

REGIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING GUIDANCE FOR PY 21-24 TWO-YEAR MODIFICATIONS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This policy provides the guidance and establishes the procedures regarding the two-year modification of the Regional and Local Plans for Program Year (PY) 2021-2024 as required by the *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act* (WIOA). This policy applies to Regional Planning Units (RPU) and Local Workforce Development Boards (Local Board), and is effective on the 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 *Local and Regional Plans PY 21-24 Two Year Modifications* (WSDD-235), issued for comment on June 22, 2022. The Workforce Development Community submitted three 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 21-24* (WSD20-05), dated January 29, 2021. Retain this Directive until further notice.

REFERENCES

-
- WIOA (*Public Law 113-128*) Sections 106 – 108 and 121
 - Title 20 *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR) Sections 679.200 through 679.580
 - Training and Employment Notice (TEN) 21-16, *WIOA Regional and Local Planning and Local Board Responsibilities Questions and Answers* (December 5, 2016)
 - *California Unemployment Insurance Code* (CUIC) Sections 14000 through 18012
 - 2020-2023 California Unified Strategic Workforce Development Plan
 - WSD19-13, *Selection of AJCC Operators and Career Services Providers* (June 8, 2020)
 - WSD19-09, *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.

- WSD18-12, *WIOA Memorandums of Understanding (MOU)* (April 30, 2019)
- WSD17-07, *WIOA Youth Program Requirements* (January 16, 2018)
- WSD17-01, *Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Procedures* (August 1, 2017)
- WSD16-04, *Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion Activities* (July 22, 2016)
- WSD15-14, *WIOA Adult Program Priority of Service* (January 22, 2016)

BACKGROUND

Overview of State Plan, Regional Plans, and Local Plans

The California Unified Strategic Workforce Development Plan (State Plan) provides a conceptual outline for RPUs, Local Boards, and their partners to jointly develop their Regional and Local Plans. The State Plan policy objectives, developed in collaboration with WIOA partners and Local Boards, work toward the shared vision of creating a comprehensive system that addresses 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 the alignment of resources and investments to meet specific outcomes within the 15 RPUs. 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 Regional Plan road map by delineating how individuals can access services through their local America's Job Center of CaliforniaSM (AJCC) system. Local Plans 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 State Plan's vision and goals. For purposes of developing cohesive narratives for Regional and Local Plans, this guidance combines both federal and state requirements. The intent is to assist in developing a seamless blueprint for the operationalization and implementation of all the required Plan content.

Changing Economic Landscape

After two years of COVID-19, California's economy is rebounding and shifting back to pre-pandemic conditions. However, for communities that have historically experienced barriers to employment, the pandemic-induced recession exacerbated and compounded long-standing disparities and economic inequities. Although some workers have benefited from higher wages due to a tightening of the labor market, the ensuing burden of pandemic-related inflation has placed more pressure on already stretched thin, low-income families.

While the planning process can be a beneficial tool for gathering a wide view of the current AJCC system within the state's diverse regional and local landscapes, the California Workforce Development Board (CWDB) recognizes that this set of Regional and Local Plans modifications will be developed while the state's economy and the labor market continues to recover from the recession. Therefore, the CWDB also understands that the goals, strategies, and objectives developed at this point in time may require change or adjustment in the future to reflect the changing economy and labor market.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Regional Plans

According to the 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 and an analysis of the current workforce. The analyses 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 further reference, California LMI data is available on the [Regional Planning Unit LMI 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 impact of the events of the last few years (e.g. COVID-19, natural disasters, the amplified movement for racial justice, inflation and rising gas prices, etc.) on the regional economy. The quantitative and qualitative data provided in this analysis should be used as a foundation for informing the rest of the Plan.

This section of the Regional Plan should provide analyses of the following:

- Current employment and unemployment data.

- Current educational and skill levels of the workforce, the current needs of employers in the region, and any relevant skill gaps between the two.
- 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. 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 number of indicators that will be used to assess progress in the regions has been narrowed to focus on the following:

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

As part of [Regional Plan Implementation \(RPI\) 4.0](#), RPUs were asked to work with the RPI 4.0 Evaluation and Technical Assistance Teams over the last 18 months to establish objective metrics associated with at least one of the four Regional Indicators. The CWDB does not view this as a one-size-fits-all exercise that would result in one set of uniform metrics across the state. Rather, it was an opportunity for each RPU to jointly agree upon data points that would take into account their region's unique needs and demonstrate the impact regional work has on their residents. The modification will allow each RPU to outline the progress that has been made by documenting the impact over the last 18 months and communicating what is anticipated for the next two years.

This section of the Regional Plan should accomplish the following:

- **Identify which of the four regional indicators the RPU established objective metrics under RPI 4.0, and what those metrics were.**
- **Identify any anticipated impacts that tracking and evaluating the regionally agreed upon metrics will have on each of RPU's local workforce service delivery system (e.g. change in service strategies, improved participant outcomes, new partner engagement, etc.).**

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. Workforce and education programs should receive timely and accurate information from industry on 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 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, and to coordinate between the education and workforce development systems. This section of the Regional Plan should achieve the following:

- **Identify the in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the region.**
- **Describe any current sector-based initiatives being implemented by the RPU for regionally in-demand industries or occupations and what, if any, new sector-based initiatives are planned for the next two years.**
- **Describe what processes or strategies the RPU uses to communicate effectively and cohesively with regional employers.**

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, and 2) advancing economic prosperity of shared target populations. This means that workforce and education programs should be accessible for all Californians, especially populations who experience barriers to employment. It is important to ensure that everyone has access to a marketable set of skills, and is able to access the level of education necessary to obtain a job that ensures both long-term, economic self-sufficiency and 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. For more information on the High Road model, please visit the [High Road Training Partnerships](#) website.

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.

This section of the Regional Plan should address and describe the following:

- ***How the RPU defines job quality and prioritizes work with employers who provide quality jobs.***
- ***How the RPU works together to develop targeted service strategies for the region's unserved and underserved communities.***

Equity and Economic Justice

California believes that diversity is a strength and advancing equity is an economic and moral imperative. To that end, the workforce system should ensure the implementation of workforce and education services that recognize historically unserved or underserved communities, including Black, Indigenous, persons of color (BIPOC), Latinx, immigrants, refugees, people with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+), 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 and upward mobility for all Californians is vital to repairing and sustaining a healthy economy.

The CWDB recognizes that many individuals may need multiple interventions and access to a variety of services provided over an extended period of time in order to locate and obtain a quality job. CWDB is committed to supporting and encouraging 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 may prevent historically unserved and underserved communities from accessing those opportunities.

This section of the Regional Plan should address the following:

- ***How the RPU defines equity and how it ensures equal access to the regional sector pathways, earn-and-learn opportunities, supportive services, and other effective service strategies identified by the RPU.***

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 their 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 from a cohesive, system viewpoint rather than thinking about programs as separate. By identifying ways to align program design, reduce duplication of efforts, and leverage critical resources, RPUs can increase the impact of their shared mission.

This section of the Regional Plan should address and describe the following:

- ***Any regional service strategies, including the use of cooperative service delivery agreements or Memorandums of Understanding (MOU).***
- ***Any regional administrative cost arrangements, including the pooling of funds for regional administrative costs.***

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 multiple 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 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 is intended to facilitate communication across systems to improve service coordination during these critical times. 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 and responding to the needs of workers and employers and aligning them with service strategies. 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 and 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

This section of 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 WIOA Memorandums of Understanding (WSD18-12).***
- ***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 Strategic Co-Enrollment – Unified Plan Partners (WSD19-09).***
- ***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 Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Procedures (WSD17-01).***

State Strategic Partner Coordination

During the two-year modification of PY 2015-2020 Local Plans, Local Boards were asked to establish new partnerships with strategic partners included in the State Plan modification. This section of the Local Plan should address ongoing coordination efforts with the partnerships established in *Regional and Local Plans PY 17-21 – Two Year Modifications (WSD18-01)*, and include the following:

- ***How the Local Board will coordinate with County Health and Human Services Agencies and other local I 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. It should also address the services, activities, and administrative requirements established for Local Boards under WIOA Title I, and include the following:

- ***Training and/or professional development to frontline staff to gain and expand proficiency in digital fluency and distance learning.***
- ***Training and/or professional development 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 Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion Activities (WSD16-04).***
- ***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 receiving public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient, as outlined in WIOA Adult Program Priority of Service (WSD15-14).

- ***A description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the Local Area, as outlined in WIOA Youth Program Requirements (WSD17-07). This includes any strategies regarding 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 of how the AJCC Operator and/or the Career Services Provider roles are fulfilled within the Local Area as outlined in Selection of AJCC Operators and Career Services Providers (WSD19-13). This includes the name(s) and role(s) of all entities.***

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. It 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 that 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), RPU and Local Boards should provide a detailed description of how meaningful stakeholder involvement and community engagement were 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* which ensures that meetings are properly noticed, agendas are made available, and the public has an opportunity to provide comments on local policy and operations.

Local Boards must provide a 30-day opportunity for public comment prior to submission of 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 [Constructing Accessible Electronic Content](#) webpage contains the Seven Steps to Creating an Accessible Microsoft Word Document guide that can assist you in preparing accessible documents. Reasonable accommodations and alternative 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

RPU 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.

Regional and Local Plans must be submitted by USB flash drive to the CWDB no later than March 31, 2023, 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

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

INQUIRIES

If you have any questions, contact CWDB Policy Unit at CWDBPolicyUnit@cwdb.ca.gov.

/s/ JAVIER ROMERO, Deputy Director
Workforce Services Branch

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 \(DOCX\)](#)