



Local Workforce Investment Area Strategy

Allegheny County Workforce Investment Area (Allegheny County)

In response to the funding that is being made available to local workforce investment areas through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), the Allegheny County Workforce Investment Area puts forward this document which is the framework of its strategy for implementing programming funded by the Act.

Response to the PA Department of Labor & Industry

1. Provide an analysis of the LWIA's economy, the labor pool, and the labor market context.

In February 2009, the Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board (TRWIB) released a comprehensive view of the labor market titled, "Seeing in 3D: The Dynamics, Diversity, and Density of Southwestern Pennsylvania's Labor Market" (http://www.trwib.org/3D2009/index_flash.php). Key findings indicates that the SWPA region offers job opportunities for all educational levels: 25% of jobs require a bachelors degree, 25% of jobs require less than a bachelors degree, but more than a high school degree, and 55% only require some type of on the job training.

TRWIB also identified five industries that are significant in the SWPA region: Healthcare, Manufacturing, Professional, Scientific and Technical Services, Financial Services, and Construction. In addition to all of the quantitative labor market research identified in the Seeing in 3D report, TRWIB also regularly convenes employers on labor market needs both through the industry partnerships and other community based partnerships. TRWIB is currently convening health care providers, educators, organizations involved in sustainability and green jobs, and staffing agencies to be sure the quantitative data matches what is actually happening in the labor market. To communicate the labor market information to key constituents, TRWIB has developed an e-newsletter, a quarterly report, and a "Special Executive Report" for policymakers as well as posting all regional labor market information on TRWIB's website.

2. What is the LWIA's vision for ensuring a continuum of education and training opportunities that support a skilled workforce?

As we carry out our mission in pursuit of our vision, TRWIB will operate in a manner that reflects the following values and we will encourage our partners in workforce development to do the same.

- We will demonstrate a **commitment to excellence** by setting high standards, pursuing continuous improvement and monitoring results.
- We will foster **innovation** by going beyond what was done in the past and capitalizing on the creativity of others.
- TRWIB will also promote **open communication** through a willingness to listen, having a respect for different perspectives and by having a positive attitude.
- We will also provide good **customer service** by identifying and knowing customers' needs and responding to them in a prompt and courteous manner. .

- TRWIB will build **partnerships** by engaging in cooperation and teamwork in pursuit of common goals.



- Promoting **equity** is another key component for ensuring a continuum of education and training opportunities.
- TRWIB also intends to utilize demonstration grants and “one-time” funding for **sustainable** program advances.

3. **What is the LWIA’s vision for ensuring that every youth has the opportunity for developing and achieving career goals through education and workforce training, including the young people most in need of assistance, such as out-of-school youth, homeless youth, youth in foster care, youth aging out of foster care, youth offenders, children of incarcerated parents, migrant and seasonal farm worker youth, youth with disabilities, and other youth at risk?**

The Allegheny County Department of Human Services is an integrated agency that provides a wide range of services including foster care, behavioral health, drug and alcohol, mental retardation/developmental disabilities, housing, hunger, self-sufficiency, employment and training. The Department also has close relationships with the county juvenile and adult incarceration, probation and parole systems. As such, Workforce Investment Act services for youth are easily targeted at youth most in need of assistance. Our LWIA serves over 70% out of school youth, over 50% of youth with a history in the foster care system, and high percentages of homeless youth, offenders and other high risk categories.

The TRWIB’s vision for youth is to ensure that all youth in the region are capable of entering adulthood with the necessary knowledge and skills to successfully perform and contribute in the 21st century economy. We will do this through various programs and partnership that we are leading or involved in. One of our programs is Educators and Employers Engaged for Excellence also known as E4. This program gives educators and employers an opportunity to build relationships that opens up job shadow opportunities and internships. It also helps teachers to develop lesson plans based off their experience in the workplace through the educator in the workplace component.

We have also taken the lead on an initiative funded by the U.S. Department of Labor to develop a blueprint to help reduce the high school dropout rate and ensure youth are workforce and postsecondary ready. The strategies for serving youth with ARRA funds are implemented through city and county programs as well as through the Youthworks program. Each program will have a workforce readiness and testing component for its participants.

TRWIB is also beginning to grapple with the issue of academic remediation, as we are seeing more students entering post-secondary training or education without the academic skills to be successful. We have convened discussions among a group that consists of college and university administrators, high school principals, TRWIB Board members, employers, and community organizations. The group is working to define what it means for the region to have an educated “world-class workforce”, and to develop a coordinated regional strategy to achieve that in SWPA.

4. **Identify the LWIA’s key workforce investment system priorities and how each will lead to actualizing the LWIA’s vision for workforce and economic development.**

The Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board meets regularly with economic development agencies and community colleges to develop a more coordinated effort to identify competitive businesses and provide them with assistance in the form of labor market information, production processes and help with grant applications.



Using a fact based management system the Pittsburgh/Allegheny Leadership Consortium will align training opportunities with current and future needs of the regions employers with attention to careers offering self-sufficient wages, career ladders, and opportunities to the diverse population of Allegheny County.

The Pittsburgh/Allegheny County CareerLink System will continue to work closely with the Allegheny County Department of Community and Economic Development. The ACCED develops business opportunities within Allegheny County and identifies employer needs around workforce development using the CareerLink system to recruit qualified employees and the WIA funds to train new employees needed for business expansion in high growth areas.

In anticipation of the ARRA, the TRWIB, Allegheny County LWIA and the Pittsburgh LWIA have been working/meeting since January to develop strategies to assist all customers with overcoming possible obstacles to training, including but not limited to financial assistance. We are in the process of exploring what may be an increase to our needs based payments and supportive service to WIA and ARRA clients. We are in discussions to possibly expand supportive service offerings to meet the needs and increased technology required to compete in training programs for the emerging fields. The priority of the Pittsburgh/Allegheny County CareerLink System is to provide regional employers with the skilled workforce needed to be competitive in the global economy. We will use ARRA funds to expand business services enabling us to identify current and future skill needs of these employers. We will meet these needs using ARRA funds to create On-the-Job and Customized Training to new and expanding companies. Likewise, ARRA funds will allow us to offer ITA's in high growth occupations. The new skills will allow dislocated workers and economically disadvantaged job seekers to enter the workforce at a self-sufficient wage while providing employers with the skilled employees they need to stay competitive and increase the economic base of the region. Our priority will be to increase the number of ITA's for those job seekers needing training, expand outreach to disconnected youth and provide exposure to both hard and soft skills needed to become successful.

ARRA funds will enable us to provide job seekers with the level of assessment and career guidance they need to benefit from CareerLink services. ARRA funds will allow us to add staff where needed to deliver assessment, training and employer services. This will be done by hiring temporary staff and shifting job responsibilities of current staff.

CareerLink business service staff will begin to attend the quarterly IP meetings allowing the LWIA to see current training programs and see how CareerLink can assist the IP employers with hiring needs.

DOL spent April 14th assessing the ARRA readiness of the area with a positive outcome.

5. What strategies are in place to address the Governor's priorities, the LWIA's priorities, and the workforce development issues identified through the analysis of the LWIA's economy and labor market?

The Allegheny County LWIA invests in five CareerLink Centers located conveniently throughout Allegheny County and in high traffic border county areas. Although some stimulus resources will go toward increased staff capacity to handle increased employment and training caseloads, no resources will be required for additional infrastructure or additional administration. Resources will be focused on Intensive and Training Services for targeted populations.

LWIA 005 delivers intensive and training services through three Comprehensive and two Regional CareerLinks. The LWIA has developed a spending plan using available formula and ARRA funds and with the addition of a temporary



counselor has the capacity to provide intensive and training services to all those in need. The LWIA provides intensive job search services for targeted populations such as soon-to- be-released inmates of the county jail, ex-offenders, and the homeless. These services will be provided with formula WIA funds. Allegheny County serves only low income individuals with WIA Adult funds and will do the same with ARRA. CSBG funds will be used for those in need of training and who do not meet low income guidelines.

The Pittsburgh/Allegheny County CareerLink system is in the final stages in the development of a management plan that will address a needed shift in resources to adequately address services to employers with hiring needs, especially addressing green technology and energy. The system uses our Employer Contact Management System (ECMS) to manage contacts to all employers in the area and to identify those employers in targeted clusters. ECMS allows business services representatives from all offices the ability to see when contacts were made and when hiring needs will occur.

The LWIA follows a Sequence of Events strategy that uses an ability to benefit and informed choice model to issue Individual Training Accounts. Counselors help job seekers identify barriers, needed services, skill gaps, high growth occupations, educational needs, and training needs. Individual Employment Plans are created with the job seeker and in addition to the fore mentioned, an extensive assessment tool menu is available as well as an intensive guided career exploration opportunity. All participants in WIA and WIA co-enrolled activities receive their choice of a monthly gas card or bus pass to help with the extraordinary costs of attending training.

If the TRWIB and the Allegheny County LWIA determines there is a need to train multiple individuals in a specific classroom training setting, the County will contract with the institution of higher education to provide such training.

6. Describe innovative service delivery strategies the LWIA has or is planning to undertake to maximize resources, increase service levels, improve service quality, achieve better integration or meet other key LWIA goals.

In answering this question, the Local Area should discuss how, in the context of a low-growth economy, they have changed training strategies that address longer-term unemployment.

LWIA should describe innovative local strategies to accomplish the LWIA's vision and achieve the goals of the ARRA, including how the LWIA will:

- Increase services to workers in need.
- The Pittsburgh/Allegheny County CareerLink is already well known in the region. Local media have done numerous spots on services and how to access. The Community College and other intensive and training providers also identify workers in need of assistance and make referrals. As the Department of Human Services, DHS will make CSBG funds available to provide skill training to the working poor and provide other support services.
- Support the full range of PA CareerLink customers in acquiring the skills needed to attain jobs in high-growth, high-wage industries and occupations, including such supports as needs-based payments, basic skills remediation, English as a second language, and supportive services.



As part of the Department of Human Services LWIA005 leverages human service funds to assist with housing, temporary housing, behavioral health services, homeless services, family support, medical transportation, and others.

CareerLinks offer on-site computer literacy classes. Contracted Intensive Job Search is provided to target populations in their neighborhoods as are literacy services and ESL.

High growth, high demand information is used in conjunction with the Statewide training Provider list to make informed training decisions. All CareerLink customers have access to these tools.

The Pittsburgh/Allegheny County web site contains a calendar of events and lists upcoming workshops. Workshop content is also available on the web site allowing job seekers the convenience of accessing workshops from home.

- Ensure education and training delivered through the workforce system results in education and workforce skills of demonstrated value, and focus assessments and certifications towards the next level of education and employment.
- It is expected that all approved training programs provide industry recognized certificates and where applicable apply STEM principles.
- Identifying employers with hiring needs now and in the near future will be a priority. OJT will focus on employers with immediate needs.
- Provide targeted work experiences in order to prepare individuals for job opportunities in new industries or occupations, particularly using registered apprenticeship and on-the-job training for all jobseekers, and summer work experience for youth.
- The Allegheny County LWIA is located within the Allegheny County Department of Human Services, and as such has a strong relationship with the Allegheny County Department of Economic Development. DED works closely with emerging industries to assist with their growth and expansion, and DHS is involved from the start in nurturing these relationship and developing contracts for on-the-job training and other innovative arrangements to prepare individuals for job opportunities in growth occupations. Similarly, the County's summer youth program providers are working closely with growth employers and industry partnerships to foster relationships and work experiences that will expose youth to in-demand careers.
- Align workforce activities with education, economic, and community development strategies to meet skill needs of individuals for occupations and industries important to the local and regional economies. The TRWIB works closely with the Allegheny Conference on Community Development, Pittsburgh Partnership for Neighborhood Development, the Pittsburgh Regional Alliance, the Community College of Allegheny County, the City and the County to align strategies through joint conferences, programming and initiatives. The TRWIB also houses the Regional Workforce Collaborative in order to coordinate strategies among the multiple WIBs and counties of Southwestern Pennsylvania.
- Allegheny County will continue to use its effective assessment and ITA process. Job seekers will be assessed as to their individual needs. Those interested in receiving an ITA will be assessed as to interest and ability to benefit. Each job seeker, using labor market information and the local high demand list, will do research on potential jobs and job duties, salary, annual openings, etc. A financial plan is developed to address the cost and ability to attend. If the current system and staff lack capacity to see the higher number of job seekers, we will shift WIA staff or add temporary staff using ARRA. For now, ARRA funds will be used for issuing more ITA's for those in need.



7. Describe the LWIB's vision for increasing training access and opportunities for individuals including the investment of WIA Title I funds and the leveraging of other funds and resources.

The Allegheny County Department of Human Services is the fiscal agent for LWIA 005. As the Department of Human Services we are able to reach out to the areas most vulnerable populations. The Allegheny County Jail collaborative provides education and employment services to inmates that continues after release. We provide employment services to the homeless stabilized through our Homeless and Hunger Program. We provide employment services in economically depressed areas and serve youth aging out of foster care. We believe we have the capacity to provide targeted populations with the counseling, guidance, and support needed to access training leading to employment in high demand occupations. ARRA funds will allow the area to significantly increase the number of eligible WIA participants enrolled in training beyond that of the past. Our CareerLink system will expand PREP call ins to reach more dislocated workers while continuing to participate in Rapid Response activities. LWIA will use the EARN program to train TANF recipients, CSBG funds to train those above poverty level. All training participants will access PELL and PHEAA and other financial aid as a first source for funding. Job Seekers interested in the building trades will be provided with information to access apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeship training. The local area is rich in training providers and a system is in place to easily provide ITA's without needing class size contracts. If our current system is unable to handle the increase

We will continue to use the Approved Statewide Provider/Program List for ITAs and will work with the local community colleges and proprietary schools to develop programs that will quickly address the needs of the current market. We will also work with local community based organizations to assist clients in obtaining the necessary workplace skills to connect quickly to employment. Proposals for all other training services have been solicited through RFPs. Additionally, the TRWIB issued ads in local newspapers to solicit information from local area training providers to determine if their programs/courses are eligible to be included on the Approved Statewide Provider/Program List.

Those successful bidders responding to the RFPs will be key providers in addition to providers on the Approved Statewide Providers List. Other key training providers will be: local area apprenticeships, career and technical education schools, Industry Partnership training providers and institutions of higher education that are engaged with employers. We will also include strategies which may include training providers of the employer's choice, i.e. OJT and Customized Training.

8. Describe the LWIA's strategy for providing comprehensive, integrated services to eligible youth, including those most in need.

Describe the anticipated program design for the WIA Youth funds provided under the ARRA. Include in this description a program design for both younger, in-school, and older or out-of-school youth (including the 22-24 year olds that can be served with ARRA funds). Please see attachment #8.

Allegheny County's ARRA youth program is designed to take into account both local demographics and specific target populations, insuring that services will be offered as broadly as possible and that services are provided to those most in need. Through census data and population mapping a selection of thirteen "community clusters" was developed to target groups of municipalities extending county-wide with a large number of low income eligible youth. Services were solicited through a request for Letters of Intent process. Solicited services included recruitment, eligibility



determination, worksite development, worksite supervision and monitoring, and fiscal management including payroll administration. Additionally, because of our interest in serving the neediest youth - low income, disconnected youth such as foster youth, homeless youth, disabled youth, adjudicated youth, out-of-school youth, and youth from TANF families - providers were asked to identify which of these target populations they would serve. Further program design considerations included:

- Development of a comprehensive and age-appropriate objective assessment and Individual Service Strategy (ISS) for each youth participant, including a review of their academic and occupational skill levels and service needs;
 - Insuring that program activities and work readiness goals are age-appropriate, taking into account participants' development and maturity, and distinguishing between younger in school and older out of school youth;
 - Provision of meaningful work experiences that introduce and reinforce the rigors, demands, rewards, and sanctions associated with holding a job along with worksites that match to the degree possible participants' interests and goals and allow the LWIA to meet work readiness goals.
 - The incorporation of green work experiences into our program design such as urban gardening and conservation projects.
- Will the LWIA use the ARRA funds to fund only a 2009 summer youth program or some combination of 2009 and 2010? If using the funds over two summers, what percentage of funds does the LWIA anticipate using for the first summer?

We anticipate that 90 percent of the LWIA's ARRA funds will used to fund a 2009 summer youth program.

- If using the funds for summer employment opportunities, describe how the LWIA will deliver summer youth employment opportunities.

The LWIA will deliver employment opportunities through its network of youth service providers who have been contracted to recruit participants, develop worksites, and provide work experiences. Providers were selected through a request for letters of intent process.

- Describe the types of worksites that will be developed for summer employment, including a mix of public and private sector work experiences, and how the LWIA will ensure that meaningful work experiences will be developed.

Worksites will be developed by our network of contracted services providers with the following considerations:

- That positions will provide participants with a supervised experience that will result in increased job skills to the extent possible in an occupation related to their interests, educational or career development plan, and help develop a positive work history;
- The worksite will meet safety and health standards and present no danger to the participants;
- The organization providing the worksite will demonstrate a commitment to the values of work experience and a willingness to meet all the requirements of the work experience agreement.



The LWIA will insure that the work experiences are meaningful by having providers offer a broad array of work opportunities in a variety of green and other relevant fields. Examples of such work experience include starting & tending urban gardens, conducting energy audits in residential areas, doing energy upgrades, targeted neighborhood cleanup, trash and brush removal, community event support, environmental education, introduction to renewable energy (e.g., internships with solar installers or work experience with geothermal crews), urban farming, service learning, beautification crews, leadership interns, basketball camp coaches, social entrepreneurship interns, summer conservation interns, park trail restoration, re-vegetation tasks, replanting and rebuilding soil depleted through flooding and erosion, reintroduction of native plant species into parks and gardens, junior summer camp counselors, health careers internships at area hospitals and other medical facilities, Dragon Boat League assistant coaches, pre-school teacher's assistants, and summer Peace Bus staff.

Describe the LWIA's policy for developing the mix of classroom versus worksite time in a summer employment opportunity. Describe the LWIA's policy for determining that summer employment opportunities are connected to academic and/or occupational learning and the types of connections that will be utilized.

Because the neediest youth often lack access to basic job-readiness skills which can make them more competitive in the job market, it is the LWIA's goal to offer them the technical skills needed to succeed in work and particularly in a green jobs economy. Through a blend of employment opportunities with academic and occupational learning participants will be trained about sustainable and clean energy practices, future green career opportunities, employer expectations, apprenticeship programs and how to perform many of the work tasks required in real-world conservation, environmental and green technology jobs. Our contracted service providers will offer service-learning curricula and field work programs designed to prepare participants for a successful job experience by equipping them not only with subject matter and skills knowledge, but with a firm grounding in the teamwork, behavioral, problem solving and life skills that form the foundation for career achievement in any field. Additionally, participants will be provided with a combination of academic and occupational learning through work readiness curricula such as:

- Project CEO, a recipient of the 2006 Department of Labor Recognition of Excellence Award, that allows youth to consider being the CEO of their own lives while learning skills that prepare them for corporate America;
- Jump Start Success (JSS), a job readiness and career exploration assessment that meets both PA State Academic Standards for Career Education and Work Readiness as well as the LWIA's Youth Council's Work Ready Competencies;
- Career exploration programs that align with the PSSA Career and Work Standards, Standard 13.1 and offer a series of educational sessions, career presentations, job tours and assessments that provide a framework for youth to explore careers and begin identifying career pathway opportunities that are associated with their individual interests and abilities as well as future educational goals;
- Development of detailed career plans outlining participants' specific career choices.



Describe any policies or strategies, in alignment with State guidance, to ensure implementation of activities that support out-of-school youth during summer and/or non-summer months, such as supportive services, needs-based payments, or day-care.

Supportive services are provided to out of school youth by those service providers contracted to serve this population as applicable. Needs based payments are not offered at this time.

- Provide the anticipated number of youth to be served with ARRA funds, including the anticipated number of summer employment opportunities created with ARRA funds.

The LWIA anticipates serving approximately 600 youth and providing them with summer employment opportunities.

9. What policies and strategies does the LWIA have in place to ensure that, pursuant to the Jobs for Veterans Act (P.L. 107-288) (38 USC 4215), priority of service is provided to veterans (and certain spouses) who otherwise meet the eligibility requirements for all employment and training programs funded by the Department of Labor?

In answering this question, the LWIA should outline the changes to local policies and strategies that make them sufficient to meet the requirements of 20 CFR 1010.230, published at 73 Fed. Reg. 78132 on December 19, 2008, of the Jobs for Veterans Act regulations issued on December 19, 2008 implementing priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses in Department of Labor job training programs. This includes providing the following information and/or attachments.

A description of the changes to policies for the delivery of priority of service by the LWIB, and One-Stop Career Centers for all qualified job-training programs delivered through the LWIA's workforce system. The description will include how:

1. The LWIA policies ensure that covered persons are identified at the point of entry and given an opportunity to take full advantage of priority of service.
 2. The LWIA policies ensure that covered persons are aware of:
 - a. Their entitlement to priority of service;
 - b. The full array of employment, training, and placement services available under priority of service; and
 - c. Any applicable eligibility requirements for those programs and/ or services.
- A description or copy of the LWIA's policy to implement priority of service for the local PA CareerLinks and for service delivery by local workforce preparation and training providers.

On December 19, 2008, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) issued 20 CFR Part 1010, Priority of Service for Covered Persons: Final Rule, which further defines and expands on the requirements of the Jobs for Veterans Act (JVA) of 2002. JVA calls for priority of service to be implemented by all "qualified job training programs," defined as "any workforce preparation, development of delivery program or service that is directly funded, in whole or in part, by the Department of Labor." This includes the Workforce Investment Act, the Trade Act programs, the Wagner-Peyser Programs, National Emergency Grants under the Workforce Investment Act as well as the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. These regulations took effect on January 19, 2009. the USDOL to clarify the requirements and determine changes that will be needed to CWDS in order to implement the requirements.

Definitions



The regulations apply to "covered persons," which is defined as "covered veterans **and** eligible spouses."

- Covered Veteran – defined as service in the military, naval, or air service and a discharge under conditions other than dishonorable.
- Eligible Spouse – the spouse of any of the following individuals:
 - A veteran who died of a service connected disability.
 - A member of the Armed Forces serving on active duty, who at the time of application for service under this section, is listed in one or more of the following categories, and has been so listed for a total of more than 90 days: missing in action, captured in the line of duty by a hostile force, or forcibly detained or interned in the line of duty by a foreign government or power.
- A veteran who has a total disability resulting from a service connected disability.
- A veteran who died while a disability so evaluated was in existence.

The Eligible Spouse definition for 20 CFR Part 1010, is the same as the definition for Eligible Person.

Provision of Service

The Disabled Veterans Employment Representative (DVOP) or a Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER) cannot serve a job seeker who meets the definition of covered veteran, but does not meet the definition of veteran under Wagner-Peyser. This job seeker will be served by the appropriate staff within the PA CareerLink --Wagner-Peyser funded BWDP staff, WIA title 1 staff or other partner staff. The part time LVER may serve this population as part to their non-veterans work time. However, local offices are encouraged to have the DVOP and LVER make the determination of veteran's status. If it is determined the job seeker is a "covered person," but does not meet the definition of veteran under the Wagner-Peyser statutes, the job seeker must be referred to BWDP Wagner-Peyser staff, Title 1 staff or other appropriate partner staff for services.

Applying Multiple Priorities

In addition, when the veterans priority is applied in conjunction with another statutory priority like the Recovery Act's priority for recipients of public assistance and low-income individuals, veterans and eligible spouses who are members of the Recovery Act priority group will receive the highest priority within that priority group, followed by non-veteran members of that of the Recovery Act priority group. For example, if three people are determined eligible for services funded by the Recovery Act – one veteran receiving public assistance (A), one non-veteran receiving public assistance (B) and one veteran who is eligible but not receiving public assistance or low income (C.) The priority of service should be applied as follows – "A" receives top priority, "B" next priority and "C" would be third in line for priority of service.

Identifying and Informing Covered Persons

The regulations require that covered persons be identified "at the point of entry," whether that is a one-stop office or an online self-service application. In the future, a new program eligibility for "Covered Person" will be added to CWDS, and "covered persons" will also be included with other veterans at the top of job order match lists.

Covered persons will be made aware of:

- Their entitlement to priority of service;
- The full array of programs and services available to them; and
- Any applicable eligibility requirements for those programs and/or services.



In order to meet this requirement, additional questions will be added to the "01" screens, e.g. EE01, in CWDS to determine eligibility. If the job seeker meets eligibility requirements, they will be provided electronic notice of their priority rights. Until CWDS can be modified to handle the new requirements, there is no way to capture self-service covered persons, or to report on this category as a whole. Once system changes are made the information will be provided to the field.

In the meantime, we are posting notices in our CareerLinks indicating that the PA CareerLink provides priority of service to Covered Persons. In addition to the posting, we will provide the participants with the full array of programs and services available to them and any applicable eligibility requirements for those programs and/or services, which can be accomplished with a single document.

TRWIB's Priority of Services Policy is in the process of being amended to include the following: Covered Veterans and their spouses pursuant to the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) issued 20 CFR Part 1010, Priority of Service for Covered Persons: Final Rule, which further defines and expands on the requirements of the Jobs for Veterans Act (JVA) of 2002

10. Describe the LWIA's strategies to ensure that the full range of employment and training programs and services delivered through the LWIA's PA CareerLink delivery system are accessible to and will meet the needs of dislocated workers, displaced homemakers, low-income individuals, migrant and seasonal farmworkers, women, minorities, individuals training for nontraditional employment, veterans, public assistance recipients, and individuals with multiple barriers to employment (including older individuals, limited English proficiency individuals, and people with disabilities).

All the mentioned target groups are part of a strategy of universal access to the PA CareerLink system. To the extent that they require more than core services, customers can receive intensive services such as job search, assessment, and individual employment plans. Individual Training Accounts (ITA) will be available to job seekers needing additional skills to enter the labor force at a level of self-sufficiency and who meet eligibility requirements. Financial aid information will be available to all job seekers. ITA's will be issued for training programs leading to high priority occupations in an amount not to exceed \$8000 or extend beyond two years. Recognizing that intensive job search can be productive within the community, services will be provided by experts skilled in the needs of the targeted workforce.

A support service counselor is available to all job seekers. This counselor provides information and referral on a wide variety of services that include housing, healthcare, transportation, credit, etc.

Providers of Intensive Job Search services are selected through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process and evaluated and monitored for performance. These contracted providers offer employment services for inmates of the Allegheny County Jail, homeless individuals accessing temporary shelters, ex-offenders, those with D&A history, etc. Contracts are awarded on a performance based contract agreement. As needed, counselors also connect them to support services and/or other services not provided through PA CareerLink. To ensure service delivery to persons with disabilities, assistive devices, interpreters, etc., are available as needed.



As continued outreach to all of the mentioned targeted groups, the LWIA participates in and or coordinates area wide Job Fairs with local community groups, corporations, and training providers. Through our partnership within the local PA CareerLink system, we have used our Business Development and Marketing service to advertise and target audiences that are within the listed targeted groups.

- **Dislocated workers:** To meet the needs of dislocated workers, the LWIA offers workshops on transferable skills, demand occupations, and assists workers in “re-inventing” themselves. Contracts with local agencies provide many specialized services for this population. These services include resume preparation, workshops on interviewing techniques, networking, and job search and placement assistance beyond those available as core services. The LWIA uses high growth training opportunities to assist dislocated workers with gaining employment at a self-sufficient level. Local and governmental economic development agencies provide information on our local workforce, including information on recently laid off individuals and their skill sets.
- **Displaced Homemakers:** This population is served through the PA CareerLink system and through our network of intensive job search service providers. Many of these community-based groups have programs that are specifically designed to attract displaced homemakers who are then referred for more services through the PA CareerLink system.
- **Low-income Individuals:** Likewise, this population is served through the PA CareerLink system and through our network of intensive job search service providers.
- **Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers:** Due to the nature of the geographical region we serve, this is not a population that we have encountered recently. However, services are available throughout our PA CareerLink network.
- **Women, Minorities and Individuals Training for Non-Traditional Employment:** Working with the Builders Guild, the Apprenticeship Information Committee and training providers, the LWIA supports their efforts to attract women and minorities to non- traditional employment through their apprenticeship programs and targeted recruitments. All trade information is posted within the PA CareerLink system. The partnership includes training and informational sessions with our employment counselors and staff to keep them abreast of all upcoming open apprenticeship recruitment sessions, educational requirements, remedial classes, as well as the organizations that provide coursework directly related to the educational requirements.
- **Veterans:** In our efforts to attract and assist veterans, the LWIA, as part of the PA CareerLink system, has given veterans priority status within WIA services, and this will be extended to those eligible under ARRA as well. The LWIA will work with veterans representatives located in the PA CareerLink to establish a direct referral system to WIA and/ARRA services for training or re-training and intensive and supportive services. The LWIA has taken an aggressive stand to provide services to our veterans by contracting with local non-profit agencies to provide job placement and supportive services to the region’s veterans and their families.
- **Public Assistance Recipients:** The LWIA has developed a strategy that integrates its Department of Public Welfare programs with the PA CareerLink system. The strategy involves co-location of the EARN program into the same office building as the PA CareerLink. All County Public Assistance clients are given an orientation to PA CareerLink services and are enrolled into the PA CareerLink labor exchange system. Clients may take advantage of all of the PA CareerLink core services including employment workshops, resume writing, interviewing skills, job search, employer recruitments and job fairs. Clients that are eligible for training can establish an Individual Training Account if appropriate.
- **Older Individuals:** In order to provide quality services for this population, the Allegheny County Department of Human Services’ sister bureaus of Employment and Training and Aging work hand in hand to provide



orientations, assisted enrollments, and group workshops in order to better prepare our older clients for employment. Additionally, the Department of Human Services operates the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP), also a recipient of ARRA funding, and older individuals will be referred to this program if appropriate. Our staff has also participated in seminars and sensitivity training to better to address the concerns of older clients. The LWIA investment in ADA compliant equipment and furniture has made it possible for many older clients to access services.

- **Persons with Limited English Proficiency:** The LWIA has developed and all staff has participated in mandatory LEP training. We have also contracted with a community based organization that specializes in dealing with immigrant populations as an intensive job search service to provide English as a Second Language courses combined with job search assistance, placement and retention services.
- **Persons with Disabilities:** Through our partnership with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation the LWIA provides assistance as needed to OVR clients for training and Intensive Services. As with all other target or special population groups, all WIA, ARRA, and PA CareerLink services are provided as applicable.

11. Describe the competitive and non-competitive processes that will be used at the local level to award grants and contracts for activities under Title I of WIA including how potential bidders are being made aware of the availability of grants and contracts.

In answering this question, the LWIA should describe:

- How providers of all youth services will be procured under the ARRA. If using funds for summer employment opportunities and the fiscal agent or the LWIA is not operating this program element, please specifically describe procedures for procuring summer employment operational entities and job opportunities.
- The Allegheny County Department of Human Services (LWIA) in February released a Request for Letters of Intent (LOI) for summer youth programming. The LWIA received 15 proposals and funded 10 based upon the following criteria specified in the LOI:

2. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION (Maximum 20 Points)
LoI briefly but clearly describes the nature of the program or services.
Describes participant recruitment strategies.
Includes estimated number of participants to be served.
Lists services to be provided.
Indicates program cost (total cost and cost per enrollee).
Describes anticipated program outcomes.
Addresses whether program would be able to target specific youth populations.
Addresses whether program would be able to target specific geographical areas of Allegheny County, and, if so, where.
3. ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY (Maximum 16 Points)
Details organization's ability to administer payroll.



Describes organization's ability to comply with county / state / and federal administrative, fiscal, and reporting requirements.
4. BUDGET (Maximum 16 Points)
Budget narrative includes a list of all project staff.
Provides explanation of "other costs," if any, whether administrative or program.
Offers an explanation and justification of any rent or equipment requests.
Indicates whether work experience wages would be spent on work experience, internships in the private sector, or a combination.
5. WORKSITE INFORMATION (Maximum 16 Points)
Provides a list of proposed worksites, participant job titles, and/or a detailed plan for worksite development.
6. ORIENTATION & RISK MANAGEMENT (Maximum 16 Points)
Provides an outline of orientation and training procedures for youth participants.
Provides an outline of orientation and training procedures for worksite supervisors.
Offers a description of risk management process (child safety, child labor compliance, clearances, etc.).
7. PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE (Maximum 16 Points)
Provides a brief history of previous experience in serving youth during the summer.
Provides a breakout of numbers served during the last three summers.

- How the LWIA will implement the ARRA provision allowing the LWIB to award a contract to an institution of higher education or other eligible training provider if the local board determines that it would facilitate the training of multiple individuals in high-demand occupations, and if such a contract does not limit customer choice.
- The TRWIB and LWIA solicit proposals for high demand training programs from institutions of higher education and other eligible training providers on an ongoing basis. In addition, we work closely with the Community College of Allegheny County to develop training programs in high growth areas that are marketed county wide as free programs to dislocated workers.

12. How will the LWIB ensure that ARRA funds will supplement, not supplant, existing resources?

How will ARRA funds be spent at the same time as formula funds?

The Allegheny County Department of Human Services, as the Fiscal Agent and Program Operator, has put into place a spending plan that will focus ARRA resources on summer youth employment programs and training for adults and dislocated workers as specified by program directives. Concurrently, formula funds will continue to support a broad array of in school youth year round programs, out of school youth year round programs, adult special population programs, intensive job search programs, core CareerLink one stop services, and training. Contracts will be set up with provider agencies to segregate formula from ARRA funds and provide transparency on expenses and clients served. FSRs will be submitted to the state in a timely manner as usual and drawdowns will match the FSRs on a real-time expense rather than accrual basis as required by program directives.



TRWIB will ensure ARRA funds will not supplant existing resources by tracking expenditures through the Financial Status Reports and by tracking the number of persons in either intensive or training services. We will also track ARRA expenditures through reports that can be generated from the ARRA database that is currently being developed by CWIA.

13. Describe the monitoring and oversight criteria and procedures the Local Area has in place to ensure not only compliance with the laws, regulations, and guidance but also with the intent and spirit of ARRA.

TRWIB's WIA monitoring policies and procedures meets the requirements of 20 CFR 667.410(b) (2) and our policies will be modified to reflect the rules and regulations of ARRA and the Jobs for Veterans Act. Our monitoring policies will emphasize the importance of transparency and accountability in the use of Recovery Act funding and will include procedures for monitoring Summer Youth Employment Programs.

14. Identify the performance indicators and goals established to track progress toward meeting strategic goals and implementing the LWIA' vision for the workforce investment system.

The NWPA WIB will review progress reports for the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act bi-monthly. During opposing months, these reports will be reviewed by the workforce investment board's Research and Quality Assurance Committee. The reports will be measured against the established goals of the workforce investment board, the intent of the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act, and applicable compliance regulations. The reports will be posted to the NWPA Workforce Investment Board website (www.nwpawib.org) for public review.

All youth in the summer work experience program will be tested for work ready skill levels prior to beginning their work experience. NWPA will utilize a locally developed pre-post test. (See Attachment E) Throughout the experience, classroom activities will be included to build work ready skills. At the completion of the participants will be post-tested. In addition, employers will provide an evaluation of the participants' performance and attendance records will be maintained. Increase in work-ready skills will be measured by successful results in two out of the three components. Successful results are defined below:

Work-Ready Component	Measure of Success
Work-Ready pre-post test	Increase of at least 10%
Employer Evaluation	Minimum score of 85%
Attendance Rate	Minimum of 95% attendance

- The ARRA requires states to report on work readiness to assess the effectiveness of summer employment opportunities for youth. The LWIA should identify its methodology for determining



whether a measurable increase in work readiness skills has occurred, and what tools will be used for this determination.

As mentioned above, the LWIA's contracted youth service providers will utilize the following instruments to measure work readiness gains:

- Project CEO, developed by Arbor Employment & Training, LLC. This tool is a recipient of the 2006 Department of Labor Recognition of Excellence Award that allows youth to consider being the CEO of their own lives while learning skills that prepare them for corporate America;
- Jump Start Success (JSS), developed by YouthWorks, Inc., a job readiness and career exploration assessment that meets both PA State Academic Standards for Career Education and Work Readiness as well as the LWIA's Youth Council's Work Ready Competencies;
- Various other career exploration programs that align with the PSSA Career and Work Standards, Standard 13.1 and offer a series of educational sessions, career presentations, job tours and assessments that provide a framework for youth to explore careers and begin identifying career pathway opportunities that are associated with their individual interests and abilities as well as future educational goals, as approved by the LWIA.

TRWIB's primary focus is to ensure that the both the letter and the spirit of the Recovery Act is met on a local level. To do this, we will work to ensure that the Recovery Act is implemented expeditiously and effectively with full transparency and accountability of fund expenditures.

As we carry out our mission in pursuit of our vision, TRWIB will operate in a manner that reflects the following values and we will encourage our partners in workforce development to do the same.

We will demonstrate a **commitment to excellence** by setting high standards, pursuing continuous improvement and monitoring results. We intend to adopt a rigorous approach, emphasizing outcomes rather than outputs, measuring results rather than documenting processes and striving to improve rather than focusing on meeting minimum standards. TRWIB will demonstrate an approach to workforce development that is grounded in data collection and analysis and utilization of best practices in the industry.

We will foster **innovation** by going beyond what was done in the past and capitalizing on the creativity of others. We intend to increase our efforts through the ARRA to promote innovation in the system so that job seekers obtain skills that are recognized by industry, establish or lead to a career path that fosters self-sufficient wages, and employers realize employees who are ready to contribute to the business's and the region's competitiveness.

TRWIB will also promote **open communication** through a willingness to listen, having a respect for different perspectives and by having a positive attitude. We believe we can facilitate this process by modeling effective communication and highlighting our shared successes. We intend to provide a more transparent view of dollars committed to workforce development through listing contracts and contractors utilizing ARRA funds on our website.

The TRWIB will continue to track the Allegheny County's LWIA's performance through the quarterly Common Measure Performance Reports that are produced by the Center for Workforce Information and Analysis (CWIA). These reports



show the County's Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth negotiated performance levels with the State and their actual levels of achievement for a particular quarter. The TRWIB will also have access to the ARRA supplemental reports being developed by CWIA. The supplemental reports will be participant based instead of exiter based and will provide a more robust, "real-time" view of the impact of the Recovery funds. In addition to the supplemental reports, TRWIB will develop internal ARRA reports when necessary to meet the oversight needs of our Board and the information requests from stakeholders and the general public.

Currently, TRWIB captures relevant ARRA/WIA data in our Briefing Book which is produced on a quarterly basis. The Briefing Book shows the County's WIA formula fund allocations and ARRA allocations and the number of persons receiving intensive or training services by funding stream. We will include a section that captures the number of youth participating/completing Summer Employment programs and the number of youth with a measurable gain in work readiness. Also provided in the Briefing Book is a PA CareerLink Pittsburgh/Allegheny County Business Services Activity Report. The Activity Report shows the number of employers enrolled in the PA CareerLink system, penetration rates of a targeted industry cluster and the number of job orders.

Furthermore, the TRWIB will continue to receive the County's Financial Status Reports that will be used to monitor WIA and ARRA spending levels. The State strongly suggests that LWIAs spend a minimum of 60% of the ARRA Adult and Dislocated Worker funding on Individual Training Accounts (ITA).

Most importantly, TRWIB will continue to monitor County LWIA ARRA funds and contractors through our WIA Fiscal and Programmatic policies. These policies and procedures will be modified to meet the rules and regulations of ARRA.

We will also provide good **customer service** by identifying and knowing customers' needs and responding to them in a prompt and courteous manner. The local workforce investment system has two distinct customer bases -- employers and job seekers. To the extent that these customers are aware of their needs and can articulate them to us, we must be attentive and responsive not assume a passive role. Since the system relies on informed decision making, we have a responsibility to try to help our customers identify their own knowledge gaps and develop strategies to address those as well. TRWIB will provide the best available labor market information to CareerLink and to all TRWIB partners to assist their efforts.

In addition, TRWIB will build **partnerships** by engaging in cooperation and teamwork in pursuit of common goals. We recognize that a significant amount of solid groundwork has already been laid by our partners in workforce development. We are committed to leveraging resources and working together for the benefit of the region. TRWIB commits to advancing an active role in developing a "regional" understanding of the workforce issues and needs, and seeking the solutions to those needs.

Promoting **equity** is another key component for ensuring a continuum of education and training opportunities. TRWIB believes that equity is characterized by both access to the services under WIA such as PA CareerLink, but also the training that might be needed to compete in the region's labor market, as well as access to the employment opportunities that are created. We will continue to work with economic development, local elected officials and planners, transit officials, community-based organizations, and with the learning provider community to assure this access. TRWIB believes that all persons in the region should be "ready-to-work" and "ready-to-learn" and will reach out



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to educators and policy makers to ensure that our region provides the appropriate program offerings to achieve a region recognized, internally and externally, for its excellent workforce development system in preparing its workforce for current & future challenges.

TRWIB also intends to utilize demonstration grants and “one-time” funding for **sustainable** program advances. TRWIB recognizes that this type of funding is not long-term and therefore, promotes through its letters of support the utilization of demonstration, foundation, and “one-time” grants to develop new practices for services or training methods that help change operational or learning behaviors through better connection to job opportunities and/or increased program effectiveness or efficiency.