



**Business Services Guidance
North Central Workforce Development Area
Effective January 1, 2021**

(Rescinds and Replaces Business Services Guidance effective August 7, 2019)

I. PURPOSE:

To provide guidance and technical assistance to the PA CareerLink® centers in the North Central Workforce Development Area on the provision of business services to employers in the region. Included in this policy is background information, labor market information tools, technical assistance / tools and board suggestions for Business Service Team composition, expectations, team goals, objectives and team responsibilities.

II. REFERENCES:

WIOA Final Rule, 20 CFR 678.430(a)(4)(ii) and (a)(6), 34 CFR 361.430(a)(4)(ii) and (a)(6), and 34 CFR 463.430(a)(4)(ii) and (a)(6), 20 CFR 678.435, 34 CFR 361.435, and 34 CFR 463.435, and Pennsylvania Combined State Plan

III. BACKGROUND:

WIOA Places a strong emphasis on enhancing communication, coordination, and collaboration among employers, economic development entities, and service providers to ensure that workforce development activities meet the needs of employers and support economic growth in the region. WIOA improves services to employers and promotes work-based training.

Workforce Solutions/North Central WDB strongly supports the emphasis on employers as a primary customer and believes workforce development begins with knowing the needs of local employers. This guidance outlines a strategy of collaboration between our partners and the board to ultimately fulfill a critical role in listening to employer needs, effectively responding and ultimately delivering high quality talent and services.

The following is directly from the legislation and/or regulations:

To support area employers and industry sectors most effectively, American Job Center staff, including designated partner program staff, must:

- *Have a clear understanding of industry skill needs;*
- *Identify appropriate strategies for assisting employers, and coordinate business services activities across American Job Center partner programs, as appropriate; and*

- *Incorporate an integrated and aligned business services strategy among American Job Center partners to present a unified voice for the American Job Center in its communications with employers.*

The expectation is for solid employer relationships built with frequent and meaningful engagement that encourages employers' active participation in and use of the workforce system. The team should act in a "sales" role and be able to perform the following functions:

- ✓ *Ability to listen and understand needs rather than immediately sell*
- ✓ *Solutions-oriented approach to selling*
- ✓ *Ability to adapt and demonstrate value to unique contacts*
- ✓ *Provide innovative solutions for customers*
- ✓ *Utilize questioning skills in a friendly, professional appropriate way*
- ✓ *Ability to gain deep understanding of core business processes and needs*
- ✓ *Ability to prepare for and conduct appropriate pre and post contacts*

Business Services

The Joint WIOA Final Rule requires the provision of "business services" through the American Job Center network, to support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area.

Through the American Job Centers, applicable one-stop partners develop, offer, and deliver quality business services that assist businesses and industry sectors in overcoming the challenges of recruiting, retaining, and developing talent for the regional economy.

Business services must be provided through the One-Stop System. These services include:

Career Services

Certain career services must be made available to local employers, specifically labor exchange activities and labor market information:

- *Appropriate recruitment and other business services on behalf of employers, including information and referrals to specialized business services other than those traditionally offered through the One-Stop delivery system;*
- *Provision of workforce and labor market employment statistics information, including the provision of accurate information relating to local, regional, and national labor market areas, including:*
 1. *Job vacancy listing in labor market areas;*
 2. *Information on job skills necessary to obtain the vacant jobs listed; and*
 3. *Information relating to local occupations in demand and the earnings, skill requirements, and opportunities for advancement for those jobs.*

Local areas must establish and develop relationships and networks with large and small employers and their intermediaries. Local areas also must develop, convene, or implement industry or sector partnerships.

Customized Business Services

Customized business services may be provided to employers, employer associations, or other such organizations. These services are tailored for specific employers and may include:

- *Customized screening and referral of qualified participants in training services to employers;*
- *Customized services to employers, employer associations, or other such organizations, on employment-related issues;*
- *Customized recruitment events and related services for employers including targeted job fairs;*
- *Human resource consultation services, but not limited to assistance with:*
 - o *Writing/reviewing job descriptions and employee handbooks.*
 - o *Developing performance evaluation and personnel policies -provide referrals to appropriate legal resources for the development of employee handbooks and personnel policies.*
 - o *Creating orientation sessions for new workers.*
 - o *Honing job interview techniques for efficiency and compliance.*
 - o *Analyzing employee turnover.*
 - o *Creating job accommodations and using assistive technologies.*
 - o *Explaining labor and employment laws to help employers comply with discrimination, wage/hour, and safety/health regulations.*
- *Customized labor market information for specific employers, sectors, industries or clusters;*
- *Other similar customized services. Local areas may also provide other business services and strategies to meet the workforce needs of area employers, in accordance with partner programs' statutory requirements and consistent with federal cost principles. These business services may be provided through effective business intermediaries working in conjunction with Workforce Solutions.*

Allowable activities, consistent with each partner's authorized activities, include, but are not limited to:

- *Developing and implementing industry sector strategies involving industry partnerships, regional skills alliances, industry skill panels, and sectoral skills partnerships. Sector Partnerships are currently implemented by Workforce Solutions. At least one Pa CareerLink® staff responsible for employer services should actively participate on the Support Team for the Next Gen Partnerships.*
- *Customized assistance or referral for assistance in the development of a registered apprenticeship program. Workforce Solutions currently provides assistance to employers to develop RA programs. PA CareerLink® staff should be aware of the possibilities in order to refer to the board staff for follow-up.*
 - *Developing and delivering innovative workforce investment services and strategies for area employers, which may include career pathways, skills upgrading, skill standard development and certification for recognized postsecondary credential or other employer use, and other effective initiatives for meeting the workforce investment needs of area employers and workers.*
- *Assistance to area employers in managing reductions in force in coordination with rapid response activities and with strategies for the aversion of layoffs, which may include strategies such as early identification of firms at risk of layoffs, use of feasibility studies to assess the needs of and options for at-risk firms, and the delivery of employment and training activities to address risk factors.*

- *The marketing of business services to appropriate area employers, including small and mid-sized employers.*
- *Assisting employers with accessing local, state, and federal tax credits.*

IV. LOCAL/REGIONAL BUSINESS SERVICES

In addition to those services identified in the legislation and final regulations there are other services available through partners participating on the Business Service Teams and include but is not limited to:

- Develop On-the-Job Training (OJT) and Transitional Employment (TE) contracts
- Provide customized recruitment and job applicant screening, assessment and referral services
- Provide employer and industry cluster-driven Occupational Skills Training through Individual Training Accounts with eligible training providers
- Participate in on-site Rapid Response activities regarding closures and downsizing.
- Use of one-stop center facilities for recruiting and interviewing job applicants
- Coordinate with employers to develop and implement layoff aversion strategies
- Provide information regarding workforce development initiatives and programs including but not limited to the following:
 - Registered Apprenticeships and Pre Apprenticeships
 - Next Gen Sector Partnerships
 - Business Education Partnership
 - Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WORC)
 - Federal Bonding Program
- Business Needs Assessment and referral to other agencies, as appropriate
- Host various events that will be of interest to businesses. For example, job fairs, mass recruitment, rapid response activities, etc.
- Explanation of PA CareerLink® services and partner services
- When a referral is made from a partnering agency such as PREP or a local economic development agency (i.e. through the ENGAGE program) the BST should follow up with the company based on the needs identified.
- Enter a CWDS case note with each employer interaction.
- Collaborate with the Job Seeker Team in coordinating employer events
- Provide activity reports at regularly scheduled Staff Meetings.

V. BUSINESS SERVICES TEAMS- EXPECTATIONS

Workforce Solutions'/North Central Workforce Development Board's mission is to serve as the premier facilitator of an innovative workforce development system that meets the changing human capital needs of our employers and provides resources for our job seekers that maximizes their career potential and focuses on the customers' needs. We accomplish this through our goals. Specifically, we have identified three out of five of our goals specific to our employer customers:

- Enhance public-private partnerships through better connectivity and communication in order to increase investment in our workforce system leading to greater economic vitality for our region

- Engage in Sector Strategies of our growth industries identifying current skill gaps of both the incumbent and entry-level worker that will result in skill upgrades through customized training and partnerships
- Ensure that our customers, both employers and job seekers, remain in the center of our design of all services and encourage our partners to do the same

Our PA CareerLink® staff and partners are important to the success of the board in helping to meet our goals. We support a comprehensive, collaborative approach to serving our employer customer. We believe our system must be flexible and responsive to our employers' changing needs; and must ensure we stay in touch with their needs to provide proactive services to ensure they remain competitive. We have established several expectations that are meant as a proactive approach to services.

Workforce Solutions expects teams to recruit at least 5 new employers to enroll into CWDS per quarter to assist in increasing the Employer Penetration Rate. We have defined a new employer as an employer that hasn't accessed any PA CareerLink® service in the past two years.

In order to be most valuable to our employers and avoid business fatigue from multiple contacts as well as ensuring coordination of services, it is recommended that teams make minimal employer visits to evaluate employer needs and explain available PA CareerLink® services and make referrals for other workforce programs including Next Gen Sector Partnerships, Business Education Partners, Registered Apprenticeship, Incumbent Worker Training etc. as appropriate.

Teams should meet at least quarterly with an agenda and conference call options. Meetings are to be documented by brief meeting notes with an emphasis on the outcomes, shared with all BST members, PA CareerLink® and Workforce Solutions staff (Business Engagement Coordinator) as appropriate. Workforce Solutions realizes it is likely that teams will have additional impromptu meetings and encourage teams to capture the outcomes of these meetings in the quarterly meeting notes.

Suggested Agenda Items for Business Service Team include but are not be limited to; needs of employers identified by each partner, potential coordination of services, Next Generation Sector Partnership Activities, High Priority Occupations, new employers, lay-offs, review of job order processes, (i.e. listing/writing job orders), local/regional labor market and/or other employer data/analysis. Employers should be profiled prior to each visit to determine basic information. Employer information to obtain includes but is not limited to; hiring needs, training needs, expansion, downsizing, etc. The PA CareerLink® services explained and use of the CWDS system should be explained and assistance and / or training on CWDS should be provided.

Collaboration with the Job Seeker Team in coordinating employer events is encouraged as well as the provision of activity reports at regularly schedule staff meetings.

VI. BUSINESS SERVICES TEAMS – CORE COMPOSITION

Workforce Solutions recommends that each comprehensive PA CareerLink® center in the North Central Workforce Development Area have in place a Business Service Team (BST). The core members of each are the PA CareerLink® Partners. However, PA CareerLink® centers are encouraged to engage additional partners in the region that also serve employers as deemed appropriate by the Site Administrator of each center.

The additional partners will vary by county and may include but are not limited to: Workforce Solutions Business Engagement Coordinator, the PA CareerLink® Operator, Business Education Partnerships, Chambers of Commerce, County and Regional Economic Development agencies, Northwest Industrial Resource Center (NWIRC), Clarion University Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) and others as identified by each Business Service Team.

VII. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Workforce Solutions' staff have access to several tools and resources that can assist you in meeting the goals, objectives and responsibilities of the Business Service Teams. The following are examples of resources the staff have available upon request:

1. Workforce Solutions' Employer Database as provided to board staff by the Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA).
2. JOBSeQ via Chmura Economics and Analytics online tool - Upon request board staff can supply you with detailed labor market information as listed on Attachment 1 to this Guidance and contains a list of the data that will be available for your use.
3. Workforce Solutions, through our continuous improvement efforts, implemented a Business Education and Training Assessment Process in 2005. The process formalized our Business Services provided by the Title I Workforce Development Staff. While we are no longer requiring the use of this tool we do encourage staff to utilize the assessment in order to assist in increasing the effectiveness of employer visits. Attachment 2 to this Guidance contains the assessment and guide for working with the assessment.
4. Staff providing Business Services are also encouraged to reach out to Workforce Solutions and involve staff if appropriate in meetings and conversations.

VIII. ACTION REQUIRED

None

IX. EXPIRATION DATE

Ongoing.

X. INQUIRIES

Questions shall be directed to:

Pamela Streich, Executive Director at pstreich@ncwdb.org

Workforce Solutions for North Central PA

425 Old Kersey Road
Kersey, PA 15846
(814) 245-1835

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

Equal Opportunity Employer/Program



WHAT-IF - ED, Education, Workforce

- *View labor availability and payroll for a firm prospect*
- *Compare a firm's occupation needs versus regional supply*
- *Occupation employment, unemployment and potential candidates per job opening*
- *Find related occupations to fill employer needs*

INDUSTRY SNAPSHOT - ED, Education, Workforce

- *Industry employment, wages, and location quotient*
- *Historical employment growth*
- *Replacement demand and growth demand*
- *Forecast regional growth by industry or sector*

OCCUPATION SNAPSHOT - ED, Education, Workforce

- *Occupation employment, unemployment, wages, and location quotient*
- *Historical employment growth*
- *Replacement demand and growth demand*
- *Forecast regional occupation growth*
- *Real time online job postings*

AD-HOC QUERY - ED

- *A general query tool for a vast assortment of data*
- *Employment, wages, and establishment counts by region*
- *Data by industry, occupation, or regions*

ECONOMIC IMPACT – ED

- *Ripple effects of economic events*
- *Direct, indirect and induced impacts*
- *Employment and sales/output multipliers*
- *Impacts of economic developments or firm closures*
- *Regional industries benefitting from supply chain effects*

MAPS – ED

- *A variety of data displayed via maps*
- *Employment, unemployment and commuting data*
- *Occupation concentration by region of work or residence*

EMPLOYMENT – ED

- *Total employment by industry*
- *Historical trends in regional employment*
- *Year-over-year percentage change in the number of jobs*

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE - ED, Education, Workforce

- *Population by age and race; population growth*

- *Labor force (civilian and military) and participation*
- *Educational attainment, foreign-born, unionization and disability rates*
- *Household income and poverty levels*
- *Housing values and vacancy rates*

WORKFORCE CHARACTERISTICS - ED, Education, Workforce

- *Regional industry demographics*
- *Workers by age, gender, education, race, and ethnicity*
- *Turnover, hires, and separations*
- *Wages and earnings in the new and ongoing jobs*

CLUSTERS - ED, Education

- *Regional industry and occupation clusters*
- *Regional competitive advantages*
- *Employment, wages, and forecast growth by clusters*

AWARDS –ED

- *Postsecondary degrees and certifications by region*
- *Awards granted by regional universities and colleges*
- *Education and training program linkages to occupations*

OCCUPATION WAGES - ED, Education, Workforce

- *Average annual wages by occupation*
- *Mean, median and percentile wages*
- *Entry-level and experienced wages*

ECONOMIC OVERVIEW REPORT – ED

- *An automatic report, summarizing a regional economy*
- *Employment, unemployment, wages and historical trends*
- *Industry and occupation mix*
- *Demographic profile, cost of living, and local industry clusters*

TRAINING CONCENTRATION – EDUCATION

- *Postsecondary awards by occupation*
- *Regional education pipeline*
- *Training output comparison versus national norms*

EDUCATION LEVELS - EDUCATION

- *Occupation demand by training requirements*
- *Employment mix and forecast growth by training levels*
- *Entry-level education, work experience, and on-the-job training requirements*

OCCUPATION GAPS – EDUCATION

- *Regional forecast of occupation supply versus demand*
- *Occupations in danger of future surpluses or shortfalls*
- *Employment projections by occupation*

INDUSTRY/OCCUPATION MIX- Education, Workforce

- *Occupation mix within a regional industry*
- *Occupation replacement demand by industry*

- *Forecast occupation growth by industry*

WILLING AND ABLE- WORKFORCE

- *Occupation matches by skill level and wages*
- *Find alternative careers*
- *View related occupation*

AVERAGE WAGE – WORKFORCE

- *Wages per worker by industry*
- *Historical trends in regional wages*
- *Cost of living comparisons by region*

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE – WORKFORCE

- *Historical unemployment rate*
- *Percentage of unemployed by region*
- *Seasonally adjusted or not seasonally adjusted*

OCCUPATION REPORT – WORKFORCE

- *An automatic regional report*
- *Employment: current, historical, and forecast*
- *Unemployment and wages*
- *Jobs by place of work, residence, and industry*
- *Education profile, training, apprenticeships, awards, and Career Readiness Certificate scores*



North Central Workforce Development Board



Company Name:			
Contact Name:		Title:	
Address:		Phone:	
City, State		Fax:	
		Email:	
Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN):	Size of Company: Number of Employees at Location: Employees at Entire Location:		
Product / Service Description:			
Peak Production Period:			

Please respond to the following questions about your firm. In some cases it may be necessary to provide documents to supplement your response.

What are the primary products of your firm?	
Who are your primary customers?	
What are your company's short term goals? (next 12 months)	
What are your steps to achieve these goals? (next 12 months)	
What are your company's long term goals? (next 5 years)	
What are your steps to achieve these goals? (next 5 years)	
What are your annual sales?	
Does your firm have any customer or industry standard certification?	ISO – please specify QS TS Other:
Does your firm plan to obtain industry standard certification within the next two years?	ISO – please specify QS

		TS Other:
	Are any significant re-organizations planned within the next 12 months? Yes No	If yes, please explain:
	Has any recent reorganization occurred? Yes No	If yes, please explain:
	Do you have plans to increase and / or decrease your current workforce?	If Yes, explain.
	What jobs are you currently hiring for?	
	Does your firm have a training plan? Yes No	If yes, please provide a copy of the plan.
	Does your firm have a training budget? Yes No	If yes, please provide the amount?
	Would you be interested in applying for training funding? Yes No	If yes, please complete the attached training plan and budget.
	Who needs the training is it managers, first-line supervisors, engineers, skilled trades?	
	What skills are needed for employment with your company? (entry level and advanced)	
	How are these skills obtained? (i.e. degree / non degree classroom training, on the job training)	
	Are you aware of and / or using the North Central Work Readiness Skills Standards (WRSS)? Yes No	
	Do you have an aging workforce? If so, have you established a succession plan?	
	Is your firm planning on implementing any major new processes during the next two years? e.g. lean, 6 Sigma Yes No	Please explain:
	Is your firm planning to adopt any new technologies during the next two years? e.g. robotics, machine vision	Please explain:.
	Do you have any needs / plans for equipment purchase and / or upgrade?	Please explain:

	Yes No						
	Will this result in additional training needs? Yes No	Please explain:					
	For each category please provide the following information	Category	No.	Avg. Age	Avg. Years in Position	Avg. Wage	Avg. Education
		Executive					
		Managers					
		Supervisors					
		Quality					
		Skilled Trades					
		Machinists					
		Others:					
	Is your firm unionized? Yes No	If yes, please specify?					
	Does your firm have any major safety issues that need to be addressed? Yes No	If yes, please specify?					
	Do you have any other comments or are there any areas that were not addressed that you would like more information about or assistance with? Yes No						