

## REGIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING GUIDANCE FOR PY 21-24

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This policy provides the guidance and establishes the procedures regarding the preparation of four-year Regional and Local Plans for Program Year (PY) 2021-2024, July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2025, as required by the *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act* (WIOA). This policy applies to Local Workforce Development Boards (Local Board), and is effective on date of issuance.

This policy contains some state-imposed requirements. All state-imposed requirements are indicated by ***bold, italic*** type.

This Directive finalizes Workforce Services Draft Directive *Regional and Local Planning Guidance for PY 21-24* (WSDD-216), issued for comment on October 16, 2020. The Workforce Development Community submitted 27 comments during the draft comment period. A summary of comments, including all changes, is provided as Attachment 4.

This policy supersedes Workforce Services Directive *Regional and Local Planning Guidance for PY 2017-2022* (WSD16-07), dated September 16, 2016. Retain this Directive until further notice.

### REFERENCES

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- [WIOA \(Public Law 113-128\) \(PDF\)](#) Sections 106 – 108 and 121
  - [Title 20 Code of Federal Regulations](#) (CFR) Section 679.200 through 679.580
  - [Training and Employment Notice \(TEN\) 21-16 \(PDF\)](#), *WIOA Regional and Local Planning and Local Board Responsibilities Questions and Answers* (December 5, 2016)
  - [California Unemployment Insurance Code](#) (CUIC) Sections 14000 through 18012
  - [California's Workforce Development Strategic Plan PY 2020-2023](#)
  - [Workforce Services Directive WSD19-09 \(PDF\)](#), *Strategic Co-Enrollment – Unified Plan Partners* (February 12, 2020)

*The EDD is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.*

- [WSD19-13 \(PDF\)](#), *Selection of AJCC Operators and Career Services Providers* (June 8, 2020)
- [WSD18-12 \(PDF\)](#), *WIOA Memorandums of Understanding* (April 30, 2019)
- [WSD18-01 \(PDF\)](#), *Regional and Local Plans PY 17-21 Two Year Modifications* (July 27, 2018)
- [WSD17-07 \(PDF\)](#), *WIOA Youth Program Requirements* (January 16, 2018)
- [WSD17-01 \(PDF\)](#), *Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Procedures* (August 1, 2017)
- [WSD16-04 \(PDF\)](#), *Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion Activities* (July 22, 2016)
- [WSD15-14 \(PDF\)](#), *WIOA Adult Program Priority of Service* (January 22, 2016)

## BACKGROUND

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### Overview of State, Regional, and Local Plans

The California Unified Strategic Workforce Development Plan (State Plan) is an overarching state policy document that provides a conceptual outline for Local Boards and their partners as they jointly develop Regional and Local Plans. The State Plan policy objectives, developed in collaboration with WIOA partners and Local Boards, drive towards the shared vision of creating a comprehensive system that impacts poverty, promotes income mobility, and embeds equity as a cornerstone of service-delivery.

As outlined under WIOA Section 106, Regional Plans provide a roadmap for alignment of resources and investments to meet specific outcomes within the 15 Regional Planning Units (RPU). Regional Plans are used to articulate how RPUs will build intentionality around industry sector engagement, drive workforce development outcomes across multiple jurisdictions, and expand on-ramps to career pathways for individuals who experience barriers to employment.

As outlined in WIOA Section 108, Local Plans provide an action plan for operationalizing the roadmap laid out in the Regional Plan by describing how individuals access services through the America's Job Center of California<sup>SM</sup> (AJCC) system. Local Plans are used to articulate how Local Boards will coordinate with local partners to ensure person-centered service-delivery.

In addition to the federal planning requirements, WIOA indicates that Regional and Local Plans should be consistent with the vision and goals of the State Plan. For the purpose of developing cohesive narratives for Regional and Local Plans, this guidance weaves together both federal and state requirements. The intent is to assist in the development of a seamless blueprint for the operationalization and implementation of all required Plan content.

### Changing Economic Landscape

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 changed the global economic landscape for millions of workers and employers. The California unemployment rate soared as shelter-in-place orders closed large and small businesses throughout the state. Employers that were deemed essential adjusted business operations to respond to changes in consumer demand

and to adhere to updated health protocols to protect staff and the public from further spread of the virus.

The effects of the public health crisis, the ensuing economic uncertainty, and the continuing challenge of reopening businesses and industries impacted by the upheaval will take years to fully comprehend. While the planning process can be a beneficial tool for gathering a wide view of the current regional and local landscapes, the California Workforce Development Board (CWDB) recognizes that this set of Regional and Local Plans will be developed during a changing and unprecedented economic and workforce climate. Therefore, the CWDB understands the goals, strategies, and objectives developed at this point in time may need to be changed or adjusted as time goes on and more information becomes available.

## **POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

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### **Regional Plans**

According to WIOA, the establishment of regions is intended to align workforce development activities and resources with regional economic development areas and available resources. While the vision and policy objectives laid out in the State Plan were used to guide the development of the criteria below, RPUs have significant discretion to determine how these approaches will be best actualized within their regions.

### **Analytical Overview of the Region**

This section of the Regional Plan should provide an analysis of the economic conditions and trends in the region as well as an analysis of the current workforce. The analysis may be completed using data compiled from a variety of resources, including local partners providing measures of self-sufficiency; WIOA core, required, and state partners; Labor Market Information (LMI); Bureau of Labor Statistics; Cross-System Analytics and Assessment for Learning and Skills Attainment (CAAL-Skills) Reports; employer engagement; and other relevant sources. For reference, California LMI data is available on the [Regional Planning Unit Labor Market Data webpage](#).

### *Workforce and Economic Analysis*

The Regional Plan represents the big picture of a region's economy and workforce environment, with a focus on collaborative strategies to be implemented across multiple Local Workforce Development Areas (Local Area) to attain regional goals and objectives. This should start with an analysis that provides insight into the current and future needs of employers and job seekers in the region. The analysis should take into account the impacts on the regional economy due to the events of 2020 (e.g. COVID-19, natural disasters, amplified movement for racial justice, etc.). The quantitative and qualitative data provided in this analysis should be used as a foundation for informing the rest of the Plan.

The Regional Plan should do the following:

- Provide an analysis of current employment and unemployment data.
- Provide an analysis of the current educational and skill levels of the workforce, the current needs of employers in the region, and any relevant skill gaps between the two.
- Provide an analysis of industries and occupations with an emerging demand.

## **Regional Indicators**

A key objective of Regional Planning efforts is to connect AJCC services to a regional skills infrastructure that aligns with regional labor market needs. To that end, previous Regional Planning cycles utilized ten Regional Indicators to assess coordination and measure progress within the RPUs. The indicators provided a useful measure of processes and activities utilized by RPU partners to establish a foundation for driving a regional approach and aligning the needs of regional industry sectors and employers.

In an effort to further refine how progress is evaluated, the following indicators will be used to assess progress:

- Region has a process to communicate industry workforce needs to supply-side partners.
- Region has policies supporting equity and strives to improve job quality.
- Region has shared target populations of emphasis.
- Region deploys shared/pooled resources to provide services, training, and education to meet target population needs.

In alignment with [Regional Plan Implementation \(RPI\) 4.0](#), during the four year Regional Plan timeframe, RPUs will work collaborative with the CWDB and the RPI 4.0 Technical Assistance Provider Evaluation Team to establish and track outcomes that show objective progress associated with the four Regional Indicators.

## **Fostering Demand-Driven Skills Attainment**

This section of the Regional Plan aligns with the key indicator of the region's process for communicating industry workforce needs to supply-side partners. This means workforce and education programs should receive timely and accurate information from industry regarding the sectors and jobs that are driving growth in the region. Each region should use that information to align program content with the state's industry sector needs to provide California's employers and businesses with the skilled workforce necessary to compete in the global economy.

### *Regional Sector Pathways*

Regional sector pathway programs are career pathway programs that result in the attainment of industry-valued and recognized postsecondary credentials. Credentials are both portable

and aligned with regional workforce needs. There is a need to ensure that these career pathway programs are responsive to the historic economic disparities in our state.

Regional Plans should be used to cultivate partnerships to promote the expansion of employer engagement and recruitment, as well as coordination between the education and workforce development systems.

The Regional Plan should do the following:

- ***Identify the in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the region.***
- ***Describe how the RPU and regional partners will expand or develop, and then implement sector initiatives for those in-demand industry sectors or occupations.***

### **Enabling Upward Mobility for All Californians**

This section of the Regional Plan aligns with two key indicators:

1. The region's policies for supporting equity and improving job quality.
2. Advancing economic prosperity of shared target populations.

This means workforce and education programs should be accessible for all Californians, especially populations who experience barriers to employment. It is important to make sure everyone has access to a marketable set of skills, and is able to access the level of education necessary to get a job that ensures both long-term economic self-sufficiency and economic security.

#### *High Road Workforce System*

California's vision for the future of workforce development is centered on the establishment and growth of a High Road workforce system that is focused on meaningful industry engagement, and the placement of Californians in quality jobs that provide economic security. Regional Plans should serve as a blueprint for regional efforts to advance work with employers who offer jobs with good wages and benefits, support for ongoing skills training and employee development, good working conditions (including paid sick days, paid family leave, and paid medical or short-term disability leave), and adequate hours with predictable schedules that enable employees to meet their family caregiving commitments.

The Regional Plan should address the following:

- ***Describe how the RPU will prioritize working with employers who provide quality jobs that provide economic security through family-sustaining wages and comprehensive benefits. This should include whether the RPU has, or plans to develop, a formal policy related to job quality.***

## *Equity and Economic Justice*

California believes diversity is a strength, and that advancing equity is an economic and moral imperative. To that end, the workforce system should ensure the provision of workforce and education services that recognize historically unserved or underserved communities, including BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, persons of color), Latinx, immigrants, refugees, people with disabilities, LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer), and others who experience systemic barriers in the labor force. For individuals who experience exclusion from employment opportunities despite having the skills and abilities to perform a job satisfactorily, RPUs are encouraged to outline strategies to work with employers, training providers, and community-based organizations to create more accurate occupational language training and job placement programs. Advancing equity within the workforce and education systems and ensuring greater opportunity for upward mobility for all Californians are vital to repairing and sustaining a healthy economy.

The CWDB recognizes that many individuals may need multiple interventions, as well as access to a variety of services provided over an extended period of time in order to find and obtain a quality job. Therefore, CWDB wants to support and encourage RPUs and Local Boards to invest in long-term approaches to serving individuals who experience barriers to employment.

While the majority of services are delivered at the local level, establishing career pathways at the regional level allows RPUs to work directly with regional employers and partners in order to remove barriers and address structural issues that can prevent historically unserved and underserved communities from accessing those opportunities.

The Regional Plan should address the following:

- ***Describe how the RPU and regional partners will work together to identify shared target populations and develop targeted service strategies.***
- ***Describe how the RPU and regional partners will work with employers and training providers to ensure that historically unserved and underserved communities have equal access to the regional sector pathways, earn and learn opportunities, supportive services, and other approaches identified by the RPU. This should include whether the RPU has, or plans to develop, a formal policy related to equity.***

### **Aligning, Coordinating, and Integrating Programs and Services**

This section of the Regional Plan aligns with the key indicator of the region's deployment of shared resources to provide services, training, and education to meet population needs. This means that workforce and education programs must economize limited resources to achieve scale and impact, while also providing the right services to clients based on each client's particular and potentially unique needs, including skills-development.

## *System Alignment*

Successful system alignment often begins with identifying a shared mission and objectives. This provides the foundation for developing strategies with a system viewpoint rather than thinking about programs as separate. By identifying ways to align program design, reduce duplication of efforts, and leverage critical resources, RPU's can increase the impact of their shared mission.

The Regional Plan should address the following:

- ***Describe any regional service strategies, including use of cooperative service delivery agreements or MOU.***
- ***Describe any regional administrative cost arrangements, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs for the region.***

## **Local Plans**

The Local Plan demonstrates operational alignment with the strategic objectives of the respective Regional Plan, drives coordination with local partners, and highlights key service-delivery strategies. In this regard, service delivery is typically integrated at the local level, where resources are braided, and support is provided to participants through workforce system partners. The Local Plans should address partnerships established under the previous Local and Regional Planning and Modification processes. This includes WIOA core and required program partners, as well as state strategic partnerships. Local Boards are also encouraged to address any additional partnership efforts taking place at the local level, if applicable.

The CWDB understands that, along with Local Boards, many workforce, education, and human services partners are currently focused on addressing increased workloads, evolving guidance, and shifting priorities. The Local Plan process is not intended to place an additional administrative burden on programs that are providing critical services to the public. Rather, the Local Plan process is intended to facilitate communication across systems to improve service coordination during this unprecedented time. Therefore, Local Boards and their partners have flexibility in determining the nature, scope, and depth of each partnership based on local needs and priorities.

## *WIOA Core and Required Partner Coordination*

Under WIOA, the ultimate vision is for core and required programs to operate as a unified system, strategically assessing needs and aligning them with service strategies to meet the necessities of workers and employers. This section of the Local Plan should address coordination with the following WIOA core and required program partners identified under WIOA Section 121:

- WIOA Title II – Adult Education and Literacy
- WIOA Title III – Wagner-Peyser
- WIOA Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation
- Carl Perkins Career Technical Education

- Title V *Older Americans Act*
- Job Corps
- Native American Programs (WIOA Section 166)
- Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers (WIOA Section 167)
- Veterans
- Youth Build
- *Trade Adjustment Assistance Act*
- Community Services Block Grant
- Housing and Urban Development
- Unemployment Compensation
- Second Chance
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families/CalWORKs

The Local Plan should address the following:

- How Local Boards and AJCC partners will coordinate the services and resources identified in their MOU, as outlined in [WSD18-12 \(PDF\)](#), *WIOA Memorandums of Understanding*.
- How the Local Board and AJCC partners will work towards co-enrollment and/or common case management as a service delivery strategy, as outlined in [WSD19-09 \(PDF\)](#), *Strategic Co-Enrollment – Unified Plan Partners*.
- How the Local Board and AJCC partners will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and other means.
- How the Local Board and AJCC partners will coordinate workforce and education activities with the provision of appropriate supportive services.

How the Local Board and AJCC partners will comply with WIOA Section 188 and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, as outlined in [WSD17-01 \(PDF\)](#), *Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Procedures*.

#### *State Strategic Partner Coordination*

When Local Boards conducted their two-year modification of the PY 15-20 Local Plans, they were asked to establish new partnerships with strategic partners included in the State Plan modification. This section of the Local Plan should address coordination with the partnerships established in [WSD18-01 \(PDF\)](#), *Regional and Local Plans PY 17-21 – Two Year Modifications*.



The Local Plan should address the following:

- ***How the Local Board will coordinate with County Health and Human Services Agencies and other local partners who serve individuals who access CalFresh Employment and Training services.***
- ***How the Local Board will coordinate with Local Child Support Agencies and other local partners who serve individuals who are non-custodial parents.***
- ***How the Local Board will coordinate with Local Partnership Agreement partners, established in alignment with the Competitive Integrated Employment Blueprint, and other local partners who serve individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities.***
- ***How the Local Board will coordinate with community-based organizations and other local partners who serve individuals who are English language learners, foreign born, and/or refugees.***

#### *WIOA Title I Coordination*

This section of the Local Plan should describe strategies for staff preparation, training, and ongoing professional development to effectively respond to participant needs. This section of the Local Plan should also address the services, activities, and administrative requirements established for Local Boards under WIOA Title I.

The Local Plan should address the following:

- ***Training and/or professional development that will be provided to frontline staff to gain and expand proficiency in digital fluency and distance learning.***
- ***Training and/or professional development that will be provided to frontline staff to ensure cultural competencies and an understanding of the experiences of trauma-exposed populations.***
- How the Local Board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the Local Area with statewide rapid response activities, as outlined in [WSD16-04 \(PDF\)](#), *Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion Activities*.
- A description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the Local Area. This includes how the Local Board will ensure that priority for adult career and training services will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient, as outlined in [WSD15-14 \(PDF\)](#), *WIOA Adult Program Priority of Service*.
- A description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the Local Area, as outlined in [WSD17-07 \(PDF\)](#), *WIOA Youth Program Requirements*. This includes any strategies the Local Board has about how to increase the digital literacy and fluency of youth participants, including youth with disabilities.

- The entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds as determined by the Chief Elected Official (CEO) or the Governor, and the competitive process that will be used to award the sub-grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities.
- ***A description about how the Local Board fulfills the duties of the AJCC Operator and/or the Career Services Provider as outlined in [WSD19-13 \(PDF\)](#), Selection of AJCC Operators and Career Services Providers. This should include the name(s) and role(s) of all entities the Local Board contracts with.***

## **Stakeholder and Community Engagement**

The development of comprehensive Plans entails building broad and inclusive partnerships with regional and local entities in a variety of sectors. This includes engaging with employers and labor organizations, as well as WIOA core, required, and strategic program partners. Additionally, building meaningful partnerships with worker centers and community-based organizations who work closely with a variety of populations, including undocumented immigrants, will ensure the inclusion of person-centered approaches to addressing multifaceted barriers to employment by utilizing input from the communities themselves.

Stakeholders participating in the planning processes should include, but are not limited to, employers, labor organizations, education partners, human services and housing partners, as well as community-based organizations that provide services to target populations such as: justice-involved, English language learners, refugees, immigrants, youth, older adults, veterans, people with disabilities, BIPOC, Latinx, LGBTQ+, and any other entities supporting historically unserved or underserved communities.

Using the Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary Template (Attachment 2), RPUs and Local Boards should provide a detailed description of how meaningful stakeholder involvement and community engagement was achieved when developing the Regional and Local Plans. This summary should be included as an attachment to both the Regional and Local Plans. A list of potential Regional and Local Planning partners (Attachment 3) is included as a tool to assist with identifying stakeholders for the planning process.

### *Public Meetings and Public Comment*

Local Boards are subject to the open meeting requirements of the *Ralph M. Brown Act*. The intent of the law is to ensure meetings are properly noticed, agendas are made available, and the public has an opportunity to provide comment on local policy and operations.

Shelter-in-place requirements or other restrictions related to in-person public meetings may affect how Local Areas conduct community engagement. Local Boards should comply with all applicable state and local requirements, and should describe all alternate methods that were utilized to meet open meeting requirements.

Local Boards must provide a 30-day opportunity for public comment prior to submitting the Regional and Local Plans. Any comments that express disagreement with the Regional or Local Plans must be included in the final submission.

### *Accessibility and Inclusivity*

In accordance with WIOA Section 188, public meetings and publicly disbursed information pertaining to Regional and Local Plan content must be made fully accessible to individuals with disabilities, as well as to individuals who require additional language options. The Department of Rehabilitation's [Seven Steps to Creating an Accessible Microsoft Word document \(PDF\)](#) guide can assist you in preparing accessible documents. Reasonable accommodations and alternate formats or languages must be provided upon request to ensure an opportunity for full and equal participation in the planning process.

### ***Regional and Local Plan Format***

RPUs and Local Boards should arrange their completed Regional and Local Plans in the following order:

#### *Regional Plan*

1. Cover Page
  - a. Name of RPU
  - b. Name of each Local Board in RPU
  - c. Primary contact name, phone number, and email address (if applicable)
2. Regional Plan Content
  - a. Analytical Overview of the Region
  - b. Fostering Demand-Driven Skills Attainment
  - c. Enabling Upward Mobility for All Californians
  - d. Aligning, Coordinating, and Integrating Programs and Services
3. Appendices
  - a. Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary
  - b. Public comments received that disagree with the Regional Plan
  - c. Signature Page

#### *Local Plan*

1. Cover page
  - a. Name of Local Board
  - b. Contact name, phone number, and email address
2. Local Plan Content
  - a. WIOA Core and Required Partner Coordination
  - b. State Strategic Partner Coordination
  - c. WIOA Title I Coordination
3. Appendices

- a. Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary
- b. Public comments received that disagree with the Local Plan
- c. Signature Page

### *Submission Criteria*

Each RPU must submit one package that includes the following documents in separate, accessible PDF files copied to a USB flash drive:

- One electronic copy of the Regional Plan with the electronic signatures of the Local Board Chair(s) within the RPU.
- One electronic copy of each Local Plan within the RPU with the electronic signatures of the Local Board Chair and CEO or their designated alternate.

If an electronic signature of the CEO or their alternative cannot be achieved by the submission deadline, the Local Board must submit a blank signature page and include a detailed explanation for the signature absence(s) and the date by which the signed copy will be provided.

Printed copies are not required for PY 2021-2024 Regional and Local Plans. Regional and Local Plans must be submitted by USB flash drive to the CWDB no later than April 30, 2021, through one of the following methods:

**Mail** California Workforce Development Board  
CWDB Policy Unit  
PO Box 826880  
Sacramento, CA 94280-0001

**Overnight Mail  
Hand Delivery** California Workforce Development Board  
CWDB Policy Unit  
800 Capitol Mall, Suite 1022  
Sacramento, CA 95814

## **ACTION**

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Please bring this Directive to the attention of the Local Board and other relevant parties.

## INQUIRIES

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If you have any questions, contact the CWDB Policy Unit at [CWDBPolicyUnit@cwdb.ca.gov](mailto:CWDBPolicyUnit@cwdb.ca.gov).

/s/ JAIME L. GUTIERREZ, Chief  
Central Office Workforce Services Division

### Attachments:

1. [WIOA Regional Planning Units \(DOCX\)](#)
2. [Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary \(DOCX\)](#)
3. [Regional and Local Planning Partners \(DOCX\)](#)
4. [Summary of Comments \(DOCX\)](#)