractor staff refer to each other for services. Montgomery College and DORS have a presence in the building—individuals that need additional support for training, adult basic skills, or vocational rehabilitation, are referred to the appropriate entity. The Department of Health and Human Services refers to Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) customers that need additional employment or occupational training support to the Montgomery County Job Center.

WSM is committed to ensuring meaningful access to services in the Montgomery County Job Centers and affiliate sites for all customers. WSM will be utilizing technologies such as electronic meeting software and online services/trainings to enhance remote services. WSM has invested in the ATLAS system that will automate, streamline, and connect all referrals to better serve our county residents. ATLAS is an Automated, Tracking Linking, and Archiving Solution. It allows for customization of collecting essential information during registration, while identifying and connecting services.

The Montgomery County Job Centers are expected to meet the needs of job seeker customers by ensuring universal access to their programs and activities for all eligible individuals. Meaningful access includes access to service delivery, resources, and customer support throughout the process. WSM will be exploring strategies and processes for deliberate navigation for customers through key personnel for both the jobseeker customer and the employer customer.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

WSM understands that no matter how streamlined the system is, some customers will need additional navigational support. Core partners are currently reviewing how best to help both sets of customers navigate the system. In addition, WSM will continually work with partners to enhance and eliminate gaps in the customer flow and service delivery model that inhibits customers from receiving meaningful access.



C. Describe the process your Board intends to use for the solicitation and selection of a One Stop Operator. (Section 107 of WIOA)

ONE STOP OPERATOR

WSM is committed to following all federal, local, and state procurement policies and processes. Contracts are awarded based on pre-established qualifications and scoring protocols. In Montgomery County, the One Stop Operator is the systems manager. Their responsibility is to ensure that all centers and affiliate sites are configured and operated in collaboration with all the required partners and other potential partners in Montgomery County. As the Montgomery County Job Centers require multiple partners to deliver services on-site, effective collaboration is essential. WSM has engaged a contractor, Eckerd Connects, to fulfill the role of One Stop Operator.

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

(D) Describe how your Board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local businesses, workers, and jobseekers. DWDAL's policy on the Eligible Training Provider List can be found here:

<https://labor.maryland.gov/employment/mpi/mpi11-21.pdf>.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The WDB has several systems in place to ensure continuous improvement. Eckerd Connects ensures that all facilities, technology, services, employment placement, and outreach materials meet all compliance requirements and engage in external monitoring of the Montgomery County Job Centers and services to measure compliance and quality services. In addition, ongoing training in areas such as case management strategies, integrated service delivery models, county assets, and customer service will be explored for entities with a presence in the Montgomery County Job Centers. WSM and the WDB, through an RFP process, procured two national organizations to provide direct services under the Adult, Dislocated Workers, and Youth programs. Both organizations have substantial experience and a strong national reputation for progressive and robust service delivery and conduct their own continuous improvement processes. Additional local providers augment the services provided by the prime WIOA youth program operator. WSM works with program operators to ensure standardization of key services across program operators, and to encourage best practices and continuous improvement methods. The WDB is committed to using evidence-based practices and to identifying opportunities to improve all processes, systems, and services. WSM utilizes many sources to find nationally recognized practices, including resources provided by the National Association of Workforce Boards and the National Association of Workforce Development Professionals. WDB has proven systems in place to ensure continuous improvement. Within the AJC, the Operator ensures that all facilities, technology, services, employment placement, and outreach materials meet all compliance requirements and is an engaging facility. All partners and their staff are provided with an AJC Operations Manual that includes all relevant policies, recommended practices, and procedures. This manual was developed by the WDB and approved by Eckerd Connects and by the Board.

The WDB engages in monthly monitoring reviews for compliance with performance goals, customer service survey reviews, and customer flow. Additionally, the WDB utilizes an external monitoring support service through independent subject matter experts (SMEs) who have no ties to partner agencies.

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

These SMEs have and will continue to review the operations of the AJC. Observations include compliance with policies and rules but also suggestions for improvement of services to support alignment and leveraging of resources.

The process of creating the local list of approved training providers in Montgomery County involves several key steps to ensure that programs meet the specified levels of performance and eligibility criteria. The comprehensive process is as follows:

Eligibility Criteria Determination:

The Local Board defines specific levels of performance and eligibility criteria for training programs seeking approval to provide services in Montgomery County. These criteria are established to meet the unique needs and standards set by the local community.

Utilization of Local List:

Montgomery County utilizes a local list that is a subset of the State's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). In accordance with Maryland POLICY ISSUANCE 2023-03, the local list incorporates additional, more restrictive criteria determined by the Local Board, ensuring that approved training programs align with the specific requirements of the county. The local list is published on WorkSource Montgomery's website

(<https://mwejobs.maryland.gov/vosnet/drills/program/ApprovedPrograms.aspx?qlink=1>), providing transparency and accessibility to the community regarding the approved training providers in Montgomery County.

Authorization on State ETPL:

Training providers seeking inclusion on the local list must first be authorized on the State ETPL. This initial step ensures that providers meet the baseline requirements set by the state before undergoing the more detailed evaluation for Montgomery County's local list.

Provider Training Workshops:

Providers are required to attend a virtual training course and participate in scheduled workshops, which are offered twice a year by WorkSource Montgomery. These workshops outline expectations and performance standards for both cohort and individual training, ensuring that providers are well-informed about the specific requirements of the county.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Providers must complete a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU outlines the terms, expectations, and performance standards that providers must adhere to during the provision of training services in Montgomery County.

SAM.gov Authorization:

Training providers must be able and authorized in SAM.gov, demonstrating compliance with federal regulations and confirming that they are eligible to receive federal funds for their training programs.

Renewal Process:

For providers seeking renewal on the local list, a consistent track record of meeting the expectations outlined in the MOU is essential. Providers must also maintain eligibility on the State ETPL, demonstrating ongoing compliance with both state and county criteria.

Performance Review:

WorkSource Montgomery's Performance & Compliance Department conducts regular reviews of training providers' performance, ensuring ongoing adherence to the established criteria. This includes monitoring outcomes, participant success rates, fiscal accountability and program effectiveness.

Continuous Improvement:

The process emphasizes continuous improvement, encouraging providers to address any identified areas for enhancement. This iterative approach ensures that training programs stay responsive to the evolving needs of the Montgomery County community and consistently meet or exceed performance expectations. Montgomery County's Local Board is committed to a robust and accountable process for creating and maintaining a local list of approved training providers. This process ensures that training programs align with the county's unique criteria, fostering effective workforce development initiatives within the community.

(E) Describe how you will facilitate access to services provided through the AJC delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and through other means.

ACCESS TO SERVICES

WSM is committed to increasing access to all employers and job seekers, including those in remote areas. Engaging career seekers directly in the communities where they live to facilitate

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

access and create stronger customer experience is a critical responsibility of local WDBs. WSM has implemented a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) process to establish “pop-up” job centers under the HIRE (Helping Individuals Reach Employment) Program. These centers are in multiple libraries and community centers. Additionally, WSM enhanced its virtual and remote access to services with a new and improved website, adding the Career Edge Virtual Service Portal, and operating the Mobile Job Center (MJC).

In 2023, WSM deployed the Mobile Job Center (MJC) to enhance service delivery at community events and local institutions. This mobile unit enables WSM to extend its reach to customers who may face barriers to accessing traditional AJC locations. In 2024, the MJC was deployed 120 times. Led by the Community Impact Advisory Committee, the MJC engaged over 1,500 residents in various communities.

WSM launched the SkillUp® Montgomery virtual platform in February 2022. The platform is available for all Montgomery County residents through the Metrix Learning® platform. SkillUp® Montgomery offers FREE and UNLIMITED access to more than 5,000 high-quality online training courses for 180 days (6 months). Key Features include Integrated assessments; 5,000+ Workplace Skills/Business/IT courses; 10 Career Pathways, 200 Occupations; 300+ Skill Tracks; 100+ Certification Training Tracks; FREE digital badges & certificates of completion. Additionally, the platform will offer paid certification tracks for job seekers upskilling for careers in I.T., Project Management, and Human Resources. As such, once training modules are complete, job seekers will be able to access funds for credentialing exams directly through the SkillUp Montgomery virtual platform.

WSM has made some of the features of the Metrix Learning® System available to local employers. Employers will have cost-free access to assessments, online skill training, and cost-effective programs for 130+ industry-recognized certifications from anywhere with internet access, 24/7. As a result, the platform will add value to employers looking to upskill incumbent staff, find skilled candidates, or enhance new hire training. Custom curricula can be developed for a particular employer or industry. Employers can also list job openings, descriptions, and the skills they are looking for.

WSM has also begun utilizing remote meeting technologies such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams to further improve access for those unable to meet in person and is using the DeliverySlip system for better encryption and security for virtual documents. Additionally, WSM utilizes the Mobile Job Center to provide access of services to customers throughout Montgomery County.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Since the launch of the Community Workforce Network (CWN) in 2021, it has supported more than 4,500 residents, many of whom have significant barriers to employment (SBE) including immigrants, young adults, and returning citizens. There are currently over 100 organizations in the CWN. A recent achievement of the CWN was the creation of the Montgomery County Community Asset Map, an innovative tool that helps residents and businesses identify nearby service providers. This map was developed to assess services offered by community-based organizations across the county.

(F) Describe the roles and resource contributions of the AJC partners. (See DWDAL's policy on Memoranda of Understanding and Resource Sharing Agreements) <https://labor.maryland.gov/employment/mpi/mpi4-21.pdf>.

ROLES OF PARTNERS

As codified through agreements, partners commit to coordination and alignment by focusing on systems change to ensure that the customers' (business and job seeker) experience—when interacting with the system—is easy, accessible, transparent, and responsive to their needs.

- **Business Solutions**—The Business Solutions Team will work towards providing a single point of contact for businesses across all workforce system partners. Key elements include a client relationship management system, coordinated business development across sub-contractors and core partners, communication strategies around services offered through the entire system, and collection of business customer satisfaction data. The partners commit to participating in the development of a coordinated business service delivery system.
- **Job Seeker Solutions**—Coordination will be accomplished by focusing on enhancing access for customers across all the programs and strengthening the engagement of all the key partners. Partners will address coordination around customer flow, reduction of duplication of services, strategic policy development, data sharing, continuous improvement, and leveraging of resources. Partners commit to participating in the development of a coordinated referral and intake system, as well as the development of a common customer satisfaction system data collection and analysis system. Additionally, partners commit to promoting information sharing and the coordination of activities across MOU partners to enhance communication and cross-customer engagement.
- **Accessibility for All Customers**—The partners will continuously ensure that all facilities, technology, services, employment placement and outreach materials meet all

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

requirements for access to the Job Centers, including but not limited to, requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Partners commit to engaging in ongoing Eckerd Connects-led training in areas such as case management strategies, integrated service delivery models, county assets, and customer service.

Currently, many of the WIOA partners have a physical presence in the comprehensive Montgomery County Job Center in Wheaton. Job Corps has a staff member who conducts outreach out of the center, and MD Labor and the adult subcontractor staff refer to each other for services. Montgomery College and DORS have a presence in the building—for individuals that need additional support for training, adult basic skills, or vocational rehabilitation, customers are referred to the appropriate entity. Department of Health and Human Services refers TANF customers that need additional employment or occupational training support to the Montgomery County Job Center.

WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA) ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKERS

These services target individuals who have either lost their jobs through no fault of their own (Dislocated Workers) or individuals who have been chronically unemployed or underemployed and represent a targeted population (Adults). Through the intake process and using state-of-the-art assessment tools, these populations are segmented and assigned to Career Coaches and/or Population Navigators who specialize in working with these populations. Career Coaches/Navigators develop individualized, customized plans for the clients that include activities that align with the client's career goals; address any potential barriers; identify training that leads to certifications; work and learn activities; job readiness activities; and connecting them with employment opportunities.

The objectives of the Adult and Dislocated Worker WIOA programs include:

1. To increase employment, as measured by entry of Job Seekers into unsubsidized employment
2. To increase job retention in unsubsidized employment at least six months following the start of employment
3. To increase the earnings received in unsubsidized employment as a result of the assistance/training provided by the WIOA program,
4. To ensure customer satisfaction with the public workforce system by both users: the Job Seeker and the Employer

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

5. To increase enrollment in training programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials or employment and achieving measurable skill gains

WIOA Youth

The Board will focus services on out-of-school youth and serve in-school youth who are not on a post-secondary education path. The Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act legislation created an opportunity for local workforce development boards to deliver comprehensive services focusing on low-income young professionals, ages 16 to 24, with one or more barriers to employment. WIOA Youth funds assist participants in securing meaningful employment, preparing for post-secondary education, and attaining skills/training credentials. Using strategies that include career exploration, the Board partners with businesses to host educational events for youth to get a better understanding of the high-growth industries and high-demand occupations. With better knowledge of the industries, there will be an increase in commitment to establishing a career path in a preferred high-growth industry.

A systemic process for young people to successfully enter a career path that will lead to more family-sustaining wages. This systemic approach will be industry-specific and will incorporate mentorship; contextual learning for youth with low literacy skills; access to GED™ instruction and testing; internships and other work and learn activities; job readiness instruction; occupational training leading to industry-recognized certification(s); apprenticeship opportunities; and access to employment. In-school youth will focus on career exploration, job readiness and internships (i.e. Summer Jobs).

The objectives of the Youth WIOA programs include:

1. Increasing the number of Youth in the workforce with meaningful employment and earned wages
2. Increase retention of participants in education, training activities or unsubsidized employment
3. Increasing the number of Youth who earn a high school degree equivalent or skills certification to increase opportunities for long-term success
4. Increasing individual participants' literacy and numeracy skills and capabilities as measured by standardized tests
5. To ensure customer satisfaction with the public workforce system by both users: the Job Seeker and the Employer.

WAGNER-PEYSER

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Board staff meet regularly with Wagner-Peyser staff to discuss client needs, new resources in the community, and ongoing education regarding targeted populations. Individuals seeking assistance with updating their resume and connection to employment is the focus of Wagner-Peyser. WSM offers workshops on resume writing, interviewing skills, and other job readiness instruction that all clients can access.

Improved client assessment identifies the need for training and more customized services. Wagner- Peyser staff will have universal checklists that confirm the need to refer the client to WIOA Adult or Dislocated Worker services.

Adult Education & Family Literacy Act Program Montgomery College and the Literacy Council of Montgomery County provide Adult Basic Education and contextualized vocational training and certification programs. MC may also serve as a Title I service provider of occupational trainings and other services. In addition, MC and the Board will develop contextual learning models for individuals with low literacy skills. These models marry math and English instruction with industry-specific training which improves the overall outcome for this client-base.

DIVISION OF REHABILITATION SERVICES (DORS)

Maryland's Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS), part of the Department of Education, provides ongoing training regarding the specific issues and needs of their client base. The universal intake system ensures that clients are referred to services that meet their needs. Working with DORS staff, the Board will ensure that workshops, assessments, and other activities consider the needs of individuals with disabilities (i.e. hearing impaired) to ensure successful universal access. DORS works with the local board to ensure that all training vendors incorporate special needs with respect to instruction to ensure eligible clients can equally participate in opportunities that lead to employment.

TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES (TANF)

The Department of Human Services (DHSS) refers individuals on public assistance or foster youth to WorkSource Montgomery for employment assistance. Through both the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) programs, clients will work with an Intake Specialist to assess job readiness (entry-level versus mid-career), barriers to employment, and other issues specific to this client-base. The Intake Specialist will determine client opportunities that align with other initiatives (i.e. Industry-focused WIOA training). In this case, clients will be co-enrolled, and funding will be braided to support the client entering into a career path that leads to a family-sustaining wage.

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

TRADE ADJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE FOR WORKERS PROGRAM

The program provides aid to eligible workers who lose their jobs, or whose hours of work and wages are reduced, as a result of increased imports or production transfers abroad. The Trade Program, which is considered to be part of Maryland's WIOA System, is a federal program that offers a variety of benefits and services to workers whose employment has been adversely impacted by foreign trade.

Through several benefits and services, the Trade Program provides trade-affected workers with opportunities to obtain the support, resources, skills, and credentials they need to return to the workforce in a good job. These include employment and case management services, training, job search allowances, relocation allowances, reemployment and Alternative/ Reemployment Trade Adjustment Assistance (ATAA/ RTAA), wage subsidies for older workers, and income support in the form of Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA). The TAA State Merit Staff reviews and makes the final determination on the retraining plan, ensuring it meets the federal requirements under the Trade Act. The Trade Act program is administered, staffed, and implemented by Maryland Labor, local workforce areas, and the Unemployment Insurance Division.

JOBS FOR VETERANS STATE GRANT PROGRAM

Through collaboration with Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS), MD Labor administers the Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JSVG) Program, which allows for veterans with significant barriers to employment to receive tailored employment and training services. If veterans require additional skills necessary to obtain employment in the civilian world, they are being referred to Career Center staff and supportive services providers. This process has been smooth in sharing resources, data, and expertise; the Board will continue this strategy. At the same time, the Board will continue improving the mechanisms of engaging Local Veterans Employment Representatives in its work with local businesses.

REINTEGRATION OF EX-OFFENDERS' PROGRAM

To prepare individuals to re-enter the community with hard and soft skills that are in line with the needs of businesses, the Board will provide the following services to the ex-offender population:

- inmate assessment for job readiness, occupational skills, criminogenic needs, and barriers
- case management

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

- customized job matching
- training opportunities
- placement and follow-up services.

WSM has partnered with the Montgomery County Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DOCR) to create a dual-track reentry program. Track I is located in the Montgomery County Correctional Facility (MCCF), operating as a satellite American Job Center and equipping incarcerated individuals with work readiness skills, career planning, and job search strategies. The program also offers soft skill development and personalized support. In 2024, Track I served 1,675 individuals and held over 200 program sessions. Returning citizens who need continued services after release, such as training and job placement services, will be referred to the reentry team based at the Wheaton AJC.

Track II supports the continuation of services from Track I as well as providing comprehensive services for any justice-impacted community members in Montgomery County. The new Justice Empowerment Center in Wheaton and the pre-release center in Rockville are staffed with team members offering training and employment services, including work experience, transitional employment, work readiness programs, job search assistance, career exploration, and soft skills development. In 2024, WSM launched a transitional employment program, offering clients paid work experience to help fill resume gaps and gain relevant work experience as a part of Track II. During this period, staff also support clients with work readiness, soft skills development, and job search assistance.

Employers who hire ex-offenders may be eligible for the Federal Bonding Program. WSM ensures its community employers are briefed on the Federal Bonding Program.

CARL D. PERKINS CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION ACT

The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act provides funding for career and technical education at the secondary and post-secondary levels. The Montgomery County Public School (MCPS) Superintendent and the Montgomery Community College (MC) President were both appointed by the County Executive to serve as a member of the Board. Both entities as well as the Universities at Shady Grove work closely with the Board to analyze data, identify employment opportunities in growth industry sectors, and design programs to align secondary and post-secondary training opportunities in high-demand industries.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (MCEDC)

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

MCEDC supports business and serves as a catalyst for business growth in Montgomery County thereby increasing job opportunities, expanding the tax base and improving quality of life.

WorkSource Montgomery and MCEDC co-locate and mutually serve on each board.

JEWISH COUNCIL FOR THE AGING (JCA)

The Jewish Council for the Aging is committed to making it possible for low-income and other disadvantaged older adults to participate fully in determining their own future and the future of their communities. The JCA runs the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), which is the largest federally funded program specifically targeted to older adults seeking employment and training assistance.

JOB CORPS

Job Corps is a no-cost education and vocational training program administered by the U.S. Department of Labor that helps young adults ages 16 through 24 improve the quality of their lives through vocational and academic training. The program provides job readiness for youth to enable them to find gainful employment.

THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY

The Montgomery County Community Action Agency (CAA) provides services to empower, educate, coordinate, and assist qualified people, including families, youth, children, the disabled, and seniors in reducing poverty and building a better life for themselves. CAA seeks to reduce poverty and increase self-sufficiency among County residents through services, partnerships, and advocacy, and as part of the Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) Office of Community Affairs, advances the implementation of equitable and inclusive health and human service systems. Key programs include Head Start (grant oversight and monitoring); The Takoma East Silver Spring (TESS) Community Action Center, VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance and EITC outreach), and Contract monitoring. The Community Action Board provides governance, shares data regarding poverty, and advises policymakers.

THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING

The Montgomery County Department of Housing is dedicated to strengthening communities and improving the lives of Montgomery County citizens focusing on the ownership, management, sustainability and preservation of affordable housing. The Commission provides supportive services to clients of the workforce development system.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Partner	Role
WorkSource Montgomery Inc (WSM)	Adult, Dislocated Workers, Youth services
Maryland Department of Labor	Wagner-Peyser, Trade Adjustment Assistance, Jobs for Veterans State Grants, Unemployment Insurance
Maryland Department of Rehabilitation Services	Vocational Rehabilitation
Jewish Council for the Aging	The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCEP)
Montgomery County Public Schools	K-12, Technical education at the secondary level, National External Diploma, Carl Perkins program
Montgomery College	Carl Perkins program; Adult Education and Literacy activities; training provider; Career and technical education programs at the post-secondary level
JobCorps	Job readiness services for youth
Montgomery County Community Action Agency	Community Service Block Grant, employment and training activities
Montgomery County Department of Housing	HUD development and training activities
Montgomery County Department of Human Services	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
Local Management Board	Outreach and supportive services
Community-based organizations	Outreach and supportive services
Faith-based organizations	Outreach and supportive services
Montgomery County Economic Development Corp.	Business Engagement

(G) Describe how your Board will use Individualized Training Accounts based on high demand, difficult to fill positions identified within local priority industries identified in (Section 1(A)).

Individualized Training Accounts (ITAs) are one of the primary methods for financing and providing training for adults and dislocated workers in Montgomery County. The Board limits individual training to those industries and occupations that the Local Workforce Development Board deems in-demand (which can be reviewed in Section 1A). Those industries and occupations are identified on the documentation that clients receive at intake. Additionally, federal, state, and local policies and guidance emphasize informed customer choice, system performance and continuous improvement. After receiving services and in consultation with case managers, eligible participants who may benefit from training use the list of MD Eligible Training Service Providers to make an informed choice. Approval of training requests is made on a case-by-case basis. It includes a thorough evaluation of the related marketability of skills gained and credentials earned upon successful completion of training.

More information about the policies and procedures for ITAs is available for review in the Job Center Operational Manual. ITAs will be available to eligible individuals subject to the availability of funds to support priority occupations (in-demand jobs) identified by industry. The Board has set a spending cap on all ITA's of \$3,500.00; the cap is reviewed annually. In all cases, the Board seeks to provide high-value training solutions utilizing the eligible training provider

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

list (ETP) for all individual and cohort training in the most in-demand and popular occupations and industries in the local area.

(H) Describe how your Board will provide priority of service that conforms to the State Plan. This should include a description of additional local requirements or discretionary priorities including data to support the need and how the local requirement and/or priority will be documented and implemented for the adult program.

The Montgomery County Workforce Development Board (WDB) is committed to ensuring that participants in the WIOA Adult program meet federal, state, and local priority of service guidelines. This commitment ensures that targeted adult populations can access the WIOA system on a priority basis. The WDB has established an eligibility policy aligned with the Maryland Department of Labor's (MDOL) priority of service guidance, which is available on the WorkSource Montgomery (WSM) website.

Maryland Priority of Service Populations

The MDOL has identified the following populations as priorities for WIOA Adult funding:

- Individuals with Barriers to Employment
- Displaced homemakers
- Eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers
- Ex-offenders
- Homeless individuals
- Individuals facing substantial cultural barriers
- Individuals with disabilities, including youth with disabilities
- Individuals within two years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under Part A of the Social Security Act
- English language learners
- Unemployed individuals, including long-term unemployed
- Individuals with low levels of literacy
- Individuals without a high school diploma
- Low-income individuals, including TANF and SNAP recipients
- Native Americans, Alaskan Natives, and Native Hawaiians
- Older individuals
- Single parents (including single pregnant women and non-custodial parents)
- Veterans
- Youth in or who have aged out of the foster care system

The local board retains the flexibility to add additional populations to this list based on changes in the local economy or demographic data, subject to a vote by the WDB.

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Priority of Service Implementation

Priority of service under WIOA Adult funding will be given in the following order:

1. **Veterans and eligible spouses** who are also low-income, recipients of public assistance, or basic skills deficient.
2. **Non-veterans** included in the groups given priority for WIOA adult formula funds.
3. **Veterans and eligible spouses** who are not included in WIOA's priority groups.
4. **Any additional populations** identified by the Governor or the Local Board.
5. **Individuals outside priority groups** specified under WIOA.

Priority status is determined at the time of eligibility assessment and remains unchanged during the program participation period.

Implementation and Documentation

- **Priority of Intake:** Program operators must prioritize intake processing based on the priority groups outlined above. Individuals in the highest priority group must be processed and served first, followed by those in subsequent groups.
- **Targeted Programs:** Where feasible, initiatives funded through WIOA Adult resources will focus on priority populations.
- **Barrier Identification:** Program operators are encouraged to identify and document customer barriers for local performance measure purposes. Documentation must meet the requirements outlined in local policy.
- **File Management and Tracking:** Participant files must clearly indicate priority status, and WSM will oversee the tracking of priority service implementation in partnership with program operators.

Through these efforts, the WDB aims to ensure that the most vulnerable populations in Montgomery County receive the support and services necessary to achieve meaningful employment and self-sufficiency.

(I) Describe how your Board will utilize funding to create incumbent worker training opportunities.

INCUMBENT WORKER TRAINING

WSM is committed to incumbent worker training, which provides a key training option for the local workforce. It allows workers to gain skills, retain employment, and advance in a career ladder while businesses remain competitive. When implemented, incumbent worker training

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

will utilize a cohort model, prioritize stackable credentialing, and provide additional case management.

The following factors will be considered when determining the eligibility of employers to receive the WIOA share of funds to provide training to incumbent workers using either Adult and/or Dislocated Worker formula funds:

- The characteristics of the incumbent workers to be trained and how they would benefit from retention or advancement.
- The quality of training. Whenever possible, the training should allow the participant to gain industry-recognized training experience and/or lead to industry-recognized credentials and/or an increase in wages.
- The occupation(s) for which incumbent worker training is being provided should be in demand and aligned with the WDB's targeted industries or small businesses.
- The employer has not laid off any workers within 120 days to relocate to Montgomery County. The WDB will follow federal and state regulations for the employer's share of the training costs.

(J) Describe how your Board will train and equip staff to provide excellent, WIOA-compliant customer service

SERVICE PROVIDER TRAINING

Excellence in Service is a core WSM principle, and as such, the provision of quality customer service in the Montgomery County Job Centers and county workforce initiatives is a priority. To ensure quality customer service that meets WIOA compliance, WSM will provide staff development opportunities to address key principles of customer service, ensure appropriate certifications and skills of staff, and evaluate customer satisfaction for continuous improvement.

Staff are trained to assess eligibility for WIOA Title I services, including adult, youth, and dislocated worker programs, and to provide individualized career services such as comprehensive assessments and the development of individual employment plans. The staff are able to use a customer flow process map, allowing them to understand where a customer should be directed in order to have efficient, seamless, and consistent experience in the workforce system. Staff receive training to properly apply the Priority of Service Policy, which ensures that veterans, eligible spouses, and other targeted populations receive precedence in accessing WIOA services. They are familiar with the Customer Complaint Policy so that grievances are addressed effectively, and complaints are documented accurately in accordance

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

with WIOA regulations. As needed, staff are also trained in best practices for safeguarding client data and maintaining confidentiality as mandated by WIOA and organizational policies.

WIOA vendors also provide internal customer service training. A Job Center Director is on staff and coordinates and tracks staff training for all employees to ensure customer-focused practices. The WDB will work with all vendors and partners to coordinate staff training efforts across entities to align strategies, knowledge bases, and customer service delivery.

Section 4: Title I – Adult, Youth, and Dislocated Worker Functions

(A) Describe description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the Local Area.

WorkSource Montgomery provides a comprehensive range of employment and training activities designed to support adult and dislocated workers in achieving meaningful and sustainable employment. These services are aligned with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) priorities and cater to the unique economic and demographic landscape of the local area. Below is a description and assessment of these services:

1. Employment Services

- **Career Exploration and Counseling:** Career assessments, one-on-one counseling, and career navigation services help individuals identify suitable career paths based on their skills, interests, and local labor market demand.
- **Job Search Assistance:** Workshops on resume writing, interview preparation, and job search strategies equip individuals with essential skills. The Maryland Workforce Exchange also serves as a digital platform connecting job seekers with employers.
- **Job Placement Support:** Local workforce partners, including WorkSource Montgomery, host job fairs and hiring events, providing direct access to employers.

2. Training Activities

- **Occupational Skills Training:** Partnerships with local community colleges, technical schools, and industry-specific training providers offer certifications in high-demand sectors such as healthcare, IT, construction, and biotechnology.
- **On-the-Job Training (OJT):** Employers receive incentives to train workers on-site, ensuring skill alignment with specific job requirements.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

- **Incumbent Worker Training:** Programs that upskill currently employed individuals to meet evolving industry standards, increasing workforce competitiveness.
- **Apprenticeships and Pre-Apprenticeships:** Registered apprenticeship programs in collaboration with industry leaders provide structured learning and paid work opportunities.

3. Supportive Services

Supportive services address barriers to employment and training through the provision of transportation assistance, childcare subsidies, work attire, and financial literacy workshops.

4. Accessibility and Integration

WorkSource Montgomery operates American Job Centers (AJCs) across the county, serving as central hubs for workforce services. These centers offer integrated service delivery through collaboration with partners like the Department of Rehabilitation Services (DORS), community-based organizations, and local employers.

(B) Describe how your Board will coordinate workforce development activities in the Local Area with statewide rapid response activities. (Section 134(a)(2)(A).

RAPID RESPONSE SERVICES

Rapid Response activities are coordinated efforts that include the employer, affected workers, WSM, MD Labor Dislocation Services Unit, and AJC partners. WDB will work with employers and employee representative(s) to reduce the disruptions associated with job loss to businesses, affected workers, and communities. The WDB is committed to working with both Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) and non-WARN businesses and employees to maximize resources and reduce the negative effects of job loss.

The Rapid Response Team provides a customized approach with varied services to affected companies, accommodates work schedules, and assists companies and workers through the challenging transitions when downsizing or closures occur. The WDB will work with the Rapid Response Team to conduct an initial business consultation, deliver an information session for affected employees, and customize additional solutions as appropriate under the Dislocation Services Unit's direction.

The WDB will work with Rapid Response representatives to ensure that individuals affected by layoffs and business closures have knowledge and access to all services available. The WDB will

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

ensure that all partners are available to provide outreach services, as needed, to aid. As required, extended hours of operation and onsite outreach activities can be negotiated. On-site registration service and linkage to other community resources can be provided.

(C) Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce development activities in your area, including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities. Include successful models of such youth workforce development

YOUNG ADULT SERVICES

To better implement the State's Youth Policy and WIOA sections 129(a)(1)(B)9111)9VII) and (a)(1)(c) (iv)(vii), the Young Adult Opportunity Program is designed to help young adults and youth become more self-sufficient and contributing members of society. The youth program has a strong community outreach emphasis and partners with multiple organizations to leverage opportunities across the county to serve all eligible youth. The WDB has a standing youth committee including member(s) of the Local Board, a member who chairs the committee, members of community-based organizations with a demonstrated record of success in serving eligible youth, and other individuals with appropriate expertise and experience who are not members of the Local Board. The committee brings its expertise to help address the employment, training, education, human and supportive service needs of eligible youth, including out-of-school youth and youth with disabilities.

WSM demonstrates its commitment to In School Youth with key investments and partnerships. Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) is a prominent partner and stakeholder. Our leadership regularly coordinates with MCPS to promote quality programming available from both organizations. WSM supports MCPS 5-week Summer RISE program by contributing funding for students' stipends and hosting regular information sessions regarding apprenticeship opportunities available to students. Additionally, WSM uses separate MD Labor funding to deliver Summer Youth Programming targeting in-school youth.

MoCo CAP (Montgomery County Career Advising Program) is a partnership between WSM, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), and Montgomery College, with support from The Universities at Shady Grove. The program addresses the mandate in Pillar 3 of the Blueprint for Maryland's Future for career counseling to be offered to all students grades 6-12. MoCo CAP includes more than 50 Career Coaches stationed in middle schools and high schools serving approximately 90,000 students. The first cohort of Coaches began working in MCPS schools in January 2024, with a second cohort starting in mid-April. In the first half of the year, Coaches reached 45,929 students through various events and activities, focusing primarily, but not

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

exclusively, on sixth and ninth graders during this time. All Career Coaches also enroll in a unique Career Advising Registered Apprenticeship Program, offering a certification from Montgomery College and a national credential from the U.S. Department of Labor.

Additionally, to better serve young residents, WSM developed a new program — LYFE (Launch Your Future Employment) — with dedicated staff at the Montgomery College East County Education Center. This program supports out-of-school youth in a post-secondary environment with a 16-week paid work experience that embeds career exploration and job readiness training by experienced career advisors along with supportive services.

(M) Describe how your board will provide access to the 14 required program elements for the WIOA Youth program design and whether the Local Board has contracted with youth services provider.

The Board recognizes the need to prepare the emerging workforce for starting on a career path and acquiring the necessary education, skills, credentials, and experience. To facilitate the process and help youth find their career path, the Board will incorporate 14 elements of the Youth program to include:

1. Tutoring, skills training, and dropout prevention;
2. Alternative secondary school services;
3. Paid and unpaid work experiences;
4. Occupational skills training;
5. Leadership development opportunities;
6. Supportive services;
7. Adult Mentoring;
8. Follow-up services;
9. Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling;
10. Concurrent education and workforce preparation activities;
11. Financial literacy education;
12. Entrepreneurial skills training;
13. Labor Market Information (LMI);
14. Preparing for Post-Secondary Education & training.

For that, the Board will support a model that includes career exploration, essential skills training, occupational training that leads to credentials, and work experience opportunities. The WDB has instituted a five-step process for serving young adults which includes individualized assessment, sector-based job training in leading industries, young adult apprenticeship and work-based learning opportunities, placement, and follow-up services. Upon completion of the assessment, young adult staff will develop an Individual Service Strategy with each young adult that will map out anticipated progress through the program and will include employment goals, objectives and milestones, and appropriate services. Staff will focus on career pathways as part

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

of their career guidance. The Individual Service Strategy will be reviewed every 90 days, per federal guidance.

Out-of-School Youth Services include but are not limited to:

- Objective and comprehensive assessment services
- Career exploration and guidance
- Academic support and tutoring
- Obtaining a diploma or GED preparation and testing
- Post-secondary education and vocational training
- Job referrals and employment
- Work readiness and work maturity skills training
- Internship/work experience activities, including summer youth connection programs.
- Military information
- Support services
- Referrals to adult Montgomery County Job Center locations
- Mentoring and leadership development
- Job Corps information/referrals

The WDB will ensure that subcontractors conduct assessments of each participant to include academic level, skill level, and service need. The assessment, per federal guidelines, will include a review of basic skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests (including non-traditional occupations), aptitudes, supportive service needs, and developmental needs.

Following assessment, young adult staff will develop an Individual Service Strategy with each young adult that will map out anticipated progress through the program and will include employment goals, objectives and milestones, and appropriate services. Staff will focus on career pathways as part of their career guidance. The Individual Service Strategy will be reviewed every 90 days per federal guidance.

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

WSM and the WDB are currently structuring an effective operation and delivery of youth programs and services through the following:

- Providing objective assessments that focus on academic and occupational skill levels, as well as service needs and career pathways.
- Partnering with K-12 and other stakeholders to reduce dropout rates for in-school young adults.
- Prioritizing services to older and out of school young adults, specifically disconnected young adults.
- Re-engaging disconnected young adults through strategic partnerships with highest need secondary schools and post-secondary institutions.
- Increasing the number of young adults that attain postsecondary degrees/credentials with a priority on high growth industry sectors as defined by the local labor market information.
- Partnering with employers, education, and other partners to connect young adults to work-based learning opportunities.
- Co-locating youth programs in Montgomery County Job Centers to strategically align and target young adult services and resources to populations of highest need and to facilitate co-enrollment when appropriate.
- Utilizing technology to increase access and services.
- Partnering with local disability-serving agencies and providers as well as health and mental health providers.

Procedures are implemented to target and provide workforce services to young adults with the following barriers:

Foster Care/Aging Out of Foster Care Youth: The foster care young adult population service delivery focuses on career guidance, assistance with social service referrals (mental health/medical), tutoring and academic supports, employability skills/life skills training, job referrals, leadership development skills, support services, and mentoring activities.

Justice-involved Youth: The primary services to justice-involved young adults focus on work readiness and work maturity skills training, comprehensive career counseling, assistance

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

attaining employment, liaison with court system, collaboration with organizations that target justice-involved young adults, development of strong partnerships to fill gaps in existing interventions, and mentoring activities.

Youth with Disabilities: Services for young adults with disabilities focus on collaboration and linkages with community partners' services for young adults with disabilities, customized work readiness skills, customized internships/ work experience, and supportive services.

Basic Skills Deficient: Services for young adults who are academic or English basic skills deficient focus on the usage of standardized tests to determine basic skill levels, pre-testing and post-testing, tutoring, and developmental activities to include individual or group academic activities, and specialized instructions to include integrated learning models.

WSM entered into an agreement with Eckerd Youth Alternatives (EYA) in October 2021 to expand employment and training services for out-of-school youth and young adults.

In addition to serving those adversely affected by the public health crisis, the program is intentionally designed to reach individuals who are one or more of the following: low-income, homeless, pregnant and/or single parent, disabled, ex-offenders, English learners, public assistance recipients, or basic skills deficient. The provision of services includes but is not limited to case management & barrier remediation, career coaching & counseling, occupational skills training, paid work experience, job placement assistance, and post-employment support.

Existing youth services will be enhanced to include industry sector strategies; this employer-centered approach will give young adults unique and direct access to private sector employer opportunities in the WDB's four targeted growth industries of construction, information technology, healthcare, and hospitality. With enhanced young adults' services around industry sectors, employers will be able to access a wider pool of qualified out of school youth and offer work-based learning opportunities.

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

SECONDARY AND POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION COORDINATION

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

The WDB has formal partnerships with both Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) and Montgomery College (MC) to identify other areas of activity and service coordination with secondary and post-secondary education programs in the county that lead to local in-demand jobs. WSM works with its partners to implement recognized post-secondary credentials across programs that are desired and endorsed by employers and aligned to career pathways.

Strategies include:

- Using the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) of vetted providers.
- Selecting training providers that meet employer requirements for skill attainment, certification, or degrees.
- Providing career planning services through the Montgomery County Job Centers and ensuring the planning includes a review of post-secondary education options.
- Augmenting occupational training with work-based learning initiatives, such as OJTs, work experiences, and apprenticeships.

The goal is that a young adult who goes through the system will have access, when applicable, to obtaining:

- A High School Diploma equivalent.
- A clear pathway, provided by trained career specialists depending on customer interests and labor market information about demand occupations, to access post-secondary credit and non-credit programs that result in industry- recognized certifications of the technical skill requirements of the occupation.
- Increased opportunity for stackable certifications and credentials.
- Opportunities for work-readiness training
- Connection to practical, hands-on skill training.

To better serve our young residents and avoid duplication of services, WSM developed a new program — LYFE (Launch Your Future Employment) — with dedicated staff at the Montgomery College East County Education Center. This program supports out-of-school youth in a post-secondary environment with a 16-week paid work experience that embeds career exploration and job readiness training by experienced career advisors along with supportive services.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

(E) Describe how your Board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out under this title in your area with the provision of transportation, including public transportation, and other appropriate supportive services in the Local Area.

TRANSPORTATION AND SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

WorkSource Montgomery is an advocate for customers and employers regarding various barriers to employment, including transportation challenges. Supportive services are defined as those services or activities (provided either directly to or on behalf of customers) necessary to reduce or eliminate barriers to obtaining or retaining employment. The WDB permits the provision of supportive services for several populations to assist with the elimination or reduction of barriers that may hinder compliance with training, work activity requirements, and employment opportunities. The WDB provides supportive services consistent with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

Common barriers to employment, training, and other activities supporting employment and training often include lack of transportation, lack of available childcare, and, in extreme cases, lack of safe and affordable housing. Staff identify potential barriers during the development of an Individual Employment Plan (IEP). Staff are encouraged to spend time with customers, asking questions to determine what referrals, services, or other supports will help individuals meet their goals. These questions often include:

- Language
 - What is your native language?
 - What other languages do you speak?
- Transportation
 - What transportation will you most likely use to get to work and/or training?
 - Do you have a valid driver's license?
- Child/Elder Care
 - Do you have children that require childcare?
 - Do you have an alternate childcare plan?
- Housing
 - What is your current housing situation?
 - Are you receiving housing assistance?
 - Do you expect to remain in your current residence?
 - Are you facing any type of housing/financial crisis at this time?

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

- Criminal History
 - Have you ever been convicted of a criminal charge? If yes, is this a barrier to employment?
- Employment Portfolio Documents
 - Do you need assistance in obtaining documents that may be necessary to reach your employment goals? This may include your Birth Certificate, Social Security Card, ID Card, and more.

Supportive services should only be provided when necessary to enable the participants to continue in Title I activities. Supportive Services are not guaranteed; if available, they are cost reimbursable only. Customers seeking supportive services should be referred to a partnering agency. Customers with substantial need are not deemed “job ready” but after referral and resolution, are welcome to continue with their job strategy. The Montgomery County Job Centers have partnerships with the public transportation system and other non-profit organizations to address these issues. Through these partnerships, the centers can obtain monthly bus passes distributed to clients to assist with transportation issues. Eligible clients can also receive childcare vouchers that can be used to pay for daycare services and in cases of extreme hardship.

WSM uses a combination of formal and informal processes for referrals and accessibility to supportive services. Center staff members receive regular training on referral processes. WSM’s CWN and Community Asset Map are essential parts of this work. This includes ensuring the resources for supportive services offered by community partners included in the asset map are fully understood by staff and CWN members, as well as jobseekers and employers.

(F) Describe how your Board will utilize Local Adult Funding, based on adult priority groups as specified in the State Plan.

ADULT PRIORITY GROUPS FUNDING

Through its strong partnerships with community-based organizations, training organizations, and the Adult and Dislocated worker service provider, WSM is well-positioned to provide a variety of employment and training-related activities to all adult priority groups as indicated in the state plan and in support of Montgomery County initiatives. Program operators will ensure that individuals receiving intensive WIOA services meet eligibility requirements for adult and dislocated workers as outlined in local policies.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

WSM and its program operators will also utilize WIOA adult funding to support employer engagement on behalf of the WIOA system, including but not limited to job fairs and job-matching efforts, industry-specific recruitments, industry sector strategies, industry-led projects, retention, incumbent and other employer training, assessments, roundtables, and any other allowable WIOA activities to further support employer needs.

For job seeker services, WSM and its program operators may use the funding to provide the full array of basic, individualized, and follow-up services. These services may include but are not limited to outreach, staff services, counseling and guidance, assessment, barrier mitigation, and support services, job readiness training, labor market information, training, work and learning opportunities, career pathway upskilling, integrated learning strategies, contracts, technology to support service delivery, and any other allowable workforce service that will benefit the job seeking customer and employers in the regional economy. Where available, WSM will fund special projects to support adult priority populations.

(G) Describe how the Local Board will utilize Local Dislocated Worker Funding.

DISLOCATED WORKER FUNDING

WSM and its program operators will utilize WIOA funding for dislocated workers, to support the reemployment of dislocated workers through a dual employer-job seeker approach. WSM and its program operators will fund employer engagement on behalf of the WIOA system, to include but not be limited to job fairs and job matching, industry specific recruitments, industry sector strategies, industry-led projects, retention, incumbent and other employer training, assessments, roundtables, and any other allowable WIOA activities to further support employer needs. In addition, Dislocated Worker funding will be used to support rapid response activities in the area.

For job seekers, WIOA Dislocated Worker Funding will be focused on helping job seekers retool and retrain to prepare for new careers. These services may include, but are not limited to: outreach, staff services, counseling and guidance, assessment, support services, labor market information, training, work and learn opportunities, career pathway upskilling, contracts, technology to support service delivery, and any other allowable workforce service that will benefit the job seeking customer and employers in the regional economy.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

(H) Describe how your Board will define “self-sufficiency” for employed Adult and employed Dislocated Worker participants.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY

The WSM policy requires all programs receiving WIOA funding for Adult, Dislocated Worker or Youth programs to use either the Poverty Income Guidelines or the 70% Lower-Level Standard Income Level (LLSIL)—whichever is higher of the two—to determine if applicants qualify as “low income” for those programs that require it.

2024 Federal Poverty Guidelines		2024 Montgomery County LLSIL (Lower Living Standard Income Level) – 70%, by Family Size	
1	\$15,060	1	\$14,150
2	\$20,440	2	\$23,189
3	\$25,820	3	\$31,830
4	\$31,200	4	\$39,289
5	\$36,580	5	\$46,370
6	\$41,960	6	\$54,229
7	\$47,340	For family units of 7+	Add \$7,859 for each additional person
8	\$52,720		
For family units of 8+	Add \$5,380 for each additional person		

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Addressing the definition of self-sufficiency guides WSM's internal performance measurements, therefore the WDB utilizes the Self-Sufficiency Standard for Montgomery County prepared by the Montgomery County Community Action Agency, The Self-Sufficiency Standard for Montgomery County, Maryland 2023 (montgomerycountymd.gov). The Montgomery County Community Action Agency, which focuses on reducing poverty and increasing self-sufficiency in the county, utilizes the Self-Sufficiency Standard (SSS), developed for the Maryland Community Action Partnership by the Center for Women's Welfare at the University of Washington.

The SSS is a budget-based measure of the cost of living that defines how much families must make to meet basic needs without public or private assistance. Montgomery County has the highest self-sufficiency rate in the state of Maryland with the self-sufficiency standard for one adult and one preschooler at \$91,674 or \$43.41 per hour to meet the families' basic needs. While Montgomery County has a higher minimum wage than Maryland, at \$16.70 an hour, a parent with one preschooler would need to work 105 hours per week to meet the self-sufficiency standard. Montgomery County's self-sufficiency standard is one of the highest in the region. Self-sufficiency will be equivalent to the wages identified in the following table.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

The Self-Sufficiency Standard for Select Family Types*

Montgomery County, MD 2023

	1 Adult	1 Adult 1 Preschooler	1 Adult 1 Preschooler 1 School-age	2 Adults 1 Preschooler 1 School-age
Monthly Costs				
Housing	\$1,699	\$1,934	\$1,934	\$1,934
Child Care	\$0	\$1,677	\$2,698	\$2,698
Food	\$413	\$610	\$905	\$1,207
Transportation	\$189	\$189	\$189	\$378
Health Care	\$238	\$667	\$697	\$790
Miscellaneous	\$365	\$619	\$753	\$856
Broadband & Cell Phone	\$111	\$111	\$111	\$155
Other Necessities	\$254	\$508	\$642	\$701
Taxes	\$1,038	\$2,160	\$2,996	\$2,816
Earned Income Tax Credit (-)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Child Care Tax Credit (-)	\$0	(\$50)	(\$100)	(\$100)
Child Tax Credit (-)	\$0	(\$167)	(\$333)	(\$333)
Self-Sufficiency Wage				
Hourly (per adult) **	\$22.39	\$43.41	\$55.33	\$29.11
Monthly	\$3,941	\$7,639	\$9,739	\$10,245
Annual	\$47,294	\$91,674	\$116,864	\$122,943
Emergency Savings Fund (Monthly)	\$122	\$519	\$742	\$280

* The Standard is calculated by adding expenses and taxes and subtracting tax credits.

** The hourly wage is calculated by dividing the monthly wage by 176 hours (8 hours per day times 22 days per month). The hourly wage for families with two adults represents the hourly wage that each adult would need to earn; while the monthly and annual wages represent both parents' wages combined. Note: Totals may not add exactly due to rounding.

For Dislocated Workers, the Local Board will consider self-sufficiency as 80% of the pre-layoff family income. A participant making less than 80% of the pre-layoff family income will be considered as an underemployed Dislocated Worker.

(I) Describe your Board's definition of "unlikely to return to previous industry or occupation" when required for eligibility for Dislocated Worker services.

UNLIKELY TO RETURN TO OCCUPATION

For dislocated workers, they are considered "unlikely to return to previous industry or occupation" when the dislocated worker is laid off and meets at least one (1) of the requirements below:

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

- The number of opportunities in previous industry/ occupation is declining based on labor market information;
- Supply of candidates in previous industry/ occupation exceeds the number of opportunities in the county;
- Projected annual employment increase for industry or occupation is less than 100 jobs;
- The individual has engaged in an unsuccessful job search in their previous industry/occupation for over three months;
- Wage variable for positions no longer matches with individual's level of skills and experience; and/ or Individual is unable to perform the duties of the previous industry/occupation due to age, ability, illness/injury, disability, or other barriers.

WSM supports the above criteria to define "unlikely to return to work." AJC staff determines that an individual is unlikely to return to his/ her previous industry or occupation due to circumstances that cause significant barriers to employment.

(J) Describe how your Board will interpret and document eligibility criteria for in-school youth. (Maryland Youth Policy and WIOA Sections 129(a)(1)(B)(iii)(VII) and (a)(1)(C)(iv)(VII). And

WSM is deeply committed to supporting in-school youth by appropriately documenting eligibility criteria that align with Maryland's Youth Policy and the requirements outlined in WIOA Sections 129(a)(1)(B)(iii)(VII) and (a)(1)(C)(iv)(VII). Our efforts are designed to ensure that youth in Montgomery County have access to high-quality programming, resources, and opportunities that will enhance their educational and career outcomes.

To ensure eligibility is determined accurately and transparently, WSM follows a comprehensive, standardized process for documenting eligibility following state and federal guidelines. This process includes carefully reviewing each youth's educational enrollment status, age, and any specific barriers they may face.

(K) Describe how your Board will interpret and document eligibility criteria for out of school youth. (Maryland Youth Policy and WIOA Sections 129(a)(1)(B)(iii)(VII) and (a)(1)(C)(iv)(VII).

WSM is committed to interpreting and documenting eligibility criteria for **out-of-school youth** in accordance with Maryland's Youth Policy and WIOA Sections 129(a)(1)(B)(iii)(VII) and (a)(1)(C)(iv)(VII). We will ensure eligibility through a structured process, including age verification, low-income status, and barriers to employment, with documentation from academic records, assessments, and community partners.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Eligibility Determination and Documentation:

1. **Verification:** Eligibility will be verified through academic records, youth interviews, and other supporting documents (e.g., disability status, foster youth, or school dropout).
2. **Assessment:** Youth will undergo a personalized **individualized assessment** to identify career interests, barriers, and training needs, which will inform their **Individual Service Strategy (ISS)**.
3. **Collaboration:** WSM will collaborate with educational institutions and community organizations to confirm eligibility and ensure youth are connected to relevant resources.

Service Delivery Model:

1. **Career Exploration:** Youth will engage in career exploration to identify potential pathways in high-demand sectors.
2. **Essential Skills Training:** Training will cover soft skills and basic workplace readiness to prepare youth for success.
3. **Occupational Training and Credentials:** Sector-based job training will lead to industry-recognized certifications in high-demand fields.
4. **Work Experience and Apprenticeships:** WSM will offer work-based learning opportunities to help youth gain real-world experience and job skills.
5. **Placement and Follow-Up:** WSM will assist with job placement and provide follow-up services for at least 12 months post-placement.

Individual Service Strategy (ISS) Review:

Each youth will have a personalized **ISS** with goals, milestones, and services outlined. This plan will be reviewed every **90 days** to track progress and make adjustments as needed.

(L) A description of the documentation required to demonstrate a “need for training.”

NEED FOR TRAINING (ITA/COHORT)

Each participant is required to conduct research and prepare a training plan prior to submitting a written request for training funds. The following must be documented in the request:

- The occupations for which the training will prepare the participant
- The local employment projections for specific occupations(s)
- The entry-level salaries of these positions
- Evidence that the position is on the High Priority Occupation list

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

- A statement regarding how the remaining tuition balance, if any, will be satisfied if the course amount exceeds the allowable funding
- For ITAs, a comparison of (2) training providers from the state-approved Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL).

Participants seeking training must apply for financial aid (if appropriate) during their career research and before requesting access to WIOA funds. In addition to the list above and financial aid applications, individuals seeking WIOA funding support also need to demonstrate a “need for training” which is a collaborative decision made with input from the interested customer and the Career Specialist. Past activities, experience and education level, job readiness level, and the Individual Employment Plan determine the need for training per individual. The WDB, in collaboration with its partners, has developed a “need for training” document. The Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) is used to assess customer skill level, interests, and aptitude and must be administered to anyone pursuing WIOA-funded occupational training. Those who proctor the assessment must go through rigorous training.

If one has at least a Bachelor’s degree (60 credit hours) with at least a 2.5 GPA, or an Associate degree, s/he does not necessarily need to take CASAS. The assessment must be taken for those with only a high school diploma or equivalent, or less. The outcome of the assessment must also be in line with the requirements of the industry of interest. Of course, one’s experience is also taken into consideration. If the person has prior training experience in a particular vocation, yet did not score adequately on the assessment, they may still be able to pursue additional training to make themselves more marketable.

Career Services Specialists instruct customers in conducting labor market and occupational research. The specialists make sure customers have some knowledge of the occupation and what it entails prior to pursuing training in that field. As part of the intake process, staff are aware that an assessment is required as part of the IEP and any ITAs and cohort training.

(M) Describe how your board will provide access to the 14 required program elements for the WIOA Youth program design and whether the Local Board has contracted with youth services provider.

WSM is committed to delivering comprehensive services for youth, especially those facing significant barriers to education and employment. Our program integrates career exploration, essential skills training, occupational credentials, and work experience opportunities. With a focus on individualized assessments, sector-based training, and work-based learning, we will prepare youth for careers in high-growth industries, ensuring alignment with local labor market needs.

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Our approach prioritizes older, out-of-school, and disconnected youth, including those facing barriers such as foster care, justice involvement, disabilities, and basic skills deficiencies. Our five-step process includes individualized assessment, sector-based job training, work-based learning, placement, and follow-up services, with continuous support to ensure successful transitions into sustainable employment and education.

1. Tutoring, Study Skills Training, and High School Diploma/GED

We will provide academic support and tutoring, helping youth obtain their high school diploma or GED. WSM will also focus on youth with basic skills deficiencies, offering pre- and post-testing, tutoring, and specialized instruction to ensure academic success.

2. Alternative Secondary School Services

In collaboration with local K-12 schools and educational stakeholders, we will provide alternative education options, particularly for disconnected youth. Programs will include GED preparation, tutoring, and strategies to reduce dropout rates, ensuring that youth complete their education and transition to post-secondary pathways.

3. Summer Employment Opportunities

We will offer paid summer employment opportunities, emphasizing work readiness and career exploration. Youth will gain valuable work experience through internships, job shadowing, and work-based learning in high-demand sectors such as healthcare, IT, construction, and hospitality. These opportunities will be integrated into the WSM Summer Youth Connection programs.

4. Paid and Unpaid Work Experiences

Our program will facilitate year-round paid and unpaid work experiences, such as apprenticeships and internships, to connect youth with employers in key industries. These work experiences will help youth develop essential work maturity skills, prepare for careers in high-growth sectors, and ensure alignment with local labor market demands.

5. Occupational Skills Training

Youth will participate in targeted occupational skills training aligned with the needs of local employers. Focus will be on industries such as construction, healthcare, IT, and hospitality. Youth will gain industry-recognized credentials that enhance their employability and career progression, with an emphasis on high-growth sectors.

6. Leadership Development Opportunities

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Youth will engage in leadership development activities, including mentoring, peer-led projects, and community service. These activities will help youth develop decision-making, communication, and teamwork skills, providing them with essential tools for long-term success.

7. Supportive Services

To address barriers to success, we will offer supportive services, including transportation assistance, childcare, mental health support, and case management. For youth with specific needs, such as those aging out of foster care or involved in the justice system, we will provide tailored services like social service referrals, employability training, and barrier remediation.

8. Adult Mentoring

Each youth will be paired with an adult mentor who will offer career guidance, academic support, and emotional encouragement. Mentors will work with youth to create Individual Service Strategies (ISS) that align with their career goals, and relationships will be sustained for at least 12 months to ensure ongoing support.

9. Follow-up Services

Youth will receive follow-up services for a minimum of 12 months after program completion. These services include job placement assistance, career coaching, referrals for further education or training, and help in overcoming barriers to long-term employment and educational success.

10. Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling

We will provide individualized career guidance and counseling to help youth explore career pathways and develop the skills necessary for success. After an objective assessment of academic, occupational, and service needs, staff will create an ISS tailored to each youth's goals. The ISS will be reviewed every 90 days to track progress and ensure alignment with employment goals.

11. Financial Literacy Education

Financial literacy workshops will teach youth essential money management skills, including budgeting, saving, and understanding credit. This education is crucial for helping youth transition to financial independence and manage their finances effectively in adulthood.

12. Entrepreneurship Skills Training

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

We will offer entrepreneurship training to youth interested in starting their own businesses. Training will cover key business skills such as writing business plans, securing funding, and marketing, empowering youth to create their own career opportunities.

13. Labor Market and Employment Information

Youth will have access to up-to-date labor market data to help them make informed decisions about their careers. Our program will provide resources on in-demand occupations, wage trends, and the skills required for various job roles, ensuring that youth are prepared for sustainable careers in growing industries.

14. Post-secondary Preparation

We will provide support for youth pursuing post-secondary education, including college and vocational training. Services will include assistance with applications, financial aid, scholarships, and test preparation, ensuring that youth have the resources to succeed in higher education and training programs.

Key WSM Initiatives and Targeted Services

Objective Assessments: WSM will conduct objective assessments to evaluate academic, occupational skill levels, and career pathways. These assessments will guide the development of each youth's Individual Service Strategy (ISS), ensuring personalized support.

Sector-Based Job Training and Work-Based Learning: WSM will focus on sector-based job training in high-growth industries, offering youth direct access to employers and work-based learning opportunities in construction, healthcare, IT, and hospitality.

Targeting Disconnected Youth: Services will prioritize older, out-of-school, and disconnected youth, with specific strategies for re-engaging youth through partnerships with local schools and post-secondary institutions.

Partnerships with Employers: WSM will collaborate with employers to create work-based learning opportunities, connecting youth with meaningful internships and apprenticeships that lead to employment in key industries.

Co-location and Technology Integration: Youth services will be co-located in Montgomery County Job Centers to facilitate co-enrollment and increase access to resources for the highest-need populations. We will also leverage technology to expand service delivery and enhance program accessibility.

Serving Youth with Barriers: Special services will be provided to youth with barriers such as foster care, justice involvement, disabilities, and basic skills deficiencies. This includes

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

customized work readiness skills, job referrals, and connections to community partners for mental health, medical, and other services.

Eckerd Youth Alternatives (EYA) Partnership: Through our agreement with EYA, we will expand services for out-of-school youth, particularly those impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. EYA will provide case management, career coaching, paid work experience, and post-employment support to youth ages 16-24, with a focus on those facing significant barriers.

(N) A description of the steps the Local Board will take to ensure at least 20% of Youth Funds are used for work-based training activities.

The Board policy requires that at least 20% of the Youth funds are used for work-based training activities. Updates to the Board on relevant expenditure occur at every full Board meeting. The program director and Executive Director will keep budgetary track of the percentage to ensure that the requirement is met.

(O) Describe your board's plan goal to serve out of school youth and identify specific steps that have been taken to meet this goal. If your board's goal is under 75 percent describe how you will implement the waiver and how you will enhance connections to Youth Apprenticeship programming, increase DORS co-enrollment, and make changes for In School-Youth (ISY) services.

The Board recognizes the importance of focusing on serving out-of-school youth. Therefore, 80% of WIOA Youth funds have been set to serve this population segment.

Outreach efforts will be conducted throughout the county that include participation and hosting of community youth events. The use of digital outreach strategies (i.e. social media, texting) should help to increase the number of youths that are reached. Partners such as the public school system, community and faith-based organizations will also be leveraged to reach harder to serve youth. In addition to these methods, the Board will support the creation of opportunities for Design Thinking that allow youth to vocalize their needs and help create programs that will support them.

Innovative measurements, such as Career Scope and other career assessment tools, will be utilized to help out-of-school youth identify their strengths and career trajectories. Assessment outcomes will help youth and Career Coaches to develop career pathways and an array of services. The services will include career exploration, mentorship programs, work and learning opportunities, and participation in industry academies.

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Partners will address coordination around customer flow, reduction of duplication of services, strategic policy development, data sharing, continuous improvement, and leveraging of resources. Partners commit to participating in the development of a coordinated referral and intake system, as well as the development of a common customer satisfaction system data collection and analysis system. Additionally, partners commit to promoting information sharing, the coordination of activities, and the enhancement of communication and cross-customer engagement.

Other basic and intensive services include:

- Assist the client with the development of an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) and job readiness support which addresses potential barriers to employment and how to overcome them.
- Provide pre- and post-employment placement coaching, and update IEP as required.
- Coordinate with other agencies and community-based organizations to assist clients and make appropriate referrals.
- Network with community resources to provide services that address specific barriers customers face in accomplishing their employment goals.
- Consult with other staff to promote customer goals and career-related needs.
- Follow up with customers who are not attending programs and provide intensive support to ensure compliance with training and employment.
- Contact customers about career opportunities as well as job fairs on an ongoing basis.
- Attending community events can be beneficial for our customers' career pathways as well as assist with addressing additional barriers that could hinder customers from gaining subsidized employment opportunities.

(P) Describe the Local Board's follow-up services policy. This should include follow-up requirements, frequency of contact, and required documentation.

FOLLOW-UP SERVICES

WorkSource Montgomery's follow-up services play a crucial role in ensuring WIOA participants, particularly youth, receive the support they need to thrive after program exit. These services are tailored to individual needs and are closely monitored to ensure compliance with DOL requirements. By maintaining consistent contact and providing appropriate assistance, WorkSource Montgomery helps participants succeed in their employment and educational endeavors, contributing to long-term workforce development in the region.

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

The minimum requirement of 12-month follow-up will be included in the policy.

Programmatically, WDM reviews the intake and enrollment processes, display of federal signs, case files, accessibility for all customers, and programmatic specific compliance for WIOA, Priority of Services, training services data input in the states system of record. From a fiscal standpoint, the WDB ensures subcontractors follow all procedures as indicated in federal, state, and local policies and WIOA regulations and ensure costs are allowable. Expenditures are tracked monthly to assure correct cost categories and that expenses are within contracted cost limitations. Frequent desk reviews are conducted on each WIOA contract.

Adult and Dislocated Worker Follow-Up Services

Follow-up services for adult and dislocated worker participants are provided after program exit, with services documented in both the Maryland Workforce Exchange (MWE) and the participant's Case Notes. These services include, but are not limited to, the following contact methods: telephone, e-mail, social media, and/or face-to-face communication. Follow-up services are offered throughout the follow-up period and may vary depending on the participant's specific needs.

- Follow-up services for adults and dislocated workers may be offered for up to 12 months, with scope and intensity tailored to each individual's situation and progress after exiting the program.

Youth Follow-Up Services

Youth participants benefit from targeted follow-up services designed to support their transition to adulthood and ensure continued success in employment and education. The services are customized to address each youth's unique circumstances and goals.

Key youth follow-up services include:

- Leadership development and supportive service activities.
- Regular contact with the youth's employer, offering assistance in resolving work-related issues.
- Career development and education assistance, including helping youth secure better-paying jobs and further education opportunities.
- Work-related peer support groups to foster collaboration and mentorship among peers.
- Adult mentoring to provide guidance and career advice.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

- Tracking employment progress, ensuring youth are maintaining employment post-training.

Follow-Up Schedule for Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth

To meet compliance, the appropriate Counselor must document follow-up activities in the MWE and Case Notes at the following intervals after a participant exits the program:

- INSERT FOLLOW-UP SCHEDULE

The career advisor is responsible for entering the dates in MWE and the Case Notes to demonstrate that follow-up services were completed and to maintain accurate records for auditing purposes.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Section VII Wagner Peyser Functions

A description of plans and strategies for, and assurances concerning, maximizing coordination of services provided by the State employment service under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) and services provided in the Local Area through the AJC delivery system, to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services.

MAXIMIZING COORDINATION OF SERVICES

Wagner-Peyser is a labor exchange program that brings together individuals who are seeking employment and employers who are seeking employees. MD Labor administers a labor exchange that has the capacity to assist job seekers to find employment; to assist employers in filling jobs; and to facilitate the match between job seekers and employers. Self-services are available to all job seekers and employers at the center or remotely. In addition to accessing information electronically, customers can choose to receive information in more traditional forms such as printed materials, which are available at Montgomery County Job Centers.

Montgomery County Job Center staff (both WIOA and Wagner-Peyser staff) provide services to the employer community, as well as to job seekers. Multiple employer services include assistance with screening qualified applicants, assessing/ testing applicants, and assistance with application processing. These activities can be conducted at the employer's location or at the center. Specialized services to employers include on-site visits, employed worker training, federal bonding services, tax incentives, mass recruitments, and job fairs.

At the comprehensive Montgomery County Job Center, WIOA staff work side-by-side with Wagner-Peyser staff, particularly in the center's resource area. Eckerd Connects is currently working to develop a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities to provide for the elimination of duplication of service and promote easier access for all job seekers.

Every UI claimant that comes to the center is invited to attend an orientation on all the workforce services to which they have access. Working in a fully co-located facility allows Wagner-Peyser, WIOA, and partner staff to develop processes and workflows to identify and promote workforce services to UI claimants using an integrated approach.

Wagner-Peyser staff provide Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) and Reemployment Opportunity Workshop (ROW) seminars in the Montgomery County Job Centers, per regulation. Staff will be trained by the state on correct information and services

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

they can provide to UI claimants and will be trained on how to support individuals applying for a claim.

Montgomery County Job Center partners will develop an intake and referral process for individuals attending RESEA and ROW seminars to effectively connect them to other Montgomery County Job Center and WIOA offerings. The instructor works with WSM staff to ensure promotion of WIOA service offerings and begins basic eligibility review for WIOA services.

Montgomery County Job Center partners will also develop workshops that will prepare customers to be job ready. Other available sessions will include resume critiques and mock interviews. Job search assistance will be provided in Montgomery County Job Centers along with job listings and job-related events such as Career Fairs.

A description of how the Local Board will ensure that migrant and seasonal farm workers in its Local Area will be provided employment services. DWDAL's policy on migrant and seasonal farmworker services can be found here:

<http://www.labor.maryland.gov/employment/mpi/mpi4-18.pdf>.

MIGRANT & SEASONAL FARM WORKERS

There are currently no identified migrant or seasonal farm workers in Montgomery County. However, anecdotal evidence collected by MD Labor suggests that Maryland's agricultural employers are challenged by the scarcity of workers interested in the agricultural field. Historically family-owned farms often struggle to remain in business or resort to hiring via the H2A Program.

If Montgomery County farms hire migrant and seasonal farm workers, the WDB will ensure that such workers receive the same employment services where they live and work that non-migrant seasonal farm workers receive at the Montgomery County Job Centers. MD Labor and WSM staff would work together to conduct outreach to migrant and seasonal farm workers and would connect with the state's National Farm Workers Jobs Program recipient, currently Telamon Corporation, and the State Monitor Advocate to gain technical assistance in providing relevant services.

Montgomery County staff would ensure any outreach or services would include a bilingual component. In addition, WSM would work with agricultural employers to ensure support for their migrant and seasonal farm workers. When serving MSFWs, MD Labor will conduct any and all housing inspections.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

A description of who is responsible for conducting migrant and seasonal farmworker housing inspections. DWDAL's policy on migrant and seasonal farmworker services can be found here:

<http://www.labor.maryland.gov/employment/mpi/mpi4-18.pdf>.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Section VIII Vocational Rehabilitation Functions

(A) A description of the replicated cooperative agreements (as defined in section 107(d)(11)) between the Local Board or other local entities described in section 101(a)(11)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 721(a)(11)(B)) and the local office of a designated State agency or designated State unit administering programs carried out under title I of such Act (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.) (The Maryland State Department of Education's Division of Rehabilitation Services) (other than section 112 or part C of that title (29 U.S.C. 732, 741) and subject to section 121(f)) in accordance with section 101(a)(11) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 721(a)(11)) with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination.

The Maryland State Department of Education's Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS), in accordance with 29 U.S.C. 721(a)(11) will provide the following services to **youth and adults** with disabilities:

- Provide intake, orientation, and assessments for disabled job-seekers;
- Promote employment of persons with disabilities;
- Based on a comprehensive assessment of an individual's disabilities, determine an individual's eligibility for services in accordance with the Division's Order of Selection criteria;
- Develop an Individualized Plan for Employment;
- Provide guidance and counseling, physical restoration, and training to eligible persons with disabilities;
- Provide follow-up services to enhance job retention;
- Provide other vocational rehabilitation services as may be available and appropriate;
- Provide Pre-Employment Transition Services for students with disabilities, as defined by WIOA;
- Provide Supported Employment Services for **youth and adults** with disabilities as defined by WIOA;

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

- Provide independent living services to enhance the capacity of persons with disabilities to live unaided in the community;
- Provide performance information as required by WIOA;
- Provide cross-training of workforce staff on disability related issues;
- Provide technical assistance on disability related issues and assistive technology;
- Engage employers through the Division's Business Services Representatives;
- Work in a collaborative manner to coordinate services among the Workforce Partners for **youth and adults** with disabilities.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Section IX Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Functions

A description of how TANF is integrated in the AJC system (e.g., customer intake, service coordination, client monitoring and tracking, targeting employment services to low-skill, low-wage workers, etc.).

TANF providers are a mandated partner in the America Job Center system under WIOA. In Montgomery County, TANF (also known as Temporary Cash Assistance) has been a longstanding Montgomery County Job Center partner. Staff members work to ensure that public assistance recipients are enrolled in programs and are receiving services they need. The TANF staff is integrated in the One-Stop to provide information on services and assists with screening customers for benefits. TANF participants have access to a broad range of AJC services that include partner services, career counseling, occupational skills training opportunities and job placement services.

As referenced throughout this Plan, the WIOA partners including TANF agreed to a common intake that includes an informal assessment and orientation session, Maryland Workforce Exchange registration and referral to career services. In addition, TANF staff participates in orientation/ information sessions, coordination meetings to facilitate co-enrollments, career pathway strategies, supportive services, and staff development training. WIOA provides an opportunity to enhance this partnership and explore additional coordination of services to better serve individuals receiving TANF.

WSM and the board continued to work needs to be done to ensure a referral system among all the partners that includes a 'warm hand-off' of customers from one agency to another. The One Stop Operator, Eckerd Connections continues to engage in a conversation about how to further develop a common referral and screening system. WSM and the County's Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) envision a seamless, integrated customer flow facilitated through a dedicated technical platform that would reduce duplicative data entry. The partners will ensure that this seamless system is based on a two-generation poverty strategy—integrating referrals to Head Start, Early Childhood Services and the Child Care Scholarship program.

The partners are committed to creating an integrated system that addresses:

- Customer Intake—The TANF workforce subcontractor through Health and Human Services has been and continues to be included in partner discussions to develop a common customer flow that will be aligned across WIOA partners.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

- Referrals—All WIOA workforce partners will have access to a full mapping of workforce services and WSM will facilitate a comprehensive training and understanding of referrals across partners.
- Service Coordination—Once shared customers are identified, there will be ongoing understanding of case management capacity and coordination of shared case management for the client so that outcomes can be effectively tracked.
- Data Matching/Client Tracking—Partners will work together to create a holistic approach to data matching and client tracking. WSM anticipates continued conversations around data matching and shared goal outcomes.
- Targeted Services for Hardest to Serve Clients— WIOA partners are committed to targeting comprehensive services for the hardest to serve customer that include coordinated programmatic elements. WSM and Health and Human Services plan to work together to pilot interventions for shared clients, focused on educational attainment and stackable credentials, career-driven placements, and long-term retention that ultimately leads to self-sufficiency.
- Two-Generation Approaches—WSM and Health and Human Services have partnered on a 2Gen grant to develop and pilot two-generational approaches to better align workforce and early childhood education services, engaging Early Head Start and Head Start grantees

(B) A description of the implementation and coordination process to enhance the provision of services to individuals on TANF that includes:

Potential co-location of LDSS and/or WIOA Partners at AJCs or LDSS depending on the nature of local partnerships and operations;

Currently, Neighborhood Opportunity Network staff provide customers at the Wheaton Job Center with TANF, SNAP and other Health and Human Services screening and referrals once per week. WSM and Health and Human Services will engage in discussions to explore potential co-location and collaboration opportunities to best meet collective needs

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Leverage existing financial and in-kind contributions to the WIOA system to ensure coordination of services provided by multiple programs, creating a seamless approach to delivering services;

LEVERAGING EXISTING RESOURCES

Health and Human Services currently dedicates staff on site through leveraged resources. HHS is open to determining what concrete in-kind contributions would be beneficial—including and not limited to educational/marketing resources/materials and access to facilities/space. WSM and Health and Human Services will collectively strategize to explore how best to leverage respective federal funding streams and grant opportunities. WSM has been awarded the 2-Gen Poverty grant from Innovate + Educate and the Kellogg foundation. WSM is utilizing family-centered best practices to best address employability

Cross-train and provide technical assistance to all WIOA Partners about TANF;

Staff development and training is key to successful delivery of service. Health and Human Services is committed to attending OSO meetings and providing relevant subject matter expertise on the TANF program, and updates on Health and Human Service programs. They will ensure that their TANF contractor fully engages in partnership opportunities and appropriate staff trainings to align staff knowledge. WSM and Health and Human Services will explore other ways to cross-train and provide technical assistance to ensure a seamless delivery of service for TANF and WIOA customers.

Ensure that activities are countable and tracked for the TANF Work Participation Rate;

Currently, TANF customers are mandated to provide weekly timesheets to track their work participation. Health and Human Services and WSM will coordinate to ensure that any TANF recipients receiving WIOA services submit their timesheets to be tracked by the TANF contractor. The partners will explore other options to improve the usability and accountability of work participation rate tracking.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Access to business services and employer initiatives to attract and better serve employers by marketing joint services, minimizing the burden on employers who use the centers, and provide employer-focused services through a single point of entry rather than through all partnering programs; and

As the single point-of-entry and the broker between employer demand and qualified job seekers, WSM has launched a strong outreach program utilizing multiple communication strategies. Lead by the Communication Committee, communication and outreach efforts target employer engagement in pipeline development and employability initiatives. WSM, sub-contractors, and Health and Human Services will work together to implement these initiatives. Outreach activities include, but are not limited to:

- Meet and greet sessions for the chambers of commerce and area businesses associations
- Development of various collateral materials
- Quarterly newsletters
- Website enhancements
- Active presence on social media outlets

These efforts will compliment what the WSM, the OSO, and partners are currently doing by targeting employers to commit to career-specific placements and developing training aligned to career pathways. TANF representation will also be incorporated as part of the new Business Solutions Team efforts.

Contribute and provide outcomes data to the WIOA system through strategies for collecting and reporting varied program reporting requirements.

The WIOA and Health and Human Services partners will work with their respective state entities to provide baseline data and develop coordinated strategies for program reporting. WSM is seeking out new avenues for technology to streamline

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

the process for data collection by population. They will soon initiate the use of a new CRM platform that will allow for better tracking of data in real time. WSM is also committed to allowing more “read only” access to their databases for partners to see who is registered. Core partners are currently reviewing opportunities to share data more effectively across programs.

(C) A description of the LDSS representation on the Local Board to ensure that TANF expectations, roles, and responsibilities are addressed in the Local Area.

The Director of Health and Human Services is an active member of the WDB. In addition, the HHS director has been part of the WDB’s Strategic Planning Team to ensure that the strategies address the needs of this population. In addition, the director was part of the local planning group that has been involved in the development of this plan. Health and Human Services has strong representation with all AJC partners in Montgomery County that evaluate and continuously improve access and services for all individuals at the centers.

(D) Provide a description of what strategies the Local Board employs to support TANF recipients in accessing skills and credentialing, life management skills, and employment to improve the financial status of those exiting the TANF program.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Section X Community Service Block Grant Functions

(A) A list of Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) providers in the Local Area and whether they provide employment and training activities.

(C) A description of the CAA representation on the Local Board to ensure that CSBG expectations, roles, and responsibilities are addressed in the Local Area. A representative from a CAA is a required partner on the Local Board.

COMMUNITY SERVICE BLOCK GRANT PROVIDERS

Meeting the needs of Montgomery County requires the leveraging of resources from partner organizations in the community. Center partners have representatives from a Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) provider, specifically the Montgomery County Community Action Association director, Sharon Strauss, who began her tenure on the WDB in 2021. The Board recognizes that CSBG organizations and partners provide services and access to resources to assist our clients in areas beyond traditional services provided by AJCs. The ability to refer clients to services that will assist them and their families in areas such as, but not limited to housing, healthcare, childcare, literacy, transportation, counseling services, will greatly enhance the success of the clients served.

As part of ongoing training activities, the WDB— through the Operator—conducts scheduled training for all partner agencies with the AJC. CSBG service providers have been and will continue to be invited to conduct training sessions for partner agencies. At minimum, these training sessions provide a general overview of services provided, eligibility requirements and referral and tracking processes.

Public Service Grants Funded by the Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) Program July 1, 2022– June 30, 2023

- A Wider Circle, Inc. \$45,000 “Workforce Development Program”
Provides holistic, intensive, and highly personalized support to adults seeking to enter or re-enter the workforce. Estimated to benefit 1000 clients.
- Artpreneurs, Inc., dba Arts on the Block, \$25,000 “Library Lanterns: Leveraging IoT to Light a Path Toward STEAM Learning.”
Provides support for four after-school workshops and a one-week summer camp to help close the STEAM academic achievement gap. Estimated to benefit 2,177 clients.
- CASA de Maryland, Inc. \$45,000 “Career Focused Pre-Apprenticeship Youth Program.”
Provides a workforce readiness program, including six-month internships and workshops, focusing on post- secondary education awareness, career exploration, and workforce readiness. Estimated to benefit 8 youth.
- Community Bridges, Inc. \$30,000 “CB College and Career Planning Program and Alumnae Program”
Provides college and career planning opportunities to girls from low-income and immigrant backgrounds. Estimated to benefit 225 students.

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

- Community Reach of Montgomery County, Inc. \$45,000 “REAP: Rockville Emergency Assistance Program” Provides case management services and financial assistance to low-income County residents facing eviction or utility terminations, or who are in need of expensive prescriptions or other basic needs, or who need social service referrals for dental and vision care, clothing, food, or refurbished computers. Estimated to benefit 275 clients.
- The Ethiopian Community Center, Inc. \$45,000 “African Immigrant Workforce Development Program” Provides a two-track workforce development program for African immigrant residents. The first track will connect participants to career development and skill training programs and the second will connect participants to jobs. The program curriculum combines culturally/ linguistically targeted training, counseling, and resource navigation. Estimated to benefit 80 clients.
- EveryMind, Inc. \$45,000 “SASS - Stabilizing Adults through Situational Support” Provides assistance to low-income residents in preventing evictions, securing shelter, making and keeping appointments for physical and mental medical health care services, and finding and keeping jobs. Estimated to benefit 140 clients.
- Interfaith Works, Inc. \$40,543 “IW Connections” Provides bilingual (English and Spanish) Outreach Coordinators at the IW Clothing who meet with clients to conduct comprehensive needs assessments, gather information to make referrals to appropriate partner service providers, and educate clients about available assistance. Estimated to benefit 750 clients.
- Montgomery County Coalition for The Homeless, Inc. \$45,000 “Home Builders Care Assessment Center Diversion Specialist” Provides a Diversion Specialist (DS) at the HBCAC emergency shelter to work with men who are experiencing a housing crisis to quickly identify and access safe and appropriate alternatives to emergency shelter. Estimated to benefit 35 clients.
- Mobile Medical Care, Inc. \$40,000 “Expanding Family Planning Options for Uninsured, Low- Income Women” Provides safe and effective long-acting reversible contraception (LARC) for low-income, uninsured Montgomery County women for whom other birth control methods are not a viable family planning option. Estimated to benefit 60 clients.
- Montgomery Housing Partnership, Inc. (MHP) \$45,000 “Middle School Afterschool Program in Wheaton and Takoma Park” Provides an afterschool academic enrichment program for middle school students at two MHP affordable housing properties (Amherst Square/ Pembroke Square Apartments in Wheaton, and Sligo View Apartments in Takoma Park). Estimated to benefit 35 students.
- NAMI Montgomery County (MD), Inc. \$27,500 “Mental Health Programs for Low-income Latinx Residents”

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Provides free mental health support groups, presentations and classes in Spanish at no cost to participants for the local Latinx community. The programs will support and educate low-income Spanish-speaking individuals living with mental illness and their family members. Estimated to benefit 425 clients.

- Per Scholas, Inc. \$45,000 “Per Scholas NCR IT Job Training”

Provides an IT-focused Job Training Program for low-income Montgomery County residents, connecting them to jobs that are immediately available and providing ongoing post-employment support. Estimated to benefit 40 clients.

- The Shepherd’s Table, Inc. \$24,457 “Food Services Program”

Pays a portion of salaries for two Chefs in a program that provides free meals to the homeless. Estimated to benefit 2,700 clients.

The WDB will provide space for the providers in AJC to meet with clients. They will be encouraged to participate in the MOU and RSAB to become key partners in the AJC. Supporting the AJC can be in-kind, cash or a combination of both. By working together, we can leverage limited resources more effectively. Additionally, AJC’s BST will promote their services to the business community so that they are aware of service offerings and resources.

An ongoing challenge is the development of a tracking and referral system. The ultimate goal would be having a single reporting system in which all data is shared in a confidential manner. Due to different funding streams and related rules and policies, tracking and sharing of information is problematic. However, the WDB and partner agencies have developed a tracking/referral system which ensures clients are served.

Through community outreach and networking, the WDB will meet with the county grant program manager, DHS, and CBOs to ensure that they are all aware of new service offerings and that information about various events are shared. The CAA is a mandated partner of our Job Center. The RSA leverages \$263,749 of in-kind contributions from our partners.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Section XI Jobs for Veterans State Grants Functions

(A) A description of how the Local Board will provide priority of service to veterans and their eligible spouses.

PRIORITY OF SERVICE TO VETERANS AND ELIGIBLE SPOUSES

The AJC provides “Priority of Service” to veterans and their eligible spouses in accordance with the Jobs for Veterans Act of 2002 and the Veterans’ Benefits, Health Care, and Information Technology Act of 2006. The purpose of Priority of Service is to give first consideration for program participation to covered Veterans and eligible spouses who also meet the eligibility criteria of a federal Department of Labor training, employment, or placement service in any workforce preparation program. Local Workforce Development Areas will ensure all vendors follow Priority of Service provisions.

To receive Veterans Priority of Service for a specific program, a Veteran or eligible spouse must meet the statutory definition of a “covered person” and also must meet any other statutory eligibility requirement applicable to the program. For all USDOL funded programs, Priority of Service means access to services or resources earlier than others, or if resources are limited, it may mean access to services and resources instead of general service individuals.

Veterans Priority of Service will take precedence before applying WIOA Priority of Service for recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient. Programs with specific eligibility criteria, such as the WIOA Title I Adult program, will ensure covered persons meet all statutory eligibility requirements for the program before receiving Priority of Service.

Note: All criteria for veteran and spouse eligibility will be applied as written in Maryland’s WIOA State Plan, Section 9. (review for more details on veteran and spouse eligibility).

In accordance with Maryland’s State Plan, veterans and eligible spouses will continue to receive priority of service for all USDOL-funded job training programs, which include WIOA programs. However, as described in TEG 10-09, when programs are statutorily required to provide priority for a particular group of individuals, such as the WIOA priority described below, priority must be provided in the following order:

1. 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 would receive first priority for services provided with WIOA adult formula funds.
2. 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.

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

3. Third, to veterans and eligible spouses who are not included in WIOA’s priority groups.

4. Last, to non-covered persons outside the groups given priority under WIOA.

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

CUSTOMER SERVICE FLOW FOR VETERANS

AJC staff provides core services and initial assessments to veterans. The receptionist or other AJC staff who work at the front desks are trained to determine whether any customers are veterans. Information can also be gathered on veteran status when the AJC front desk has customers complete their county’s “Customer Activity Sheet”. Customers who self-attest to veteran status shall receive priority of service from this point forward.

AJC staff conduct the initial Personalized Needs Assessment with all new customers (including veterans). If a customer self-attests to veteran status, AJC staff complete MD Labor’s Significant Barrier to Employment (SBE) Checklist to determine whether the veteran qualifies as having one or more SBE.

When the Personalized Needs Assessment is completed, veterans choose from the following options:

1. If the customer qualifies as SBE and requires intensive services to overcome a barrier to employment, AJC staff assists in setting up an appointment for them to meet with a Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialist.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

2. If the customer does not require intensive services, they are then referred to Basic Career Services resources, WIOA Title I resources, an AJC Workforce Development Specialist, or other resource as determined appropriate based on the Personalized Needs Assessment.

Note: When a veteran seeks services at an AJC where the DVOP is not currently available because of their rotation schedule, the receptionist provides the customer with the card and contact information of the DVOP and contacts the DVOP via email to provide them with the contact information of the customer so the two can coordinate a meeting time when the DVOP will be stationed at the AJC, if desired.

VERIFYING VETERAN STATUS

Any individual self-identifying as a covered person should be provided with immediate priority in the delivery of employment and training services. It is neither necessary nor appropriate to require an individual self-identifying as a veteran or eligible spouse to verify their status at the point of entry unless the individual who self-identifies as a covered Veteran or eligible spouse:

1. Is to immediately undergo eligibility determination and must be registered or enrolled in a program; or,
2. The applicable Federal program rules require verification of covered Veteran or eligible spouse status at that time.

Similarly, a covered person should not be denied access on a priority basis to any services provided by program staff in order to verify covered person status. Rather, an individual self-identifying as a Veteran or eligible spouse should be enrolled and provided immediate priority and then be permitted to follow-up subsequently with any required verification of his or her status as a Veteran or eligible spouse.

For services that require eligibility verification, such as classroom training, verification only needs to occur at the point at which a decision is made to commit the use of outside resources.

For example, to receive training services under WIOA Title I programs, veteran status must be verified. In cases such as these, verification is only necessary where a decision is made to commit outside resources to a covered person over another individual. For all other purposes, covered persons should be enrolled and provided immediate priority before providing verification as a covered person.

To receive Priority of Service for career services, covered persons may self-attest their veteran or eligible spouse status.

VETERANS & SPOUSES AS DISLOCATED WORKERS

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker Funds can help Veterans, separating service members and eligible spouses to enter or reenter the civilian labor force. To receive services under the WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker Program, a Veteran or eligible spouse must be a dislocated worker. According to WIOA, a dislocated worker is an individual who:

1. Has been terminated or laid off, or received a notice of termination or layoff from employment;
2. Is eligible for, or has exhausted, unemployment insurance (UI) benefits;
3. Has demonstrated an appropriate attachment to the workforce, but is not eligible for UI and is unlikely to return to a previous industry or occupation;
4. Has been terminated or laid off, or received notification of termination or layoff from employment as a result of a permanent closure or substantial layoff;
5. Is employed at a facility where the employer has made the general announcement that the facility will close within 180 days;
6. Was self-employed, but is unemployed as a result of general economic conditions in the community or because of a natural disaster;
7. Is a displaced homemaker as defined by WIOA 3(16); or,
8. Is the spouse of a member of the Armed Forces on active duty (as defined in section 101(d)(1) of Title 10, U.S.C.), and who has experienced a loss of employment as a direct result of relocation to accommodate a permanent change in duty station of such member; or is the spouse of a member of the Armed Forces on active duty and is unemployed or underemployed and is experiencing difficulty in obtaining or upgrading employment.

Generally, service members exiting the military, including, but not limited to, recipients of Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Military members (UCX), qualify as dislocated workers. Active-duty service members who separate by retirement may also qualify as dislocated workers. However, an active-duty service member taking early retirement as an incentive must be taken on a case-by-case basis. In some cases, this type of separation may be the only choice a service member may have. Thus, the service member's retirement could be considered a dislocation. However, if the service member's separation is voluntary, then the service member would not qualify as a dislocated worker.

If a Veteran meets the definition of a dislocated worker, then they may also be eligible to receive Priority of Service. For WIOA Title I programs, Priority of Service is available to any Veteran who has served at least one day in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable. AJCs may consider documentation of a service member's release from active duty on a specific date as equivalent to a layoff notice for

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

WIOA Dislocated Worker Program eligibility. However, service members are not eligible for Priority of Service until they leave active duty.

In the case of separating service members, because they may be on a terminal leave from the military, a separating service member may begin to receive career services while the service member may still be part of the Active-Duty military but has an imminent separation date. It is appropriate to provide career services to separating service members who will be imminently separating from the military, provided that their discharge will be anything other than dishonorable.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

- (B) A description of how the Local Board will engage Local Veterans Employment Representatives in engaging and providing services to local businesses.

JOBS FOR VETERANS STATE GRANT (JVSG) FUNDS ARE PROVIDED TO FUND TWO STAFF POSITIONS

Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) Specialists –

Under 38 U.S.C. 4103A(a), a DVOP specialist provides intensive services and facilitates placements to meet the employment needs of veterans, prioritizing service to special disabled veterans, other disabled veterans, and other categories of veterans in accordance with priorities determined by the USDOL Secretary; and

Local Veterans' Employment Representatives (LVER) –

Under 38 U.S.C. 4104(b), the LVER's principal duties are to: (1) conduct outreach to employers in the area to assist veterans in gaining employment, including conducting seminars for employers and, in conjunction with employers, conducting job search workshops and establishing job search groups; and (2) facilitate employment, training, and placement services furnished to veterans in a State under the applicable State employment service delivery systems.

MONITORING PRIORITY OF SERVICE

To ensure priority of service is implemented and operating correctly it will be monitored by the Regional Local Veterans Employment Representative (RLVER) and by the Labor Exchange Administrator or whomever they designate.

ENGAGING LVERS

Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER) conduct outreach to employers and engage in advocacy efforts with hiring executives to increase employment opportunities for veterans and encourage the hiring of veterans. The Local Board will promote LVER services through social media, job fairs and email blasts based on information provided to the Local Board by the LVER. The Local Board will include the LVER in employer meetings convened in support of determining employer needs related to Career Services, Training Services, or Educational Services. The LVER will be included in meetings and efforts convened by and on behalf of the AJC Partners, including meetings and efforts convened by the One Stop Operator.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Section XII Trade Adjustment Assistance for Workers Program Functions

A description of how Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) services will be provided in the AJC system within the Local Area.

TAA SERVICES PROVIDED IN THE AJC SYSTEM

Trade affected workers will be co-enrolled with the WIOA dislocated worker program or other appropriate program to ensure the availability of a comprehensive array of services and the integration of workforce development programs. Trade staff and WIOA partners will coordinate efforts to provide opportunities for Trade affected workers to obtain skills, services, resources and support in a quick and effective manner to return the trade affected worker back to suitable employment.

A description of how Title I staff will provide the TAA services listed above in an integrated manner. (Note: Services such as initial assessments, access to information on workshops, job search activities, inform participant of all the services and allowances available under TAA, Rapid Response, LMI, assist in securing appropriate training, monitor training progress and benchmarks, IEP, obtain credentials, follow-up, etc. may be provided by a partner program. Decisions such as the affected worker's TAA training program and training contracts need approval by state merit staff). Describe what your process/flow will look like.

TITLE I PROVISION OF TAA SERVICES

Partner staff in the American Job Center will be responsible for providing the initial meeting and assessments, ensure enrollment in MWE, labor market information and delivering Rapid Response service, if not already provided and to make the participants aware of all the available services and allowances that the Trade Adjustment Assistance Program can provide. Trade staff will work with the trade affected worker on training options, completing TAA application MWE and to ensure the six criteria for training have been met, as well as create or review participants' IEP. Trade staff will also provide approval of all TAA training programs, training contracts and training waivers. Efforts will be coordinated to monitor progress, provide Bench marks every 60 days and ensure a service is provided every 90 days for the Trade affected worker, as well as ensure any needs and barriers are addressed. Staff will coordinate on all employment, case management and follow-up activities.

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

A description of how Trade participants will be co-enrolled in other programs.

Note: co-enrollment with WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker program is a requirement under the TAA Final Rule.

CO-ENROLLMENT

By following an established process flow within the AJC, co-enrollment of Trade affected workers will be ensured to allow for more efficient use of public workforce system resources and reduce barriers to program integration. Participants will be made aware of their co-enrollment. In the event that a Trade affected worker declines co-enrollment or is not eligible for co-enrollment, documentation must be provided and maintained. Declining co-enrollment has no effect on eligibility for benefits and services under the TAA Program.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Section XIII Unemployment Insurance Function

(A) A description of how WIOA Title I and Title III partners will support Unemployment Insurance claimants and provide meaningful access to Unemployment Insurance claimants, as required by WIOA.

(B) UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE FUNCTION

WIOA staff work side-by-side with Wagner-Peyser staff, particularly in the job center's resource area. The One Stop Operator and AJC partners have developed clear roles and responsibilities to provide for the elimination of duplication of service and promote easier access for all job seekers.

Wagner-Peyser staff are key to supporting the labor exchange program that brings together individuals who are receiving unemployment compensation, seeking employment, and employers who are seeking employees. The Wagner Peyser program and Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) and Reemployment Opportunity Workshops (ROW) programs provide claimants access to the full menu of services of the AJC through RESEA, ROW, and WIOA programs. An AJC staff member presents information during two weekly workshops about services, resources, and job opportunities – and at the conclusion of the workshop, the Wagner Peyser staff meets one on one with each RESEA customer to identify their needs and refer them to other services e.g. WIOA, employment opportunities, one-on-one appointments, workshops and/ or to other workforce partners in the One-Stop.

(C) A description of the Local Board will utilize the Wagner-Peyser program and the RESEA and ROW programs to provide access to local workforce development services for Unemployment Insurance claimants.

Both WIOA and Wagner-Peyser staff provide services to the employer community, as well as to job seekers who are receiving unemployment benefits. Multiple employer services include assistance with screening qualified applicants, assessing/testing applicants, and assistance with application processing.

WSM staff have been attending UI training in order to provide better access to the services in the AJC and introduce and invite the customers to workshops and hiring events at the AJC. Additionally, WSM staff have access to the Beacon Database system to monitor any issues that UI claimants have reported and determine if they are able to provide additional guidance.

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Section XIV SENIOR COMMUNITY SERVICE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM FUNCTION

(A) A list of Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) providers in the Local Area. Explain how SCSEP is administered in the Local Area, including grantee and subgrantee information, if applicable.

SCSEP PROVIDER

The SCSEP Director is currently part of the local Strategic Partnership workgroup to promote services for Older Jobseekers (55+) in the AJC. SCSEP Staff are available to provide services in the center at least once a week. The Jewish Council for Aging is the SCSEP provider.

Montgomery County has been steadfast in its commitment to a community where people can age, remain, and thrive, or what has been termed: “A Community for a Lifetime.” Employers also recognize the enormous contributions that are made by a large, diverse, and rapidly growing older population.

WSM and the WDB partner with JCA’s Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), which places older adult (55+) job seekers in paid training to refresh skills and provide hands- on work experience. The “community service” piece is internship placements with nonprofits and government agencies, allowing our seniors to build their resumes while delivering valuable community service.

Our partners at the Jewish Council on Aging also offer an excellent program, The Career Gateway, a five-day workshop with the low cost of \$75. Through intensive training, long-term mentorship, and individualized attention, this workshop is a terrific resource for midlevel managers and other professionals.

(B) A description of how SCSEP services will be provided in the AJC system within the Local Area. Include the components of the SCSEP program that are offered in the Local Area.

While all American Job Center workshops are open to job seekers of any age, WSM periodically hosts a “Job Seekers Over 50” workshop at both the Germantown and Wheaton Job Center locations.

This two-hour workshop provides strategies specific to marketing the 50+ job seekers.

Understanding the unique needs of the 50+ job seekers, WSM maintains a dedicated page on its website listing available resources: [Job Seekers- 50+ | Who We Serve | Worksource Montgomery](#)

Finally, as previously noted, WSM partners with the Jewish Council on Aging in hosting the annual 50+ Employment Expos via Zoom. Each of the six virtual expos brings a dozen employers and organizations that support older workers. There are two workshops included in each expo that cover a variety of topics to help the 50+ Job Seeker. There is no fee to attend as a job seeker, but advanced registration is required.

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Job seekers over age 50 also have the opportunity to participate in “pop-up” outreach activities. WDB and SCSEP collaborate on several activities such as 50+ club, Older Adults Technology Training, Upskill to Age- Friendly Positions, and the Virtual 50+ Employment Expos.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Section XV WIOA Section 188 and Equal Opportunity

Functions

MD Labor's Nondiscrimination Plan can be found here: <http://www.labor.maryland.gov/employment/ndp/>. MD Labor's Language Access Plan can be found here: <http://www.labor.maryland.gov/employment/wioa-access.pdf>.

It is against the law for this recipient of federal financial assistance to discriminate on the following bases: Against any individual in the United States, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions, sex stereotyping, transgender status, and gender identity), national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, disability, or political affiliation or belief, or, against any beneficiary of, applicant to, or participant in programs financially assisted under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, on the basis of the individual's citizenship status or participation in any WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity.

A designation of the local Equal Opportunity Officer, including their name, location, email, telephone number, and TTY or equivalent.

Cynthia Grissom WSM Director of Talent Development
1801 Rockville Pike, Suite 320, Rockville, MD 20852
Email: Cgrissom@worksourcemontgomery.com
(240)641-6730
TTY: (301)929-6888

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

(A) A description of how entities within the AJC delivery system, including AJC operators and the AJC partners, will comply with Section 188 of WIOA and 29 CFR Part 38, 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 and individuals with Limited English Proficiency, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities and for individuals with Limited English Proficiency.

WDB has a zero-tolerance policy on discrimination on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, gender identity, political affiliation or belief for any workforce or education program or activity.

The WDB provides policies and procedures for all subcontractors on informing customers of their rights, under WIOA Title I and detailing the complaint process. All WIOA enrollees receive a copy of their federally protected rights. Customers and staff have the right to report alleged discrimination to the EEO Officer at WSM, who is not in direct line of program oversight. WDB monitors compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) in all AJC and affiliate centers who provide WIOA services offered through program operators. The AJC will make visible to participants that the centers are ADA compliant and are equipped with auxiliary aids and accommodations to serve individuals with disabilities. Within the centers, assistive technology is available for use, including ADA-compliant computers in the resource rooms and classrooms.

The WDB ensures subcontractors follow all procedures as indicated in federal, state, and local policies and WIOA regulations. WDB staff will provide overall oversight and monitoring for WIOA activities. Each sub-contractor will be responsible for identifying staff to conduct internal monitoring on a regular basis. As part of ongoing monitoring, the WDB reviews the intake and enrollment processes, display of federal signs, case files, accessibility for all customers, and programmatic specific compliance for WIOA, Priority of Services, training services and accessibility every six months. AJC partners' staff will also receive ADA compliance training to ensure compliance is met at all levels of engagement once a year

COMPLIANCE WITH ADA

WDB and AJC partners are required to provide reasonable accommodation for individuals with disabilities to ensure equal access and opportunity as both employers and providers of service. WorkSource Montgomery will be the entity responsible for ensuring the American Job Centers in Montgomery County meet accessibility requirements. Maryland Department of Labor will

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

support accessibility compliance at the Wheaton Job Center. The Division of Rehabilitation will provide technical assistance around accessibility and accommodations.

WorkSource Montgomery considers individuals with disabilities an important element of diversity and ability within the AJCs. Individuals with disabilities must be treated with respect and give customer-centric services within both the universal AJC offerings, as well as within WIOA and other WorkSource Montgomery programmatic offerings.

No individual is to be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, subjected to discrimination under, or denied employment in any program or activity, funded in whole or in part under WIOA, due to race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, or political affiliation or belief.

Program operators must use the same processes for all customers, including individuals with disabilities. The program operator will also make reasonable modifications in practices and procedures when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability, unless making the modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity. The need for an accommodation/modification shall not adversely affect the consideration of a qualified individual with a disability for aid, benefits, services, and training.

All sub-recipients and contractors as part of their contractual agreements are required to be compliant with all board policies and procedures which are included in the Job Center Operational Manual (<https://worksourcemontgomery.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/AJC-Procedures-Manual-3.22.18.pdf>).

Individuals, specific classes of individuals, or authorized representatives may file complaints/allegations of discrimination regarding WorkSource Montgomery under the following policy guidelines

WorkSource Montgomery (WSM) will make every effort to provide a professional and positive environment focused on providing career services to customers. Whenever possible, we will address complaints or grievances within 14 days of submission.

Participants, sub-recipients, and contractor employees are encouraged to communicate program issues first to the staff who can assist in the area of concern. Issues that need to be escalated should be referred to the WSM Career Services Manager.

You may file a formal written grievance as follows:

You have up to 180 days to file an EEO- or non-EEO grievance. Your grievance must be in writing and must contain the following information:

- your name;
- mailing address, or other means by which you can be contacted;

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

- identification of individual(s) responsible for alleged issue;
- a description of the allegation(s), which must include enough details to determine the jurisdiction of the complaint;
- the date(s) the alleged incident(s) took place; and
- the complainant's signature or the signature of his/her authorized representative and the date of signature.

You may file your grievance with the WSM Career Services Manager:

Kirk Carrington Career Services Manager WorkSource Montgomery, Inc. 11510 Georgia Avenue, Wheaton, MD 20902 Email: kcarrington@worksourcemontgomery.com

You may also file a grievance with the WSM Director of Programs: Camille McKenzie

WorkSource Montgomery, Inc. 11510 Georgia Ave., Wheaton, MD 20902 Email: cmckenzie@worksourcemontgomery.com

Or, the EEO Officer: Cynthia Grissom WorkSource Montgomery, Inc. 1802 Rockville Pike #320, Rockville, MD 20852 Email: cgrissom@worksourcemontgomery.com

Grievance Procedure Timeline

1. Within 2 days from the receipt of a grievance, the WSM Career Services Manager will contact the customer.
2. Within 14 days of receiving a grievance, the WSM Career Services Manager will attempt to resolve the matter informally.
3. If a resolution cannot be reached within the initial 14-day period, then a formal hearing will be scheduled. The formal hearing provides customers with an opportunity to present any evidence.
4. Within 30 days from the date that the original grievance was received, and or upon conclusion of the hearing process (whichever is sooner), the WSM Executive Director will issue a decision. The final decision will be issued within 10 days from the date of the hearing and not more than 60 days from the date of the initial submission of the formal grievance.

Appeal

If the EEO-complaint grieving party does not receive a decision within 60 days of filing the formal grievance, or receives an unsatisfactory decision, the aggrieved has a right to request a review by the Civil Rights Center at the US Department of Labor.

Assistive technology is available in all centers and affiliate sites. This technology ensures effective methods for individuals with disabilities to access all services. Additional accommodations, equipment, and interpreters can be accessed as needed.

A non-exhaustive list of auxiliary aids and services can be found in 29 CFR § 38.4, and includes:

- Qualified interpreters, note-takers, transcription services, written materials, telephone handset amplifiers, assistive listening systems, telephones compatible with hearing aids, closed caption decoders, open and closed captioning, telecommunications devices for deaf persons

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

(TDDs/TTYs, video telephones, or video remote interpreting devices), videotext displays, or other effective means of making orally delivered materials available to individuals with hearing impairments.

Qualified readers, taped texts, audio recordings, brailled materials, large print materials, or other effective means of making visually delivered materials available to individuals with visual impairments. Acquisition or modification of equipment or devices. Ensure Job Centers are American with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant and equipped with auxiliary aids and accommodations. This should include a list of currently available assistive technology devices and services within the centers available for individuals.

- Ensure individuals are aware of compliance through use of signs or other means of visibility. “Equal Opportunity is the Law” must be prominently displayed within the Job Centers and made available in other formats as requested.
- Rejection of all job orders from any employer that specifies it will not accept applications from individuals with disabilities or from applicants with a certain disability. Under the law, individuals with disabilities must be referred for the same range of positions as any other qualified customer.
- Maintain confidentiality and not disclose disability-related or other medical information about an individual to an employer or partnering organization unless the job seeker has requested the disclosure on their behalf.
- Incorporate information on accommodations and rights of all individuals, including individuals with disabilities, in orientations.
- Refrain from stereotyping individuals with disabilities when evaluating their skills, abilities, interests and needs.
- Periodically review eligibility criteria for services or training to eliminate elements that may screen out individuals with disabilities (unless criteria are directly related to specific training or services and is essential).
- WSM is also deploying several other resources to increase access including a virtual services portal (career edge-URL WSMEdge, Metrix Learning with significant content available to all county residents, the Mobile AJC set for delivery in 2022, and the creation of the Community Impact Team which is tasked with developing relationships with community and faith-based groups across the county to promote WSM services.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

An acknowledgment that the Local Board understands that, while Section 188 of WIOA and 29 CFR Part 38 ensure equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities, sub-recipients may also be subject to the requirements of:

- **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, which prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities by recipients of Federal financial assistance;**
- **Title I of the ADA, which prohibits discrimination in employment based on disability;**
- **Title II of the ADA, which prohibits State and local governments from discriminating on the basis of disability;**
- **Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act; and**
- **Maryland Anti-Discrimination laws, including 5 Md. STATE GOVERNMENT Code Ann. §10-1101, which stipulates that oral language services must be delivered on-site for those in frequent contact with a service provider.**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

Montgomery County WDB acknowledges a strong understanding that while Section 188 of WIOA and 29 CFR Part 39 ensure equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities, sub-recipients may also be subject to the requirements of:

- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, which prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities by recipients of Federal financial assistance;
- Title I of the ADA, which prohibits discrimination in employment based on disability;
- Title II of the ADA, which prohibits State and local governments from discriminating on the basis of disability;
- Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act; and
- Maryland Anti-Discrimination laws, including Code Ann. §10-1102-1103, which stipulates that oral language services must be delivered on-site for those in frequent contact with a service provider.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

(C) A description of how the Local Board will ensure meaningful access¹ to all customers.

(D) A description of the Local Board's procedures for handling grievances and complaints from participants and other interested parties affected by the local AJC system, including partners and service providers. Federal regulation on grievances and complaints can be found at: 29 CFR 38.69-97. Provide a separate description for the:

- **Complaints alleging discrimination on the ground of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, and for beneficiaries only, citizenship or participation in any WIOA Title I – financially assisted program or activity;**
- **Complaints and grievances not alleging illegal forms of discrimination. This includes grievances from individuals alleging labor standards violations; and**
- **Remedies that may be imposed for a violation of any requirement under WIOA Title I, limited to, suspension or termination of payments under the title; prohibition of placement of a participant with an employer that has violated any requirement under WIOA Title I; reinstatement of an employee, payment of lost wages and benefits, and reestablishment of other relevant terms, conditions, and privileges of employment (where applicable); and other equitable relief as appropriate.**

The policy to address all grievances is included in the Job Center Operational Manual (<https://worksourcemontgomery.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/AJC-Procedures-Manual-3.22.18.pdf>) posted on our website. After receipt of a formal grievance, the deciding official shall consider and attempt to resolve the grievance, to the extent resolution is, in the deciding official's judgment, warranted. If the grievance cannot be resolved in a manner acceptable to the aggrieved, the deciding official shall refer the grievance to the for his/her consideration and final decision.

Upon receipt of a formal grievance, the deciding official shall consider and attempt to resolve the grievance, to the extent resolution is, in the deciding official's judgment, warranted. Within 14 days of receipt of the formal grievance, the grievance cannot be resolved in a manner acceptable to the aggrieved, the deciding official shall refer the grievance to the Executive Director for his/her consideration and final decision.

The deciding official, or the Executive Director in the event of referral to him/her for final decision, shall conduct a hearing of the nature and scope appropriate to the issues involved in the grievance, within 30 calendar days of the filing of the formal grievance.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

For non-WIOA programs funded through MD Labor, if the grieving party does not receive a decision within 60 days of filing the formal grievance, or receives an unsatisfactory decision, the aggrieved then has a right to request a review by the Maryland Department of Labor.

For programs other than those funded by MD Labor, the grievance procedures and appeal process shall be those specific to the funding source.

(E) A description of how an individual can request accommodation.

Under the ADA, an individual with a disability can request accommodation and assistance in order to understand, use and benefit from the services in the One-Stop Center and youth providers. During the initial visit to the Center, or through virtual or other correspondence, an individual can ask for assistance to understand and/or access the range of services the programs offer.

Some accommodations may include:

- An individual meeting rather than group orientation
- Help with filling out any registration forms
- Brochures, flyers, and other information in an alternative format such as a different language, Braille, or large print ;
- Sign language interpretation
- Using a tape recorder to remember information
- Adaptive equipment to use computers and phones

(F) A description of the Local Board's policy and procedures with regard to aid, benefits, services, training, and employment; include a statement of assurance that you will provide reasonable accommodation to qualified individuals with disabilities unless providing the accommodation would cause undue hardship.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

(G) A description of how the Local Board will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The description should include how the Local Board will provide reasonable accommodation regarding materials, technology, and physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities. The description should also include how the Local Board will provide staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act Checklist for Existing Facilities can be found here:

<http://www.labor.maryland.gov/employment/ndp/nbp9-AADAChecklist.pdf>.

(H) A description of the Local Board's policy and procedures in place to ensure that communication with individuals with disabilities, including individuals with visual or hearing impairments, are as effective as communications with others.

WSM and the WDB will take reasonable steps to provide auxiliary aids and materials to ensure that communications with individuals with disabilities, including individuals with visual or hearing impairments are assisted. Examples include but are not limited to: large print, Braille, interpreting services, allowing people with visual or learning disabilities or who have limited use of their hands access to tape recorders or a computer. Furthermore the WDB and its partners have the Centers and affiliate sites assessed annually for compliance as well as provide ADA professional development training to all new staff as part of the onboarding process.

A description of the steps the Local Board will take to meet the language needs of individuals with Limited English Proficiency who seek services or information. The description should include how the Local Board proposes that information will be disseminated to individuals with Limited English Proficiency, including using oral interpretation and written translation services in accordance with Maryland Anti-Discrimination laws, including 5 Md. STATE GOVERNMENT Code Ann. §10-1101, which stipulates that oral language services must be delivered on-site for those in frequent contact with a service provider.

As Montgomery County has a strong and diverse immigrant population, WSM partners with the Gilchrist Immigrant Center, Upwardly Global and Montgomery Coalition for Adult English Literacy to provide comprehensive services to individuals with limited English proficiency.

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

The WDB complies with the Maryland Antidiscrimination laws, including MD Ann. Code, State Government, §10-1101 et seq., which stipulates that oral language services must be delivered onsite for those in frequent contact with a service provider. WDB disseminates information to limited English speaking individuals through both oral and written means. Each of AJC partners have at least one staff and/or access to a member that is bilingual in English and Spanish. Many of the WSM staff are bilingual and can provide services in different languages. Bilingual brochures specifically designed for this community are also available and periodically updated. Recognizing that English language learners may have difficulty communicating their needs, available brochures will provide pictorial representations to ensure the message is effectively received. In addition, Wagner-Peyser staff provide ROW and RESEA workshops in Spanish regularly to support the needs of limited English-speaking individuals.

WDB anticipates expanding access to services and translation of documents into the six major languages spoken in Montgomery County: Spanish, Mandarin, French, Amharic, Korean, and Vietnamese. WDB staff members coordinate with the county's Language Access Coordinator to stay up-to-date on county resources and capabilities for serving the county's LEP population.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Section XVI Fiscal Performance and Other Functions

(A) An identification of the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in section 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III), as determined by the chief elected official or the Governor under section 107(d)(12)(B)(i).

DISPERSAL OF GRANT FUNDS

WDB has developed a financial handbook that outlines policies, procedures and internal controls designed to record and report all financial transactions in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). The fiscal management systems include QuickBooks Online and Bill.com, an online electronic distribution system, a third-party payroll processing service, supported by Excel for analysis purposes. Each source of revenue (i.e., grant or award) is accounted for using a specific "Class" assigned in QuickBooks. All costs expended with the source of funds are recorded to the specific, assigned Class.

All financial results by Class are compared to approved budgets. Program expenditures are processed through Bill.com and assigned to specific Classes and accounts within the Chart of Accounts.

All expenditures are routed through the Program Manager of the specific program for approval, review by the Financial Consultants, and reviewed and approved by the Executive Director prior to release for payment. Bill.com and QuickBooks are synchronized and updated electronically.

Summary reports of expenses by grant are reviewed by the fiscal agent, Executive Director and Board Finance Committee, and programmatic staff to ensure costs are properly assigned and within budgetary limits. Contractual obligations are tracked and tied to programmatic goals to monitor contractual obligations and expenditures.

Capitalized assets are recorded in QuickBooks separately and depreciation is calculated and recorded on a monthly basis.

Cash reimbursement requests are submitted to MD Labor twice each month and the receivables are recorded in the accounting system and Excel cash forecast. WIOA formula funds are received from the county approximately 30 days after the request and non-formula funds are received from MD Labor approximately 21 days after the request. Knowing this, cost projections for the expected time to receive requested funds are made for payroll and for other recurring costs (rent, utilities, etc.) based on historical trends from the three previous months. These projections are added to the cash disbursements for the grant and aged invoices associated with the grant so that negative cash on hand (reimbursable disbursements in excess

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

of cash receipts) does not become too great. Aged payables are flagged according to the cash request that includes them so that checks can be written within three business days of receipt of the funds.

(B) A description of financial sustainability of the AJC services with current funding levels, and a description of the ability to make adjustments should funding levels change.

DESCRIPTION OF FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY OF THE AJC SERVICES

All fiscal procedures are guided by MD Labor issuances and monitored by an independent audit firm. WDB also utilizes braided funding practices and other resources to sustain quality service delivery in the Montgomery County Job Centers. The Executive Director and financial contractor regularly review funding levels to forecast significant changes in WIOA funding. WDB monitors the base costs of Job Center operation to be able to quickly develop a reduction plan in the event of reduced WIOA funding. In the event of a reduction of funding WDB will adjust the following as appropriate modify service provider contract, modify programs, or modify operation costs to ensure alignment with budget.

WSM maintains flexibility in how it manages the financial stability of the Job Center. There are minimal fixed costs and approximately 85% of WIOA funding is available for staffing and career services. WSM rents a facility appropriate for its size and budget. Our lease includes a defunding clause so we are not locked into a large expense that would cause financial difficulties if the budget shrank. Our personnel and professional services contracts are short-term, generally one year, so we have the flexibility to shrink or grow our annual operating budget based on our funding levels. Additionally, we braid multiple funding sources to supplement our budget which gives us the ability to adjust our operating budget by replacing funding that expires with new funding when needed, or to expand or contract our services.

(C) A description of the competitive process to be used to award the subgrants and contracts in the Local Area for activities carried out under this title, including risk assessment of potential subgrantees and contractors.

DESCRIPTION OF THE COMPETITIVE PROCESS IN AWARDING SUBGRANTS AND CONTRACTS

WDB is committed to following all federal, state, and local procurement policies and processes.

WDB has established procurement policies and procedures which have been approved by the board.

Services are announced for bid or proposal and evaluated by an independent team of either staff, board members and/or community members based on procurement thresholds.

Contracts are awarded based on pre-established qualifications and scoring protocols. As

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

outlined in the procurement policy, the WDB issued an RFP to procure six areas of services to build the workforce system infrastructure in Montgomery County.

The RFP invited proposers to:

- Deliver Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth Services;
- Help build a career pathways system; and
- Act as the One-stop Operator.

The RFP process involved a set of rules to safeguard fair and objective decision-making when awarding grant funds. The rules comply with applicable federal, state and local requirements, i.e., Title 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 200. Notice of the RFP was sent to entities on WDB Bidders List (a list of local non- and for-profit entities interested in conducting business with WDB which numbered over 50 organizations). Additionally, information regarding the RFP was legally noticed (i.e. published in local newspapers and on the WSM website). WSM has a procurement process that details the competitive selection procedures. The procedures prescribed for preparation of the Request of Proposal (RFPs) include Board advisement. A Board review subcommittee selects and recommends to the full Board as to the vendor. WSM contracts with the vendor.

WSM understands that it is incumbent on the organization to be good stewards of taxpayer funding. This includes ensuring that the entities with which we contract are fiscally sound. Along with application of the current Procurement Policy, WSM vet's prospective vendors in the following manner:

1. WSM RFPs require that vendors supply a Maryland Certificate of Good Standing (or equivalent from the home state), Audits from the last 2 years, and verification of Minority Business Status, if applicable. WSM's Fiscal Team verifies the information and reviews Audits for general financial stability.
2. When WSM checks prospective vendor references, our representative also inquiries about timeliness and accuracy of fiscal reporting and invoicing.
3. During contract negotiations, WSM verifies and documents that the prospective vendor has necessary cash reserves.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

(D) A description of the actions the Local Board will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing board, consistent with the factors developed by the State board pursuant to Section 101(d)(6); this should include a description of the process used by the Local Board to review and evaluate performance of the local AJC(s) and the One-Stop Operator.

DESCRIPTION OF LOCAL LEVELS OF PERFORMANCE NEGOTIATED (SECTION 116(C))

The Board negotiated the performance levels with the State under the guidelines of the TEGL 11-19. As a response to the proposed state outcomes, the Local Board analyzed historical participant level data and estimated the outcomes based on the WIOA definitions for performance metrics. The Board considered current employment trends and economic conditions in the county. The tools used to come up with the suggested measures were suggested by MD Labor. These factors were considered when suggesting new performance levels which were accepted by the state. The negotiated performances are below.

WIOA Performance Metrics	LWDA Goal PY2021	PY22 State Goals	PY23 State Goals	Labor Proposed LWDA PY22 Goal	Labor Proposed LWDA PY23 Goal
Adult Measures					
<i>Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after exit</i>	76.0%	75.0%	76.0%	75.0%	76.0%
<i>Employment Rate 4th Quarter after exit</i>	72.0%	73.0%	73.5%	73.0%	73.5%
<i>Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after exit</i>	\$6,500.00	\$6,400.00	\$6,500.00	\$6,900.00	\$7,000.00
<i>Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters after exit</i>	61.0%	62.0%	62.5%	61.0%	62.0%
<i>MSG</i>	53.0%	58.0%	58.5%	59.0%	60.0%
Dislocated Worker					
<i>Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after exit</i>	80.0%	78.0%	80.0%	78.0%	80.0%
<i>Employment Rate 4th Quarter after exit</i>	76.0%	77.0%	77.5%	77.0%	77.5%
<i>Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after exit</i>	\$9,400.00	\$8,250.00	\$8,300.00	\$10,000.00	\$12,000.00

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

<i>Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters after exit</i>	56.0%	56.5%	57.0%	57.0%	57.0%
<i>MSG</i>	53.0%	59.0%	59.5%	63.0%	64.0%
Youth					
<i>Employment or Placement Rate 2nd Quarter after exit</i>	69.0%	71.5%	72.0%	70.0%	71.0%
<i>Employment or Placement Rate 4th Quarter after exit</i>	64.0%	65.0%	66.0%	65.0%	66.0%
<i>Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after exit</i>	\$3,500.0	\$3,500.00	\$3,600.00	\$3,600.0	\$3,700.0
<i>Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters after exit</i>	62.0%	63.0%	63.5%	64.0%	64.0%
<i>MSG</i>	48.0%	54.0%	55.0%	63.0%	64.0%
WP					
<i>Employment Rate 2nd Quarter after exit</i>	59.0%	59.5%	60.0%	59.5%	60.0%
<i>Employment Rate 4th Quarter after exit</i>	58.0%	59.5%	60.0%	59.5%	60.0%
<i>Median Earnings 2nd Quarter after exit</i>	\$7,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$6,200.00	\$8,000.00	\$8,500.00

Actions Taken to Remain a High Performing Board

The WDB Operation Committee is responsible for reviewing and evaluating the performance of the Montgomery County Job Centers and the One-Stop Operator. The committee reviews and evaluates quarterly reporting for WIOA performance indicators and conducts on-going analysis of programs and

outcomes to identify trends and ensure data-led decision making. WDB is developing a data dashboard that includes key performance indicators of AJC and the economic impact of the workforce development system. The Board will require WSM to conduct an annual independent evaluation of the service delivery system.

The Board will comply with Sections 107 and 116 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) by following requirements regarding the Workforce Development Board structure

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

and performance. In particular, the Board will review quarterly predictive reports that show WIOA performance indicators. The Governance Committee will be tasked with oversight of performance and funding.

In addition, the Board will be conducting and reviewing an on-going analysis of WIOA programs' outcomes that look at trends, causal relationships, and impact of the local area; making decisions accordingly if needed. A scorecard, with the outcome of each partner will be developed and reviewed at Alignment Committee meetings. The Board will strongly encourage all staff who work with clients and customers to participate in all trainings provided by the Maryland Department of Labor and the U.S. Department of Labor that relate to meeting performance standards. Staff may also attend other professional development training courses and conferences such as the National Association of Workforce Development Professionals (NAWDP) and other employment and trainings opportunities as appropriate. At the same time, all service providers (vendors) will receive periodic training on performance standards and strategies.

(E) A description, including a copy of the Local Area's Individual Training Account policy. The description should include information such as selection process, dollar limits, duration, etc. and must be in accordance with the State's WIOA Title I Training and the Eligible Training Provider List policy.

ITA POLICY AND COMPLIANCE

ITAs are the mechanism for providing Title I and EARN (when dual-enrolled in Title I) customers with the means to finance and obtain training to become employed full-time without additional subsidies.

The Workforce Development System established under WIOA legislation emphasizes informed customer choice, system performance and continuous improvement. After receiving services and consultation with case managers, eligible participants who may benefit from training use the list of Maryland Eligible Training Service Providers to make an informed choice.

WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(G)(iii) states that "[t]raining services provided under this paragraph shall be directly linked to an in-demand industry sector or occupation in the local area or the planning region." As such, the Board limits individual training to those industries and occupations that the Local Workforce Development Board deems in-demand. Those industries and occupations are identified on the documentation that clients received at intake. The Board has set a spending cap on all ITAs of \$3,500.00. This cap is reviewed on an annual basis.

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

In all cases, the Board seeks to provide high-value training solutions by operating cohort training in the most in-demand and popular occupations and industries in the local area.

Training services may be made available to employed and unemployed adults, dislocated workers, and youth who:

- Have met the eligibility requirements of receiving career services and have been determined to be unable to obtain or retain employment through such services;
- After an interview and case management has determined the need of training services;

Current guidance for the development and approval of ITAs is as follows:

- Have researched and selected a program of training that is directly linked to employment opportunities either in the local area or in another area to which the participant is willing to relocate;
- Are unable to obtain grant assistance from other sources to pay the total cost of such training, including State funded training, Trade, Pell Grants or require WIOA assistance in addition to other sources of grant assistance.

ITAs will only be approved for positions on the High Demand Industry List, defined as jobs (1) in demand by employers, (2) have higher skill needs and will therefore be likely to provide family sustaining wages, and (3) are targeted to locally have 75 or more openings each year for the next five years.

Funding is based on appropriateness and funds availability. The individual funding for ITAs cap is \$3,500. AJC customers should never be guaranteed funds or training. No payments are made directly to an individual.

(F) A description of how training services under chapter 3 of subtitle B will be provided in accordance with Section 134(c)(3)(G), including, if contracts for the training services will be used, how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of individual training accounts under that chapter and how the Local Board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided.

A DESCRIPTION OF HOW TRAINING SERVICES UNDER CHAPTER 3 OF SUBTITLE B WILL BE PROVIDED IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 134(C)(3)(G)

Training services will be provided in accordance with 134(c)(3)(G) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Training services provided will maximize client's choice in the selection of an eligible provider of such services. As required in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Act, training services shall be directly linked to an in-demand industry sector or occupation or related entry level career path course of study.

The Board will support both Individual Training Account (ITA) and On-the-Job training (OJT) models for training. OJTs are an example of a larger work & learn strategic priority of the Local Board and provide work experience for clients before they are hired and an opportunity for businesses to teach a potential employee and evaluate their suitability for the job. ITAs provide an opportunity for a client to study for and obtain certification or other credential through a training provider, which would allow him/her to obtain employment at the end of the study. The clients will be able to decide on the training and career track utilizing Labor Market Information provided to them.

Career Specialists will work with individuals and cohorts to identify training opportunities that match their abilities, career interests, and labor market information. The Career Specialist will complete the training contract with the individual and training provider and submit the documentation to the training coordinator. The Training Coordinator will review the documentation and submit it to the Director for budgetary and programmatic approval before training begins.

The WDB works with industries to identify and facilitate industry-led training. Core partners will target ITAs and cohort training approaches towards these targeted industries. If key training demanded by industry is not yet available through MD Labor approved training providers within Montgomery County, the WDB can provide a waiver for training under the following circumstances:

- There is an insufficient number of eligible training provider services to use ITAs;
- There is a training service program of demonstrated effectiveness that is offered by a community-based organization, a private organization, or an EARN Maryland program;
- The most appropriate training could be provided by an institution of higher education to train multiple individuals for jobs in in-demand sectors or occupations.
- A pay-for-performance contract is the most effective means of providing training services; or
- Providing training through a combination of ITAs and contracts is the most effective approach to placing a participant in a program.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

(G) A description of how the AJCs are utilizing the Maryland Workforce Exchange as the integrated, technology enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA and programs carried out by AJC partners.

UTILIZING THE MARYLAND WORKFORCE EXCHANGE SYSTEM (MWE)

WDB and AJC partners will utilize the Maryland Workforce Exchange (MWE) as the primary case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA and job center activities.

All information on activities, compliance, attendance, and case notes will be entered in real-time by adult and youth sub-contractors. Subcontractor staff will monitor performance and compliance in the system on a regular basis. The WDB staff will run reports monthly to provide data integrity and compliance oversight to include predictive reporting and data analysis for continuous improvement purposes.

The core partners will work together to effectively collaborate on Maryland Workforce Exchange utilization across WIOA, Wagner-Peyser and general program functions for employers' and job seekers' benefit.

Enhanced utilization of the Maryland Workforce Exchange will include workshop registration through the system, improved use of the Virtual Recruiter functions, and business solutions activities. Staff will also encourage customer use of the mobile application to support job matching activities within the Maryland Workforce Exchange.

(H) A description of the Local Board's procedures for conducting oversight and monitoring of its WIOA activities and those of its subgrantee and contractors.

OVERSIGHT AND MONITORING OF WIOA ACTIVITIES

WSM staff will provide overall oversight and monitoring for WIOA activities. WSM Policy 2017-17 Subrecipient Monitoring Policy provides guidance in making informed decisions about subrecipient monitoring ensuring the proper use of federal funds authorized under the Workforce Innovation Act. The purpose of oversight and monitoring is to ensure that workforce development programs within WorkSource Montgomery are operating in accordance with all applicable federal, state, local regulations and policies associated with all WIOA funded sub-recipient agreements, and all appropriate administrative directives. Monitoring will be scheduled twice a year, or anytime at the discretion of WorkSource Montgomery, Inc. to ensure that all services and programs are designed and operating to achieve expected results, to ensure funds are being spent for authorized purposes, to ensure reliable and timely information is captured, reported, and utilized to improve decision-making, and to aid in corrective action

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

prior to oversight by grantors. Each contractor will be responsible for identifying staff to conduct internal monitoring on a regular basis. The WDB expects internal monitoring to include periodic comparisons of information entered into the Maryland Workforce Exchange and information kept in the physical case files for compliance purposes.

In addition, the WDB expects that subcontractors will monitor data integrity in the Maryland Workforce Exchange to include assurance that case notes and activities are entered in a timely manner and that outcomes and soft exits are monitored properly.

The WDB will work closely with MD Labor and will comply with the requirement for all subcontractor agreements and contracts be monitored annually. WSM staff will monitor subcontractors regarding both programmatic and fiscal compliance. As part of this process, the organization provides technical assistance to subcontractors as needed on all aspects of compliance and monitoring.

The WDB reviews the intake and enrollment processes, display of federal signs, case files, accessibility for all customers, and programmatic specific compliance for WIOA, Priority of Services, and training services.

Expenditures are tracked monthly to assure correct cost categories and that expenses are within contracted cost limitations. Expenditure related to Young Adulting program expenditures will be monitored to ensure compliance to expenditures related to training, work-based activities are being met. Additionally, frequent desk reviews are conducted on each WIOA contract.

The Operation Committee and Eckerd Connects both review any findings. Eckerd Connects staff will be responsible for recording all monitor findings, forwarding such findings, and ensuring positive responses and corrective actions as needed. The WDB is committed to providing technical assistance or seeking the proper expertise to rapidly remedy all issues and ensure positive practices and will ensure subcontractors take correction action pertaining to WIOA case file monitoring and data validation findings.

Training on policies and reporting requirements will be held for all partner agencies and contractors at a minimum on a yearly basis. Local policies addressing the oversight of the AJC, youth programs and WIOA Title I programs are developed in response to MD Labor issuances, or internal needs. The WDB established a Policy Development Procedure based on MD Labor's policy process. All policies are reviewed by the Board.

The procedure outlines key components required in policies and a five-step process for policy development:

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

1. Identify Need for Policy
2. Policy Drafting
3. Policy Review by Subject Matter Experts and Committees
4. Review of Eckerd Connects
5. Review and Comment Period

(I) A description of the Local Board's policy and procedures regarding the safeguarding and handling of personally identifiable and confidential information (ex., physical and electronic files), including the incident response plan for loss of records.

DESCRIPTION FOR SAFEGUARDING PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE AND CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

In accordance with TEGL 39-11 individuals applying for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act or other funded services must be provided an opportunity to submit written authorization allowing the service provider to share their personal and confidential information and records. The Montgomery County Workforce Development Board (WDB) and WorkSource Montgomery (WSM) are committed to ensuring client confidentiality and appropriate handling of sensitive information. The purpose of board policy 2016- 05 is to specify the requirements for the use, storage, and security of sensitive and confidential information as outlined within said policy.

Each individual must also be informed that he/she can request his/her personal and confidential information not be shared among the partner agencies of the workforce system and that this request does not affect their eligibility for services. If an individual declines to share his/her personal and confidential information and is eligible for and receives services, the Board will work with the State to identify a pseudonym to document the participant's program services.

The WDB is committed to protecting the privacy of both job seekers and employers through secure handling of personally identifiable and confidential information in compliance with TEGL 39-11. All staff and AJC partner representatives are required to take aggressive measures to mitigate the risks associated with the collection, storage, and dissemination of sensitive data including personally identifiable information (PII) as outlined in the policy.

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

The WDB and contractors will maintain confidentiality and not disclose information about an individual to an employer or partnering organization unless the job seeker has requested the disclosure on his/her behalf. Both staff and customers sign confidentiality agreements, and customers are informed of their rights and the protection of information. Specific measures are taken to further secure medical and disability records, as well as social security numbers. Procedures and policies are in place and updated regularly to secure customer information electronically and in the Montgomery County Job Centers.

(J) A description of the Local Board's procurement system, including a statement of assurance that the procedures conform to the standards in USDOL regulations set forth in 29 CFR Part 95, Part 97 and 2 CFR 200. Note that this should include details on how the Local Board would award emergency contracts when current contracts have been eliminated for just cause, in accordance with the Local Board's procurement system.

DESCRIPTION OF PROCUREMENT SYSTEM

The WDB assures that all procedures will comply with WIOA and WIOA Final Rules, as well as State of Maryland and Montgomery County standards. WSM has a procurement process developed by the WDB for expenditures that adheres to the most stringent funding standards for procurements. In addition, WDB has a policy in place for vendor procurement guidelines.

WSM is in compliance with the 29CFR Part 95, Part 97 and 2 CFR 200.

1. As a non-profit 501(c) organization, WSM has established procurement regulations that meet the requirements of Montgomery County and all Federal requirements delineated below. These regulations have been reviewed by WSM's attorney and approved by the WSM Corporate Board of Directors.
2. WSM Procurements will comply with WIOA and WIOA Final Rules as well as standards established by the State. Property contracts will adhere to Property Management Procedures taken from the Office of Management and Budget, OMB Circular 2 CFR 200 Uniform Administrative Guidance. Major service providers, as identified in the federal procurement guidance will be selected by utilizing the Competitive Bid or Request for Proposal formats. Selection of all service providers will be based on the vendor's ability to demonstrate prior effectiveness in the performance standard goals; provide fiscal accountability and cost effectiveness; and serve the targeted population. Proper consideration shall be given to the community-based organizations based on cost, quality of training, characteristics of participants, and meeting performance goals.

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

3. Sole-source contract may be necessary for services not available by multiple vendors or by vendor ability/knowledge to perform necessary service. Sole-source procurements will be justified in accordance with the criteria in the Uniform Guidance
4. Duplication of services or facilities available from federal, state, or local funds will not occur unless it can be demonstrated that alternative services or facilities are more effective or contribute to the achievement of the Montgomery County Workforce Development Area's goals.
5. Local Education Agencies will be given the opportunity to provide services unless it is demonstrated that alternative agencies would have a greater potential to enhance the participant's occupational and career growth.
6. WSM will not fund any skills training unless the level of skills provided in the program is in accordance with any guidelines which may have been established by the Board.
7. WSM and the Board agree to adhere to a code of conduct and procedures to avoid conflict of interest, or the appearance of such conflict, in the exercise of their responsibilities, particularly those relating to the awarding of contracts. All members of the Board and the WSM Corporate Board of Directors must sign a Conflict-of-Interest Statement as a condition of their continued membership. The standards governing the conduct and performance of members of the Board (as noted on its by-laws), its officers and staff, WSM members and authorized agents who are engaged in the procurement of goods and services using federal funds. Except as otherwise permitted or provided by federal, state, or local laws, rules, and regulations, the following provisions shall apply:
 8. The Board members, WSM, the Board members or employees will not be permitted to participate in the selection or award of a contract supported by federal or state funds if there is an apparent conflict of interest.
 9. The Board members or employees will not be permitted to solicit or accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors, potential contractors, or parties to any agreement, or to accept gratuities, favors, or anything of a monetary value from contributors, etc.
 10. The Board members or employees will not be permitted to use any knowledge gained through their position for personal profit or the profit of family or associates.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

11. Conflict of interest standards covers Board members, employees who are involved on the procurement process in which their relationship to the award recipient could be categorized as:

- The member, officer, employee, or authorized agent;
- Any member of his/her immediate family;
- His/her business partner;
- Any organization which he/she belongs to or that employs any of the above or has a financial interest in the firm is being considered for an award.

These internal regulations define the levels of procurement and the different requirements of competition for each level.

The procurement process is as follows and will be outlined in the procurement policy (see Attachment 2 for policy development timeline):

For large procurements, RFPs are developed, widely issued, advertised, when necessary, proposer conferences are held, proposals are rated and ranked based on established, know criteria and the best proposer is objectively selected;

- For more routine purchases, needs are identified by initiative director/authorized staff;
- The level of approval and requirements for competition as defined by procurement regulations are assessed by the initiative director;
- Criteria in the procurement regulations are applied and when necessary, competing prices are determined via catalog, internet, or telephone as appropriate; at least three prices for equivalent items are entered on the form designed for this purpose including the recommended source;
- The initiative director reviews the proposed purchase to determine if the item is a valid program need, if the competitive prices are sufficient and if the recommended source is appropriate; if so, the initiative director will verify that the contractor/vendor is in good standing with the Federal Government and the State; this is done through SAM and SDAT;
- If so, the signed approved fiscal request form and backup documentation is forwarded to the fiscal unit for the order to be placed.
- For routine office supplies, purchases are approved by the initiative director and sent to the fiscal unit to be ordered. Orders are sent directly to the office needing the supplies and a staff member at the office will verify the order was

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

completely received by signing off on the shipping invoice and/or responding to the fiscal unit by e-mail that the order was received and complete.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

(K) A description of any documentation to demonstrate that the acquisition, management, and disposition of property adhere to the Property Management Procedures taken from USDOL regulations 29 CFR Part 97 and 29 CFR Part 95.

A procedure for all property management has been developed to adhere with MD Labor standards and regulations set forth in 29 CFR Parts 95 and 97, as well as in 2 CFR 200. Asset management will adhere to Property Management Procedures taken from the Office of Management and Budget, OMB Circular 2 CFR 200 Uniform Administrative Guidance. As part of the property management policy, all equipment and significant assets are tagged and inventories with a biennial review.

Equipment that is not working, fully depreciated, and/or no longer needed is disposed of according to federal regulations and removed from inventory. As a practical matter, WSM has not extended any federal funds subject to Property Management Procedures.

(L) A description of any policies or procedures the Local Board adopted to avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance of such conflicts in the exercise of their responsibilities, particularly those related to the awarding of contracts.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

A Conflict-of-Interest policy has been approved by the WDB. As part of the policy, no individual in a decision-making capacity shall engage in any activity, including participation in the selection, award, or administration of a subgrant or contract supported by WIOA funds, if a conflict of interest (real, implied, or apparent) would be involved. All WDB members sign a Conflict-of-Interest form and attend yearly ethics training. In addition, conflict of interest training materials is posted on the WDB website for easy reference.

(M) A description of the Local Board or fiscal agent's accounting procedures, including the procedures used in preparing reports to the State. In addition to the requirement that all financial transactions be conducted in compliance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), the fiscal management system must include the following in the accounting procedures.

WIOA ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES (GAAP)

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

The fiscal management systems include QuickBooks Online, Bill.com, an online electronic disbursement system, a third-party payroll processing service, supported by Excel for analysis purposes.

Each source of revenue (i.e., grant or award) are accounted for using a specific "Class" assigned in QuickBooks. All costs expended with the source of funds are recorded to the specific assigned Class.

All financial results by Class are compared to approved budgets.

Program expenditures are processed through Bill. com and assigned to specific Classes and accounts within the Chart of Accounts.

All expenditures are routed through the Program Manager of the specific program for approval, review by the Financial Consultants and reviewed and approved by the Executive Director prior to release for payment. Bill.com and QuickBooks are synchronized and updated electronically.

Internal financial reports are prepared monthly, not less than quarterly, for review by the Executive Director and Board.

The Staff Accountant, Financial Consultant and Executive Director discuss financial matters on a weekly basis to confirm all information is shared.

Capitalized assets are recorded in QuickBooks separately and depreciation is calculated and recorded on a monthly basis.

Cash reimbursement requests are prepared and submitted to MD DOL not less than quarterly, with payment received from MD DOL within 30 days. Outstanding reimbursement requests are monitored on a monthly basis and pursued for payment if outstanding for more than 30 days.

WIOA grants allow requests for advance funds for costs to be incurred within 20 days (e.g., rent and personnel costs) of the request. As a practical matter, WDB does not request funds in advance.

The Financial Consultant and Executive Director monitor the WDB cash resources to confirm adequate resources are available to meet all obligations when they become due.

MWE is registered with both the Maryland Comptroller's Office and the federal System of Award Management and receives Electronic Funds Transfers directly from all state and federal grantors into our main operating bank account as a result.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

The majority of cash receipts are received electronically from the remitter. WDB does not accept payments in cash. Cash is disbursed either via Payroll Network, WSM's payroll vendor, for payment of compensation or Bill.com for payment of vendor invoices.

No WIOA cash is kept on hand and stringent procedures are in place to monitor cash.

(N) An identification of key staff who will be working with WIOA funds.

WSM STAFF WORKING WITH WIOA FUNDS

- Anthony Featherstone, *WSM Executive Director*
- Nate' Gordon, *Dir. of Administration and Finance*
- Tyrece Boston, *Staff Accountant*
- Harry Thompson, *Financial Consultant*

(O) A description of how the Local Board's (or fiscal agent's) financial system will permit tracing of funds to a level adequate to establish that funds have not been used in violation of WIOA standards or USDOL regulations.

WorkSource Montgomery (WSM) has implemented a robust, multi-tier financial system within the Local Board to ensure meticulous tracking of funds. Our primary objective is to establish a high level of transparency and accountability, guaranteeing that funds allocated under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) standards or U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) regulations are utilized appropriately and in strict adherence to established guidelines.

WSM employs a comprehensive accounting system, leveraging tools such as QuickBooks and Bill.com, capable of generating detailed reports and maintaining a transparent audit trail. We prioritize open communication with stakeholders, including regulatory bodies, addressing any inquiries or concerns related to fund utilization and financial management.

In the budgeting process, WSM develops a detailed budget aligned with WIOA standards and USDOL regulations. This budget clearly delineates the allocation of funds across various activities, programs, or initiatives. Prior to implementation, the budget undergoes review, voting, and approval by the local board. Any proposed changes exceeding \$99,999 require re-approval by the local board.

To fortify our financial documentation practices, WSM maintains thorough records for all financial transactions, encompassing invoices, receipts, contracts, and other pertinent documents. Over the years, we have strengthened this process by expanding our fiscal and administrative department, enhancing capacity, and adding additional oversight. Our internal controls, inclusive of segregation of duties, regular reconciliations, and approval processes for expenditures, ensure the accuracy and reliability of financial information. The tiered approval

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

process in our Bill.com system further adds a layer of scrutiny for payments based on the amount issued. Contracts exceeding \$50,000 undergo approval by the local board.

In terms of compliance monitoring, WSM has established a systematic approach, regularly reviewing activities, services, and expenditures to confirm alignment with approved budgets and guidelines. We maintain a reporting mechanism that facilitates the generation of detailed financial reports, ensuring easy accessibility and providing a transparent view of fund utilization. This robust reporting structure aids in our preparation for periodic audits.

WSM is committed to fostering a culture of financial responsibility and transparency. We provide training to staff engaged in financial management to ensure a clear understanding of compliance requirements. Regular assessments and improvements to our financial processes are conducted based on feedback, audit findings, and changes in regulations. We remain vigilant in staying informed about updates to WIOA standards and USDOL regulations.

(P) A brief description of the following:

- *Fiscal reporting system,*
- *Obligation control system,*
- *ITA payment system,*
- *Chart of account system,*
- *Accounts payable system,*
- *Staff payroll system,*
- *Participant payroll system, and*
- *Participant stipend payment system*

OBLIGATION CONTROL SYSTEM

Obligations for training and participant costs are tracked and reported by the adult and youth subcontractors. Sub-contract obligations are tracked by internal staff and Job Services who oversee the WIOA contracts. An internal contract tracking document matches expenses to the budget for each contractor and is reconciled on a monthly basis.

Other obligations like contracts and sub-grants are requested by the initiative director, prepared in the fiscal office, and signed by the WSM Executive Director. Obligations are controlled using Excel spreadsheets that list each obligation separately and subtotals them by

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

grant and budget line item, while enabling the calculation of month-end accruals. Reports are provided to the Program Manager for review monthly to verify completeness and to identify amounts needing to be de-obligated.

ITA PAYMENT SYSTEM

All ITA's prior to FY22 have been managed by the program provider, most recent DB Grant, including the costs on its monthly invoices approved by the Program Director.

Invoices/bills for the training are sent directly to the fiscal unit, which reviews the document in accordance with the terms of the Individualized Training Account (ITA), the bill is matched to the original ITA to ensure that: the ITA has been signed by both parties; the bill amount does not exceed the ITA amount (by more than 10%); client information is correct; outcome documentation is for the training as listed on the original ITA. Copies of the outcome documentation are sent to the program to be placed in the client file.

CHART OF ACCOUNTS SYSTEM

WSM's chart of accounts, supported by a unique Class ID for each source of revenue provides an appropriate amount of detail to produce timely and accurate financial reports to all funders.

The system allows WSM to track funding type, funding amounts, obligations, expenditures, and assets. The system permits the tracking of program income, stand-in costs, and leveraged funds.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE SYSTEM

WSM uses Bill.com to facilitate electronic accounts payable procedures and ensure timely payments. The online system allows for receipt of invoices, validation, and sharing of information directly with QuickBooks.

A hierarchy of approval levels are passed to the Executive Director approving all payments.

WSM is implementing a Purchase Order system to improve the management of the service(s) performed or materials purchased. The appropriate grant and chart of accounts line is charged according to the budget. The Staff Accountant enters the invoice for review and approval by the program manager, Financial Consultant and Executive Director prior to the initiating payment.

Check Writing—WSM rarely writes checks, as the organization tends to utilize an electronic system.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

Credit Card Payments—WSM has one corporate credit card that is held by the WSM Executive Director. It is used for online purchases, registrations, and point-of-sale purchases.

Documentation includes a receipt and normally, as appropriate, a fiscal request form which states the need for and use of the purchased item or service. After entry into the accounting system a report is printed showing how it was charged to the appropriate grants budget. The total documentation package is approved by the accountant after entry and by the WSM Executive Director at the end of the month when all packages are assembled using the monthly statement as the cover sheet.

Online Payment—A majority of transactions are paid electronically. The Bill.com system maintains electronic copies of documentation for each transaction.

STAFF PAYROLL SYSTEM

Personnel costs are managed and disbursed through Payroll Network, Inc., a third-party payroll processor. The system contains payroll data (backed up by employee files) and provides: the calculation of wages, taxes, and leave payments; creation of appropriate reports; and payment and filing of all necessary employer taxes and quarterly reports. All payroll is directly deposited to a financial institution of staff choice. Times of attendance, hours worked, and grant/program served are submitted biweekly into the Payroll Network online system. Hours are approved by the supervisor and reviewed by the Staff Accountant for accuracy and completeness.

PARTICIPANTS PAYROLL SYSTEM AND STIPEND PAYMENT SYSTEM

All participant payroll and stipends under WIOA funding are managed by WDB program operators. Each services provider serves as the employer of record, including those programs through WorkSource Montgomery. Participant payroll and stipends are processed through NetSpend, a third-party vendor. WDB reviews participant payroll and stipends in its fiscal monitoring to ensure sound financial processes.

(Q) A description of the Local Board's (or fiscal agent's) cash management system, providing assurance that no excess cash will be kept on hand, and that procedures are in place to monitor cash.

CASH MANAGEMENT

All WDB funds are held in Eagle Bank in either an operating account for payment of recurring transactions or an interest-bearing money market account with funds not immediately required for operating or program expenditures.

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

The Executive Director, Director of Administration and Finance, the Staff Accountant and the Financial Consultant have online access to Eagle Bank or managing and monitoring cash resources.

The Executive Director and Director of Administration and Finance are authorized account signers. The WDB does not hold or accept cash for payment of expenditures.

(R) A description of the Local Board's cost allocation procedures including:

- *Identification of different cost pools,*
- *Procedures for distribution of staff costs between cost categories (Administrative cost, program cost and indirect cost),*
- *Procedures used for distribution of funds from each cost pool,*
- *Description of funds included in each cost pool, and*
- *Description of cost allocation plans for AICs*

COST POOLS

All direct program costs are recorded to specific Classes.

Certain Personnel, Occupancy and Indirect Costs are pooled and allocated pursuant to written procedures not less frequently than quarterly.

Program cost pools are allocated not less than quarterly to the WIOA Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker grant Classes.

The Occupancy and Indirect Cost Pools are allocated based on the relative use by all programs, to the limit of the lesser of the grant approved rate or our Federal approved indirect rate.

WSM does not have a Federal approved rate and uses the 10% de minimis rate allowed by MD Labor.

WDB organizational operations are supplemented through other funding streams and unrestricted funds are utilized for costs not attributable to grants, as outlined in our cost allocation plan.

- **Program Cost Pool**—The operations of the WIOA Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker grants are closely related and share a number of resources including staff, facilities, equipment, and supplies. In the cases where these costs cannot be easily identified as associated with one or the other grant, they are included in this pool.

Local Area Workforce Plan

WORKSOURCE MONTGOMERY

- **Occupancy and Indirect Cost Pools**—The cost of operating the corporate headquarters, including facilities, certain executive salaries, all fiscal costs, and human resources costs are included in this pool and shared as indirect by all programs.

DEBT COLLECTION

WDB functions on a reimbursement basis. All invoices are reviewed prior to payment to confirm allowable costs. Requisitions for reimbursement are prepared not less than quarterly for submission to MD Labor.

WDB is permitted to request funds in advance from MD Labor however as a practical matter does not. MD Labor's cycle for funding requisitions is within 30 days. In the event a payment is not received within the 30-day cycle, WDB staff contact the MD Labor fiscal office for resolution.