

# San Joaquin County Workforce Development Board

## Program Year 2025 – 2028 Local Plan



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## I. INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 and guidance published by the California Workforce Development Board (CWDB) and the California Employment Development Department (EDD), the San Joaquin County Workforce Development Board (WDB) has developed a four-year Local Plan covering program years (PYs) 2025-2028. Following approval by state officials representing the Governor, the plan will be effective from July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2029.

Throughout the plan, WDB and WorkNet, the brand name for the local network of career centers funded by WIOA, may be used interchangeably. However, in some cases, WDB is used to refer specifically to the members of the workforce development board and the board as a whole and WorkNet is used to refer to the managers and staff of the WorkNet centers.

### A. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

Passed by Congress with a wide bipartisan majority, WIOA was signed into law on July 22, 2014. WIOA is designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training, and support services to succeed in the labor market and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in a global economy. WIOA represents the most recent version of federal workforce legislation providing funding to states and local areas to administer and operate workforce development programs. WIOA was preceded by the Job Training Partnership Act (active from 1982 to 2000) and the Workforce Investment Act (active from 2000 to 2015).

WIOA promotes accountability and transparency through negotiated performance goals that are publicly available; fosters regional collaboration within states through local workforce areas; and supports a nationwide network of career centers, which are branded within the state as America's Job Centers of California (AJCCs) and within San Joaquin County as WorkNet centers.

While the PY 2025-28 Local Plan addresses collaboration among many organizations that derive their primary funding from a wide range of federal, state, and private programs, it is WIOA that requires the development and publication of the plan and that prescribes its core content.

### B. San Joaquin County Workforce Development Board

WIOA requires that a workforce development board (WDB) be established in each Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA). The area's chief local elected officials appoint members to the WDB. Locally, the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors fulfills this function. Local workforce development boards are business-led, and the majority of members must come from the business community. Required WDB members also include representatives from labor, education, economic development, and specific

federally funded workforce programs. The chief local elected officials may also select representatives from other groups, such as community-based organizations, to sit on the WDB.

WDBs drive the vision for the workforce system and maintain the critical role of leading and providing oversight for local WIOA programs. WDBs also play a critical role in promoting, sustaining, and growing regional economies. They are responsible for aligning investments in job training, integrating service delivery across programs, and ensuring that workforce investments are job-driven and match skilled workers with employers.

WIOA indicates that development of the local plan, along with the associated regional plan, is a primary responsibility of the workforce development board.

### C. Local Plans and the WIOA Planning Structure

The San Joaquin County WDB's Local Plan is best understood within the context of a three-tiered planning structure envisioned by WIOA that requires development of plans at the state, regional, and local levels.

**State Plans:** Under WIOA, state plans communicate the vision for the statewide workforce development system. WIOA planning requirements aim to foster effective alignment of federal investments across job training and education programs, in order to coordinate service delivery among programs for shared customers; improve efficiency; and ensure that the workforce system connects individuals with high-quality job opportunities and employers. Cross-program planning promotes a shared understanding of the workforce needs within each state. California's PY 2024-2027 Unified Strategic Workforce Development Plan represents agreement among the WIOA core program and other partners and serves as the framework for the development of public policy, fiscal investment, and operation of the state workforce and education systems.

**Regional Plans:** In states such as California, where Governors have established workforce planning regions encompassing one or more LWDA, regional plans are required. Local WDBs within the region participate in a planning process that describes elements such as: analysis of regional labor market data, development and implementation of sector initiatives for targeted industries and in-demand occupations; coordination of workforce services with regional economic development services and providers; and establishment of regional service strategies, including use of cooperative service delivery agreements. Along with seven other local areas, the San Joaquin County LWDA is part of the San Joaquin Valley and Associated Counties Regional Planning Unit (SJVAC RPU), which is one of California's fifteen workforce regions.

**Local Plans:** The local plan is intended to serve as a four-year action plan to develop, align, and integrate the local area's job-driven workforce development systems and provide a platform to achieve the local area's vision and strategic and operational goals. Features of the local plan include: coordination among economic development, education, and workforce partners to build a skilled workforce through innovation in, and

alignment of, employment, training and education programs; implementation of job-driven strategies and services through the local career center system; and delivery of education and training to ensure that individuals, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment, have skills necessary to compete in the job market and that employers have a ready supply of skilled workers.

WIOA requires that local plans be incorporated into the regional plan. Therefore, the PY 2025-28 San Joaquin County WDB Local Plan is officially part of the PY 2025-28 SJVAC RPU Regional Plan.

## **D. California's Strategic Workforce Priorities**

California's Unified Strategic Workforce Development Plan describes the state's priorities for the public workforce system.

Under the leadership of the Governor and the Secretary of the Labor and Workforce Development Agency, California's vision for the future of workforce development is centered on the establishment and growth of a workforce system that promotes opportunity, job quality, and environmental sustainability for all Californians. The state is committed to developing a workforce system that enables economic growth and shared prosperity for employers and employees, especially those with barriers to employment, by investing in industry partnerships, job quality, and meaningful skills attainment. One area in which the CWDB pursues these aims is through its "High Road" programming. High Road refers to a "family of strategies" for achieving a participatory economy and society by aligning workforce, economic policy, and different interests with long-term goals of environmental sustainability, high-quality jobs, and a resilient economy. High Road emphasizes the complementary nature of these aims over the long term. In practice, High Road policy builds upon areas where the interest of employers (in trained and productive workers), workers and jobseekers (in good quality and accessible jobs), and environmental protection (for a sustainable future for all) overlap to create pathways to high-quality jobs while raising the profile of existing ones.

In consideration of the practical implementation of High Road principles in workforce development policy, the CWDB describes in the current State Plan four distinct "flavors" or styles of intervention. These interventions are directly relevant to High Road projects but also inform, to a greater or lesser extent, all CWDB's workforce efforts. They include: (1) lifting all workers to the "High Road;" (2) professionalizing precarious work (i.e., employment that is temporary, non-standard, and insecure, often with poor pay and no protection); (3) democratizing access to high-quality, middle-skill jobs; and (4) participatory planning for a low-carbon economy.

In accordance with the requirements of WIOA, both the San Joaquin County WDB PY 2025-28 Local Plan and the PY 2025-28 SJVAC RPU Regional Plan support the State Plan priorities by:

- Maintaining a dual focus on providing programs and services that meet the needs and support the goals of businesses and job seekers/workers.
- Concentrating on industry sectors which drive growth and prosperity within local labor markets and regional economies.
- Targeting jobs that offer career advancement opportunities and that lead to positions that pay family-sustaining wages and provide pathways to the middle class.
- Committing to the adoption and implementation of strategies and processes that support environmental sustainability and climate resilience through workforce development.

## E. Development of the Program Year 2025-28 Local Plan

WorkNet's executive leadership and management team led the process of developing the original PY 2025-28 Local Plan. Preparation of the plan involved a process of reviewing and evaluating existing partnerships, services, and systems and identifying areas that could be strengthened. The WDB, system partners, businesses, and community stakeholders were engaged in the planning process. Completion of the Local Plan took approximately six months, after which it was made available for public review and comment.

## F. San Joaquin County WDB Strategic Goals

In the latter half of 2023, members of the San Joaquin County WDB participated in a strategic planning process during which they reviewed their WIOA-prescribed roles and responsibilities and identified priorities for the board and the local workforce system that they oversee. Ultimately, the WDB established five strategic goals, for which areas of focus were identified. These goals include:

**Goal 1: Promotion and Advocacy:** Broadcasting and seeking support for WorkNet services.

Area of focus include:

- Business outreach and the promotion of WorkNet programs to local businesses is central to this goal. The local board envisions its members playing a central role in communicating the benefits of the workforce system to private industry.
- Greater coordination and alignment of public and community-based programs may provide opportunities for the WDB to leverage additional resources to support its programs and customers.
- WDB members recognize the value of communication with state and federal representatives on improvements that can be made to structure, policy, and funding for local workforce development programs.

**Goal 2: Business Engagement and Support:** Strategies to increase effectiveness in serving businesses.

Priorities connected to this goal are:

- In collaboration with WorkNet leadership, the board will identify opportunities to hear from businesses about the workforce issues that are of most interest and urgency to local companies.
- As local businesses in key industries seek to expand, the WDB will ensure that they have the support necessary to hire and train a skilled workforce.
- In connection with regional workforce priorities, the local system has identified priority sectors. In addition to focusing resources on the county's largest industries, the WDB will enhance services for the many small businesses in the San Joaquin County that are essential to the economy.
- Working with system partners, WorkNet leadership and the WDB will identify opportunities to support entrepreneurs through the local workforce development system.

**Goals 3: Increased Coordination** across organizations, programs, and services.

The WDB intends to concentrate its efforts in the following areas:

- Through its multiple connections with public agencies at all levels of government, the board will seek to align the workforce system with other public services.
- Relationships with community-based agencies are instrumental to the system's ability to reach many under-resourced groups who are critical to meeting workforce needs in the county. The WDB will help to shape efforts to engage with community-based organizations to assist their constituents in preparing for good jobs in promising careers.
- San Joaquin County is home to many organizations that provide services and support to business. The WDB's objective is to better align these services with those of the local workforce development system

**Goal 4: Funding Diversification:** Leveraging opportunities to expand resources.

Priorities include:

- To reach underserved populations and prepare individuals from these groups for demand jobs in growing industries, the WDB will direct efforts to identify and secure funding focusing on these individuals.
- The WDB will seek funding targeted to support base and emerging industries in the county.
- While the programs overseen by the WDB are funded by public sources, WorkNet has had some success in securing foundation and corporate funding. The WDB seeks to expand upon these efforts.

**Goal 5: Shared Prosperity:** Improving outcomes for all county residents and businesses.



Efforts will include:

- In recognition of the county's diverse economy, the WDB will ensure that workforce development resources are utilized to support growth across multiple sectors and for businesses of all types and sizes.
- As businesses prosper, so too should individuals and communities. The WDB will ensure that co-investments in workers and businesses create across-the-board opportunities for financial stability and prosperity.

Following the WDB's adoption of the strategic goals, the board convened to discuss the development of related action plans. WDB members determined that the work necessary to make progress on the goals requires concentrated effort and, therefore, it was decided that three work groups would be established, as follows.

- Promotion and Advocacy, Increased Coordination, and Shared Prosperity
- Business Engagement
- Fund Development

For each workgroup, one or more WDB members volunteered to take a leadership role and WorkNet managers were assigned as liaisons to support each group. WDB members leading the workgroups were tasked to recruit their colleagues from the board, as well as individuals from the community, to serve as members of the workgroups. While the strategic goals are scheduled for completion in 2025, many will likely continue beyond that point and all the preceding goals and objectives will shape the WDB's priorities over the four-year active period of this plan.

## **G. Program Year 2025-28 System Priorities**

During the process used to develop the PY 2025-28 Local Plan, community members, local stakeholders, and system partners were invited to participate in discussions regarding the direction of the local workforce system over the next four years. As a result of these discussions, the following priorities have been identified:

- Customize training and services to meet the needs of business
- Consult with business on workforce and labor market issues
- Teach businesses to be trainers
- Adopt creative approaches to business outreach
- Address job retention as a business and job seeker strategy
- Prepare job candidates for workplace requirements
- Focus on upskill training for the existing workforce
- Youth programs should emphasize business communication skills
- System partners should identify opportunities to create short-term training and stackable credentials
- Focus on creating pathways to good jobs and careers

Section V of this plan summarizes these and other issues, strategies, approaches, and key considerations that the San Joaquin County WDB and the system partners will examine over the four-year course of this plan.

## II. WIOA CORE AND REQUIRED PARTNER COORDINATION

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) includes requirements for Local Boards to establish a framework for collaboration among state and local programs that are financially supported by nineteen distinct federal fund sources. Six of these programs constitute the four “core partners:” the WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs; the WIOA Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program; the WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Act Program; and the WIOA Title IV State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program. The core partners, together with thirteen other federally supported programs, make up the WIOA-mandated one-stop partners. The San Joaquin County WDB has entered into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the organizations managing each federal program at the local level. The narrative that follows describes coordination with the WIOA core and other required program partners as prescribed by the Act.

### A. Coordination with AJCC Partners and WIOA Memorandum of Understanding

San Joaquin County WDB has active, strong, and effective partnerships dating back 40 years with public and private agencies that administer the WIOA partner programs. In addition to the many day-to-day interactions that the WDB has with the one-stop partner agencies, the participation of the partners in the planning process that led to the development of the PY 2025-28 Local Plan is a testament to their commitment to San Joaquin County’s local workforce development delivery system.

#### **Overview of Local One-Stop System Partners**

Following is a summary of the local/regional organizations representing the nineteen (19) federal one-stop partner programs, with which the San Joaquin County WDB has developed MOUs.

Federal Partner Programs	MOU Partner
WIOA Title I Adult WIOA Title I Dislocated Worker WIOA Title I Youth	San Joaquin County Workforce Development Board (WDB)
WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy	Delta Sierra Adult Education Alliance (DSAEA) Stockton Unified School District
WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser	Employment Development Department (EDD)
WIOA Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation	California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR)
Carl Perkins Career Technical Education	San Joaquin Delta College (SJDC)
Older Americans Act Title V Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)	SER – Jobs for Progress, Inc.
Job Corps	Davis and Associates Communication, Inc.

	<i>Recruiter for the Sacramento, San Jose, and Treasure Island Job Corps Centers</i>
Native American Programs (WIOA Section 166)	California Indian Manpower Consortium
Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (WIOA Section 167)	San Joaquin County Workforce Development Board (WDB)
Jobs for Veterans State Grants	Employment Development Department
Youth Build	San Joaquin County Office of Education (SJCOE)
Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)	Employment Development Department
Community Services Block Grant	San Joaquin County Human Services Agency (HSA)
Housing and Urban Development E&T	Housing Authority of the County of San Joaquin (HACCSJ)
Unemployment Insurance (UI)	Employment Development Department
Second Chance	<i>No Current Grant in San Joaquin County.</i>
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)/CalWORKs	San Joaquin County Human Services Agency (HSA)

**Memorandum of Understanding with System Partners**

The San Joaquin County WDB has developed a master MOU with the federally funded system partners. The MOU describes shared customers, shared services, and shared costs.

**Coordination with AJCC Partner Programs**

The following information summarizes the ways in which the WDB and the local workforce system collaborate with organizations managing the federally mandated one-stop partner programs.

WIOA Title I – Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs: The three formula-funded programs are administered by the WDB, and services are delivered through the Comprehensive WorkNet AJCC in Stockton and four Affiliate AJCCs, which are in Lodi, Manteca, and Tracy and on the campus of San Joaquin Delta College in Stockton.

WIOA Title II – Adult Education and Literacy: The WDB has strong working relationships with the Title II partners. Delta Sierra Adult Education Alliance (DSAEA) encompasses many adult schools, the community college, and various community partners. WorkNet identifies opportunities to co-enroll Title II participants in need of workforce training or job placement.

WIOA Title III – Wagner-Peyser: Traditionally, the collaboration between the WIOA Title I and the Wagner-Peyser programs has been among the strongest in the system and has been crucial to the delivery of coordinated services within the comprehensive and various affiliate AJCCs. Coordination includes co-location at the WorkNet centers; assistance in providing customers with information on unemployment insurance; delivery of Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) workshops; assistance in

providing Rapid Response services to dislocated workers; and provision of cross training for WorkNet staff and system partners.

WIOA Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation: The State Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) has staff co-located on a part-time basis at the Comprehensive AJCC. Coordination between Title I, Title IV, and other workforce system partners and programs includes a variety of efforts, including:

- Cross referrals of applicants and participants between the AJCC and DOR staff when an individual with a disability is determined to need the services of both organizations.
- Co-enrollment and co-case management of participants.
- Collaboration in efforts to increase the availability of competitive integrated employment (CIE) opportunities for individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities, as outlined in the CIE local partnership agreement in which the WDB is listed as a community partner.
- DOR advises the AJCCs on accommodation issues.
- DOR has provided various training sessions for AJCC staff and system partners.

WorkNet also operates the STEP program funded by DOR, to provide youth with disabilities (ages 16-21 in high school or post-secondary education) with job readiness training and work experience aligned with their career goals.

Carl Perkins Career and Technical Education (CTE): San Joaquin Delta College is a recipient of Perkins CTE grant funds. The college uses Perkins funding to develop and deliver technical training linked to occupations that are in demand in the county, and, in recent years has significantly increased its focus on CTE programs. The location of a WorkNet AJCC affiliate center at the college provides a strong connection to CTE programs by WIOA participants served by the college based AJCC and other WorkNet Centers.

Title V Older Americans Act: SER-Jobs for Progress currently operates the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) in San Joaquin County. WIOA-funded case managers and other partner staff refer individuals 55 years and older to the program, in cases where subsidized employment opportunities under SCSEP appear to be a good option for an individual's transition back into the labor market. SCSEP staff are co-located at the WorkNet center in Stockton.

Job Corps: The WDB has a signed MOU with the U.S. DOL contractor that conducts outreach and recruitment for the Sacramento, San Jose, and Treasure Island Job Corps Centers. Each week, Job Corps representatives visit the comprehensive WorkNet center to conduct outreach, orientations, eligibility determinations, intake, and initial assessments.

Native American Programs (WIOA Section 166): California Indian Manpower Consortium Inc., (CIMC) is the Section 166 grantee covering San Joaquin County. WDB staff support CIMC by promoting its various programs, including workforce development, Community

Services Block Grant programs, childcare and development, the Elders Nutrition program, National Caregiver Support Program, Native Entrepreneur Training Program, Census Data Services, Tribal Business Services, and the Tribal Business Export Development Program.

Migrant Seasonal Farmworker Program (WIOA Section 167): San Joaquin County Workforce Development Board (WorkNet) is the WIOA Section 167 grantee for San Joaquin County. WorkNet provides a wide range of workforce development programs for migrant and seasonal farmworkers and their families, including access to career services and training programs and referrals to services like low-cost medical care, housing, utility assistance, and food banks. Participants enrolled in training are eligible for supportive services such as assistance with transportation and training-related expenses. Participants may be co-enrolled in WIOA Title I and Section 167 program services. WorkNet and the EDD Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Outreach Program are co-located at the Stockton WorkNet center. Both agencies have an established referral process to serve farmworkers through their respective programs, including the NFJP program offered by WorkNet.

Jobs for Veterans State Grants: The WDB collaborates with EDD to serve veterans. Once veterans complete an application, they are assigned to a case manager who conducts initial assessment and a determination of the career services needed to support job search and employment. EDD's Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) and a Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) staff are co-located at the comprehensive AJCC. Assistance from these specialized staff can also be made available to affiliate site participants, as needed.

YouthBuild: The WDB works closely with the San Joaquin County Office of Education on many projects serving youth and makes referrals to YouthBuild San Joaquin. The program provides individuals 17-24, who are in need of a high school diploma or GED, with the job skills, leadership, and education necessary to succeed as adults. YouthBuild San Joaquin's unique combination of on-the-job training, educational support, and community service provides participants with a challenging and rewarding experience.

Trade Adjustment Assistance Act (TAA): The WDB staff has worked closely with EDD to serve individuals who qualify for TAA services. Some participants have been co-enrolled in WIOA Title I services and TAA, with WIOA Title I providing career services and EDD coordinating payments to training providers, as TAA funds support training. WorkNet leadership is closely monitoring guidance on the closeout of TAA pursuant to information published in TEG 13-21. While TAA is still technically a mandatory partner program, it is currently an unfunded initiative.

Community Services Block Grant (CSBG): The CSBG program provides funds to alleviate the causes and conditions of poverty in communities. The San Joaquin County Human Services Agency (HSA) administers grants to community agencies, many of which provide support services that align with the needs of WIOA participants. WorkNet

collaborates with various CSBG grantees to connect participants to programs and support services that they offer.

Housing and Urban Development Employment and Training Program: The WDB collaborates with the Housing Authority of the County of San Joaquin to connect customers needing housing assistance to available programs and resources. Under the Housing Authority's Self-Sufficiency Program, support is provided to public housing residents, which includes referrals to WorkNet.

Unemployment Insurance (UI): While EDD once had UI staff stationed at the WorkNet centers, the service is now provided remotely. The AJCCs are equipped with UI phones for customers seeking assistance. Customers may also apply online. EDD's UI representatives are now accepting requests for information by email. WorkNet staff assist participants in preparing these emails.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families/CalWORKs: The WDB collaborates with HSA to provide eligibility, initial assessments, outreach, intake, orientations, labor exchange information, job search referrals and labor market information as well as support service information. In addition, as an HSA partner, WorkNet serves CalWORKs participants by providing assessments, work experience, job club, referrals to vocational training, and community service opportunities.

## **B. Partners' Efforts to Collaborate on Co-Enrollment and Case Management**

The local workforce system that the WDB and WorkNet have developed within San Joaquin County is characterized by the effective relationships that mandated and local partners have built. One of the clearest manifestations of these partnerships is the collaboration among various agencies to jointly serve individuals requiring multiple services to achieve their employment and career goals.

In accordance with the requirements outlined in State Directive WSD19-09, co-enrollment strategies are specifically described in the MOU executed between the Local Board and the AJCC partners. The MOU also acknowledges that participants may be co-enrolled into workforce development, training, and support programs offered by WIOA and other funding administered by the Local Board, identifying processes to address opportunities for co-case management. Several AJCC partners have established structured relationships with the San Joaquin County WorkNet AJCC system leading to co-enrollment. Programs with which WIOA Title I program participants are co-enrolled include DOR programs, including STEP; AB 109 and P2E re-entry programs; Child Support Services; CalWORKS, and various state discretionary grant programs.

Whether partners are collocated at WorkNet Centers or operate from other sites, shared participants, once co-enrolled, benefit from the commitment of local stakeholders to collaborate on the deployment and tracking of services. Case managers are likely to communicate frequently, both verbally and in writing, about a co-enrolled participants'

progress, successes, challenges, and changing circumstances. This communication is the central feature of the WorkNet system partners' approach to co-case management. Co-case management is also facilitated using information sharing platforms such as CalJOBS and Unite Us. Common case management is also bolstered by the workforce system's use of Navigators. Currently two staff are assigned a "Resource Navigators," assisting a wide range of customers in identifying and accessing services and resources to support their career exploration, training, and job search.

### **C. One-Stop System's Use of Technology and Other Remote Strategies**

The WDB has strategically located WorkNet centers throughout San Joaquin County. The geographic distribution of centers enables staff and partners to effectively reach remote communities within service areas designated for each center, which include rural and remote communities. The centers, in effect, serve as hubs for the surrounding communities. Through these hubs, WorkNet is increasing direct outreach into communities to meet customers where they live and make services more accessible through "pop up" sites. These sites enable customers to learn about services, complete the WorkNet enrollment process, and attend events, such as community-based job fairs.

#### ***Physical Locations Serving Remote Communities***

- The Tracy WorkNet Center provides services to portions of south San Joaquin County including Tracy, Mountain House, and associated unincorporated areas.
- The Manteca WorkNet Center provides services to Manteca, Lathrop, Escalon and Ripon.
- The Lodi WorkNet Center provides services to portions of Northern San Joaquin County, including Acampo, Lockeford, Lodi, Thornton, Victor, and Woodbridge.

These affiliate centers provide the same services that are available through the Comprehensive Center in Stockton. In addition, the affiliate AJCCs are instrumental in collaborating with partner organizations that have facilities in rural communities.

WorkNet is committed to the use of technology to improve service delivery. Efforts and accomplishments include:

Integrating Virtual Case Management for Enhanced WIOA Service Delivery: With the full integration of CalJOBS virtual services into Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth service delivery, WorkNet has enhanced client accessibility, efficiency, and overall experience. By maintaining case files digitally, clients gain the flexibility to access their information anytime and from any location with internet access, minimizing the need for in-person visits. This is especially beneficial for individuals in remote areas or those with mobility challenges or tight schedules, enabling them to review and update their personal details, track progress, and submit required documents at their convenience. Furthermore, the



use of text messaging tools, such as CareerHub, allow clients and case managers to easily share information, ask questions, and receive timely updates, improving engagement and reducing delays in service delivery.

Integrating CalJOBS virtual services also streamlines document storage and case management by securely storing all case-related information in one centralized, digital location. This reduces the risk of lost or misplaced paperwork, improves accuracy, and ensures that clients' personal information remains secure with advanced encryption and access controls. By eliminating paper-based workflows, clients can experience a faster, more efficient process, while also contributing to environmental sustainability. These systems also offer enhanced privacy protections, reassuring clients that their sensitive data is safe from unauthorized access.

Enhanced Virtual Coaching and Support and Personalized Skill Development: Providing personalized pathways and skill-building opportunities ensures that participants receive tailored guidance for their career growth. This helps bridge the gap between individuals' current skill sets and the demands of the labor market. These virtual services should always be available in remote areas and be tailored to individual needs.

Career Edge was implemented to enhance youth services. The platform functions as a comprehensive online learning center, focusing extensively on educational and career readiness components. It integrates essential career development tools such as job readiness modules, an interview simulation trainer, e-portfolio, business plan builder, and templates for resumes and cover letters. It also includes mock job applications, time management, study skills, and financial literacy, all aimed at equipping youth with necessary skills to effectively pursue both career opportunities and higher education goals. It includes an administrative dashboard for WorkNet staff, enabling them to monitor and interact with participants' activities and progress in real time. This feature supports staff in managing and guiding youths' learning outcomes as specified in their Individual Service Strategy.

WorkNet has also begun utilizing an online learning platform (Metrix Learning) to enhance and personalize staff skill development by offering tailored learning paths that cater to individual needs and career goals. By providing access to a diverse range of courses and training modules, it allows employees to focus on areas where they need the most improvement or wish to advance their expertise. Adaptive learning technologies track progress and suggest relevant resources, ensuring employees can learn at their own pace and on their own schedule, making professional development more accessible. Additionally, data-driven insights enable managers to identify skill gaps across the department, allowing for targeted interventions and development plans that align with both individual growth and organizational objectives.

Redesigned Website for Enhanced Accessibility, Improved Communication, and Engagement: An Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant website is a crucial technological benchmark for WIOA Title I service providers, ensuring that all users, including individuals with disabilities, can easily access services and resources. By

adhering to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1), the site ensures seamless user experience for people with disabilities, allowing them to independently browse job postings, access training programs, and apply for services without requiring additional accommodations. This enhances the inclusivity of workforce development programs, making them accessible to a broader audience, particularly those who face barriers in traditional in-person service delivery.

This website supports the delivery of virtual services and remote access, enabling customers to engage in online job counseling, training webinars, and application portals without the need for physical visits. This aligns with the modern workforce environment, where many services are now digital first. It supports the goals of WIOA by promoting equitable access to training, job placement, and career advancement resources for all individuals, including those with disabilities. By ensuring compliance with legal standards such as the ADA, the website helps avoid legal risks and fosters a reputation for inclusivity. Moreover, enhanced website security will mitigate potential risks, safeguarding sensitive data.

#### **D. Coordination of Workforce Activities and Support Services**

When job seekers are enrolled in WIOA Title I services, they participate in a comprehensive assessment and are assigned a case manager. Working together, participants and case managers develop an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) for Adults and an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) for Youth, which identifies services, education, and training the job seeker will participate in to prepare for employment and identifies supportive services that are needed to enable participation. Such services include, but are not limited to transportation, counseling, bus passes, clothing (as required for the job), tools (as required by an employer and necessary for a job), physicals, license fee (GED fees, credentials), and books and supplies.

In addition to the above-mentioned supportive services, which represent those most commonly needed by workforce system participants, WorkNet has supported our customers in many other ways that reflect their unique needs and circumstances. Examples of resources the workforce system uses support services to promote participants' success in programs and on the job include the following:

- Training Supplies
- Textbooks
- Boots/Work Shoes
- Work Equipment (e.g., safety glasses)
- Photo identification
- Physicals required before being accepted for training or employment.
- Driving Permits
- Testing Costs
- Uniforms
- Interview Clothes
- Driver License Fees

- Certification costs
- Medical Expenses (e.g., drug test, TB test prior to beginning training or employment)
- Fingerprints required for employment
- Bus Passes

Over the period of this plan, WorkNet will work on processes that make the assessment of support needs and the delivery of support services more effective.

## **E. Physical and Programmatic Accessibility for Individuals with Disabilities**

Across our network of AJCCs, the San Joaquin County WDB ensures that all customers have access to the full range of workforce system services. The WorkNet Centers are physically and programmatically accessible to all customers, including individuals with disabilities. WDB managers and staff have participated in extensive human-centered design training sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor and others and have applied this knowledge to the design of space, equipment, and information to ensure that the AJCCs correspond to the needs of individuals with disabilities. This is evident in the center layout, which provides clear lines of sight to information for seated or standing users, as well as in the availability of necessary accommodations and adequate space for the use of assistive devices or personal assistants. WorkNet Centers feature a wide range of assistive technology to enable individuals with various disabilities to effectively utilize all resources. Products such as UbiDuo supplement more traditional resources like TTY.

### ***Approaches and Partnerships Supporting Effective Service Delivery***

All five AJCCs in San Joaquin County work closely with partners on making and receiving referrals so that the delivery of services for individuals with disabilities is convenient and seamless. Department of Rehabilitation representatives support WorkNet by providing ongoing assessment and evaluation of assistive technology resources. For example, documents are adjusted for the visually impaired and document viewers are available in the AJCCs. Collaboration with local partner, Disability Resource Agency for Independent Living (DRAIL) also helps to inform the centers about client needs and resources required to address them. American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation and other forms of support are available upon request. Client surveys support the AJCCs in improving services for all customers, including jobs seekers with disabilities. Furthermore, DOR has collaborated with WorkNet on design features, such as signage lighting and colors, to make centers not only more accessible, but, generally, more user-friendly

### ***Ensuring Compliance***

Compliance with WIOA Section 188 and the applicable provisions of ADA are tested and documented through the following processes.

- Physical accessibility is reviewed annually by the EDD Equal Opportunity (EO) Monitoring Unit.

- Program accessibility is reviewed annually by the EDD EO Monitoring Unit.
- A designated EO Coordinator works with the State in addressing accessibility issues as expressed by the public, customers, or staff.
- The EO Coordinator works closely with co-located partners on any similar public concerns.
- OJT employers and ITA training providers are reviewed annually to ensure compliance with EO physical and program accessibility.

### ***Staff Training to Increase Knowledge and Effectiveness***

The San Joaquin County WDB and WorkNet, along with other local workforce boards in the Central Valley, have intentionally committed resources to strengthen the capacity of WIOA frontline staff and system partner representatives to serve job seekers with disabilities. Examples of these efforts have included:

- The State Department of Rehabilitation rolled out a series of training sessions for AJCC staff which provided information on fundamental approaches to service delivery for persons with disabilities, including understanding unique needs and capabilities of job seekers with a range of disabilities.
- The EO Coordinator and WDB management staff attend State EO trainings to increase their understanding of compliance mandates.
- The EO Division of the San Joaquin County Human Resource Department provides training to new employees on services for individuals with disabilities, with refresher courses provided every two years.
- Training by consultants on the development and design of services for a wide range of target groups with barriers to employment.

### III. STATE STRATEGIC PARTNER COORDINATION

In 2018, the State published a biennial modification to California’s Unified Strategic Workforce Development Plan for Program Years 2016-19. Within this modification, the California Workforce Development Board identified several new strategic partnerships with state-level agencies and initiatives. Guidance issued by the State Board in 2018 to Local Boards regarding two-year modifications to their PY 17-20 Plans required that WDBs pursue these partnerships within their jurisdictions. In the 2019 modification to the Local Plan, San Joaquin County WDB described these local level relationships, some of which were in an early stage of development. State guidance published in 2024 added requirements for two new partnerships.

The following is a summary of the evolution of these strategic partnerships as well as approaches under consideration to further strengthen collaboration with local providers and programs.

#### A. Coordination with County Human Services Agency and Other Local Partners That Serve Individuals Accessing CalFresh Employment and Training Services

In San Joaquin County, the County Human Services Agency (HSA) contracts the CalFresh Employment and Training (E&T) program to Community Partnership for Families (CPFSJ), a San Joaquin County-based non-profit organization representing neighborhood groups, faith-based organizations, schools, businesses, public and private health, and law enforcement agencies. CPFSJ manages six Family Resource Centers in Lodi, Stockton and Tracy. CPFSJ’s CalFresh E&T program is branded as CPF Works.

CPF Works’ overarching goal is to increase the employment and earning capacity of CalFresh recipients by maximizing their access to training, supportive services, skills, and credentials. Specifically, the project aims to: increase job placement, retention, and wages; increase CalFresh Employment & Training participation across a dynamic mix of people, communities, and cultures; increase employability by removing barriers to employment; increase skills attainment, and credentialing; and lead an efficient and effective customer-focused employment and training program.

The CPF Works program serves individuals aged 16 and older. While participation is voluntary, referrals come from HSA, community agencies (including WorkNet), or through walk ins. In addition to age, eligibility criteria include that applicants: qualify for CalFresh; are not in CalWORKs; reside in San Joaquin County; are working fewer than 30 hours a week or not employed and are motivated and committed.

Once eligibility is determined, enrolled participants are assigned to a case manager and provided with the following services:

Job Readiness: Participants will engage in job readiness workshops, which include sessions on resume writing, completing applications, and interview preparation.

Training: If it is determined that an individual requires training, CPF Works will cover tuition costs up to \$3,000 for vocational training. Participants can attend any training program through which they can obtain a recognized credential. Supportive services will also be available, as needed, to support participation in training.

Employment Assistance: Participants receive one-on-one assistance with job search and job placement. Supportive services are also available, as needed, to help them succeed in job search and placement.

Job Retention: Participants receive assistance for up to one year to retain their initial employment or to find new employment opportunities, should they lose their job or would like to explore better opportunities. Supportive services during job retention period are provided only during the first quarter of the year.

### ***Collaboration with the Program***

During the development of our 2019 modification to the PY 2017-20 Local Plan, San Joaquin County WDB convened stakeholders and the community around the development of a local level partnership between the workforce system and agencies involved in delivering CalFresh E&T services. Since these initial discussions, communication and referrals have been ongoing between the CalFresh E&T program and the WDB.

## **B. Coordination with Local Child Support Agency and Other Local Partners That Serve Individuals Who Are Non-Custodial Parents**

This strategic partnership reflects the goals and objectives expressed in the State Plan. The WDB and San Joaquin County Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) collaborate in providing services to a key target population: non-custodial parents (NCPs) with child support orders, who are unemployed, underemployed or payment delinquent. This population is diverse. Some individuals are completely disconnected from the labor market, having never worked a traditional job and possessing few marketable skills. Others may be formerly incarcerated individuals, including those who are recently released and, therefore, unemployed. Still others may be English language learners, persons with disabilities, disconnected youth, or older workers. The common thread among them is their status regarding child support payments, employment, and the ability to command family supporting wages within the marketplace. Given the diversity of the population and the spectrum of support needs that exists, AJCC staff work individually with each non-custodial parent to determine appropriate career services, training, and needs for support. DCSS utilizes a range of motivational tools to support customers' participation. Among these are restoration of licenses; revisiting support orders to ensure they reflect the current circumstances of the NCP; deferring or lessening the requirement for payment during the time in which NCPs are engaged in workforce services, training

and job search; and, in specialized cases, under a compromise of arrears program, forgiving a portion of past due payments.

### ***Collaboration with the Program***

During the development of the 2019 modification to the PY 2017-20 Local Plan, San Joaquin County WDB convened stakeholders and the community around the development of a local level partnership between the local workforce system and DCSS. Since those initial meetings, much has been accomplished, including, but not limited to the following:

- The San Joaquin County WDB and DCSS have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding.
- A referral process and guidance are in place (as outlined in the MOU).
- Referrals are recorded and a tracking system is in place to follow-through and report progress on referrals made.
- Procedures for co-enrollment of participants have been established.
- WDB and DCSS representatives communicate regularly, and quarterly meetings are held to provide program updates.
- WorkNet representatives have provided training on WIOA and other workforce development services to DCSS staff.

### **C. Coordination with Local Partnership Agreement Partners Established in Alignment with the Competitive Integrated Employment Blueprint and Other Local Partners That Serve Individuals with Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities**

San Joaquin County is covered by the Amador, Calaveras, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Tuolumne Counties' Local Partnership Agreement (LPA) for Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE). The parties to the agreement include: the Department of Rehabilitation (Stockton Branch, San Joaquin Valley District and Modesto Branch, San Joaquin Valley District); Valley Mountain Regional Center (Stockton, Main Office San Joaquin County, Modesto Branch Office, Stanislaus County, San Andreas Branch Office, Amador, Calaveras, Tuolumne Counties); and Local Education Agency Core Partners: Amador County Office of Education, Calaveras County Office of Education, East Valley Education Center, Lodi Unified School District Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA), San Joaquin County SELPA, Stanislaus Academy, Stanislaus SELPA, Stockton Unified School District/SELPA, and Tuolumne County Superintendent of Schools. The WDB and the local WorkNet/AJCC system is considered a collaborative partner. The goal of the agreement is to improve CIE opportunities for individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities.

### ***Collaboration on the Program***

During the development of our 2019 modification to the PY 2017-20 Local Plan, the San Joaquin County WDB convened stakeholders and the community around the development of a local level partnership between the local workforce system and the CIE LPA partners. Early discussions were useful in helping WDB, WorkNet, and local workforce system staff better understand the goals of the State-level CIE Blueprint and the tenets of competitive integrated employment. The WDB committed its support by joining the agreement and regularly participates in LPA meetings. Within San Joaquin County, discussions regarding CIE have also been absorbed into a larger community of practice that includes the LPA core partners and other disabilities services and workforce system stakeholders. The San Joaquin County WDB has established a subcommittee on serving individuals with disabilities, which is chaired by the DOR District Administrator. As the committee's goal is to explore and identify strategies to better serve individuals with disabilities, recommendations for increasing the participation of the workforce system in developing CIE opportunities is an anticipated outcome.

### ***Building on Existing Collaboration***

The WDB will align its work, including the Students Training and Employment Program (STEP), with the LPA to create additional CIE opportunities for youth with intellectual or developmental disabilities (ID/DD). This will entail the following:

Establish a Structure for Collaboration: Collaborate with the LPA partners on the design and development of key performance indicators to measure CIE outcomes. In addition, WorkNet will collaborate with the partners in development of a streamlined and standardized referral process.

Engage With Businesses: WorkNet will build on existing relationships with business to promote the hiring of individuals with ID/DD, use of the CIE model, and benefits of working with the target population.

Prepare Youth Participants: WorkNet will enhance the current work readiness training for individuals with disabilities in the STEP program, including general soft-skills training for students entering the workforce. Increase efforts to find participants work experience opportunities with employers that are committed to hiring and integrating youth with disabilities into their work environment.

Engage with Participants' Family and the Community: WorkNet will host workshops for families to educate them on the project, available supports, and benefits planning. In addition, staff will leverage media platforms to share success stories, promote awareness, and reduce stigmas around disability employment.

Evaluate and Improve Services: Project staff will design feedback loops involving youth participants, families, and employers that will enable the project to make adjustment, as necessary. WorkNet will track and share data.



WorkNet will work closely with the LPA partners to finalize the structure and content of the program, along with establishing processes to connect WorkNet's project to the various initiatives of the CIE partners.

#### **D. Coordination with Community-Based Organizations and Other Local Partners That Serve Individuals Who are English Language Learners, Foreign Born, and/or Refugees**

Stakeholders continue to recognize that the needs of immigrants, refugees, and individuals in the process of developing English fluency are of paramount importance to the social and economic well-being of San Joaquin County. Of the approximately 750,000 people who call the county home, nearly forty percent (40%) are Hispanic or Latino and one in every four individuals is foreign-born. In addition to Latinos, immigrants and refugees from Southeast Asia also make up a significant portion of the foreign-born population. Immigrants are vital to the economy and government, community, and business leaders agree that investments in this target population are critical to building a workforce capable of attracting a more diverse array of businesses and industries to San Joaquin County. In addition to local education agencies and the WIOA Section 167 grantee, the provider network serving immigrants in San Joaquin County includes, but is not limited to, Catholic Charities (including its Immigration Legal Services); Proyecto Esperanza (an advocacy-focused initiative of Catholic Charities); El Concilio; Social Justice Collaborative; CPFSJ; and the Southeast Asia Resource Action Center, among others.

##### ***Establishing and Developing the Partnership***

During the development of our 2019 modification to the PY 2017-20 Local Plan, San Joaquin County WDB convened stakeholders and the community around the development of a local level partnership between the workforce system and agencies serving ELLs, immigrants, and refugees. Since the discussions in 2019, stakeholders have continued to collaborate on the delivery of services to ELLs and the immigrant community. Services have also been streamlined, and local CBOs have been included in grant funding requests for increased services to ELL participants.

##### ***Building on Existing Collaboration***

WorkNet envisions opportunities to more effectively serve the ELL and immigrant population through its WIOA programs and collaboration with local partners, by using tailored approaches to address language, cultural, and systemic barriers. Over the course of this plan, WorkNet and partners will work together to develop new service strategies and to strengthen existing ones that include the following:

Bilingual Instruction and Materials: Ensure all program materials and services are accessible in participants' native languages. WorkNet centers are staffed with multiple bilingual personnel to meet the diverse linguistic needs of participants.

Referral to Adult Education Providers: Establish a streamlined referral process to local adult education providers and utilize the WIOA Title II program for access to basic skills education, English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) classes, and civics education.

Career Pathways: Enhance collaboration with adult and community college education programs in developing career pathways for ELL's and other individuals with limited English language skills. Assist in identifying realistic, achievable career paths that have potential to offer a living wage. Ensure individuals have information about the labor market and understand requirements for their specific fields. Provide mentorship, financial, and technical access to new entrepreneurs.

Workforce Preparation Activities: Collaborate with adult education to develop and offer employment preparation classes that address workplace expectations, employee rights, financial literacy, digital literacy, and job readiness skills, that are tailored to participants' linguistic and cultural contexts.

Civics Education for Integration: Promote civics education through adult education programs to help participants more successfully integrate into their communities while simultaneously preparing for work.

Co-Enrollment Across WIOA Core Programs: Leverage partnerships across WIOA Titles I, II, III, and IV to co-enroll participants in programs such as adult education, Wagner-Peyser Employment Services, and vocational rehabilitation services to maximize available resources.

Community-Based Collaboration: Partner with community-based organizations, faith-based groups, and migrant education programs to expand outreach and enhance the delivery of tailored services to underserved populations.

Legal and Immigration Resource Access: Collaborate with organizations that provide guidance on work authorization, citizenship pathways, and other legal support to address immigration-related barriers.

Employer Partnerships for Sector-Based Training: Work with employers to develop sector-specific training programs in high-demand industries, such as healthcare, manufacturing, and agriculture, where ELL participants can excel.

Employment and Self-Sufficiency: Strengthen and broaden ongoing partnerships with employers and resource agencies to assist individuals in obtaining and maintaining permanent employment and achieving self-sufficiency.

## **E. Coordination with Local Veteran Affairs, Community-Based Organizations, and Other Local Partners That Serve Veterans**

WorkNet has adopted a policy ensuring priority of service for veterans that reflects federal and state requirements for WIOA programs. Working with the full range of system partners, WorkNet is committed to assisting veterans in acquiring skills that make them competitive for in-demand, well paid jobs that provide opportunities for career advancement. Protocols are in place to ensure that veterans and eligible spouses are identified upon initial engagement with staff and that they are provided opportunities to benefit from all the services that WorkNet and the workforce system partners offer.

As indicated in Section II of this Plan, San Joaquin County WDB's primary partner in providing workforce development services to veterans is EDD and its staff who are funded under the federal Jobs for Veterans State Grants (JVSG) program. EDD Veterans' services and strategies include:

- Veterans Services Navigator Services, which may consist of self-service activities, group services, or one-on-one assistance.
- JVSG Staff Support, including assistance from the Local Veterans Employment Representative or Disabled Veterans Outreach Program specialist. These services include referrals job training, vocational education, supportive services, and partner programs.
- Customized Job Search: Veterans receive support in developing resumes and in applying for job openings via CalJOBS.
- Job Fairs and Workshops: Staff assists clients in preparing for interviews and participating successfully at specialized hiring events.

Other organizations with which WorkNet collaborates in serving veterans include:

San Joaquin County Veterans Services Office: County Veterans Services provides an extensive array of support for veterans and their families, including assistance with: veteran's driver's license and license plate certification; income verification; records requests; California Tuition Fee Waiver Applications; vocational rehabilitation and education applications; emergency aid resources; housing and food resources; information on state and federal benefits; benefits counseling; and applications for VA healthcare.

San Joaquin Delta College Veterans Resource Center Services: The center serves student veterans, their dependents, those on active duty, and reservists. Staff provide assistance in utilizing VA benefits, education counseling, and support with VA work study programs.

Over the course of program years 2025 through 2028, WorkNet will look to strengthen relationships with existing partners, seek out new partnerships to improve services for veterans, and continuously assess opportunities to improve services and increase outcomes for this important target group.

## F. Collaboration with the Strategic Planning Partners to Address Environmental Sustainability

The PY 2025-28 planning cycle marks the first time that local workforce boards and RPUs have been required to address their efforts to collaborate with partners on efforts to promote environmental sustainability in connection with workforce development service delivery and oversight. While WorkNet is currently connected to businesses, organizations, and projects that have the potential to support environmental sustainability, the four-year period represented by this plan will provide the opportunity to conduct strategic planning with system partners and stakeholders related to state, regional, and local climate goals pertaining to jobs and the economy.

WorkNet leadership envisions opportunities to accelerate its work in supporting a climate resilient economy as including initiatives such as the following:

Collaborate with Green Jobs Training Programs: Work with educational institutions, industry leaders, and training providers to develop and expand training programs for green careers, such as renewable energy, energy efficiency, sustainable construction, and waste management. A possible starting point could be engagement with San Joaquin Delta College and the Green Economy Lab's Clean Energy program to offer certifications in solar panel installation, electric vehicle maintenance, and water conservation technologies.

Implement Workforce Development Strategies with Businesses Focused on Clean Energy: Engage with local clean energy companies to identify job opportunities and skills gaps in the fields of solar, wind, biofuels, and other renewable energy sectors. Develop programs that train workers transitioning from traditional energy sectors into clean energy roles. Partner with Tesla, San Joaquin Renewables, San Joaquin Valley Clean Energy Organization (SJVCEO), PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy), and Rising Sun Center for Opportunity.

Support for Environmentally Sustainable Businesses: Partner with local chambers of commerce, small business development centers, and economic development agencies to help businesses implement sustainable practices. Activities may include provision of workshops and resources for companies seeking to reduce carbon emissions, minimize waste, and adopt eco-friendly operations; or working with established partnerships, such as the Green Team San Joaquin through the Greater Stockton Chamber of Commerce.

Youth-Focused Sustainability Initiatives: WorkNet could collaborate with schools, non-profits, and community organizations to introduce youth to careers connected to environmental sustainability through job shadowing, internships, and summer programs. Such efforts would include highlighting green jobs as offering viable, future-focused career pathways.

Connecting Work-Based Learning Programs to Sustainability Goals: WorkNet and system partnerships could develop protocols with working with businesses to incorporate

an environmental sustainability focus into apprenticeships, internships, and other work-based learning models. Opportunities may exist to collaborate with the City of Stockton and Restore the Delta to provide hands-on training for workers in energy efficiency retrofitting or water conservation projects.

Over the next four years, WorkNet leadership anticipates that it will significantly expand its work in connection with industries and occupations that support and enhance climate resiliency and environmental sustainability. Support for WDB and WorkNet goals in this area will likely come from a range of sources, such as: WorkNet's research and learning about the intersection of climate/environment and the labor market; coordination with efforts being led by education, economic development, and other local system partners; and involvement in regional initiatives dealing with environmental issues affecting businesses and workers throughout the entire Central Valley.

## IV. WIOA TITLE I COORDINATION

The following narrative addresses services, activities, and administrative requirements of the San Joaquin County WDB under the WIOA Title I formula programs, along with strategies for staff preparation, training, and ongoing professional development to effectively respond to participant needs.

### A. Staff Training and Professional Development to Increase Digital Technology Skills

While the staff has strong digital literacy skills, WorkNet recognizes that technology is consistently changing and that there will be an ongoing need for training. No less than annually, WorkNet management assesses staff needs for upgraded training and identifies where such training may be available. Likely resources or brokers for technology training are:

- WorkNet and partner staff participate in initial training on the use and functionality of the CalJOBS system. Annual training is available to assist staff in remaining current on the system and a range of supplemental online training is also available, including, but not limited to following:

#### General CalJOBS Training

- Introduction to CalJOBS: Layout, Navigation, and Customization
- Assisting Job Seekers Remotely: CalJOBS from an Individual's Perspective
- Building Power Users
- Go Green! CalJOBS Document Management

#### Individual Case Management Series

- WIOA Program Enrollment I: The WIOA Title I Application
- WIOA Program Enrollment II: Participation, Activity Codes, and Case Notes
- Making CalJOBS Work for You: Case Management Tools
- Five Helpful Case Management Reports
- Performance for Case Management I: The CalJOBS Reporting Process
- Performance for Case Management II: The Six Indicators of Performance

#### Employer Services Series

- Employer Services I: Creating and Managing Job Orders
- Employer Services II: Recruiting Candidates

- To meet regional needs for staff training, the Central California Workforce Collaborative (CCWC) has proven to be a vital resource. CCWC is the association of workforce boards in and around the San Joaquin Valley. Boards within the region often collaborate on procuring and organizing training that will benefit multiple local areas' staff and partners. The Regional Organizer for the San Joaquin Valley and Associated Counties Regional Planning Unit surveys local boards about topics and potential training providers.

- Workforce GPS, a training initiative of the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration, is also a good resource for digital skills training. The initiative works to consistently remain aware of key issues affecting the national workforce development community and makes available online training on such topics.

Ongoing tutorials are available to support staff in the use of digital services. In addition, WDB leadership continues to evaluate the value and relevance of training available from sources such as the California Workforce Association and includes training needed and requested by staff as part of the annual performance evaluation process.

Staff have access to a variety of online training through the Metrix Learning licenses, which include courses in Computer Programming/Networking, Business, Accounting, Computer Applications, Customer Service, Personal Development, and more.

## **B. Frontline Staff Training and Professional Development to Increase Cultural Competency and Effectiveness in Working with Individuals and Groups that Have Been Exposed to Trauma**

Training on cultural competence and working with individuals affected by trauma serves to make WorkNet's case management and other services stronger, more effective, and capable of addressing a broader range of participant and community needs.

### ***Cultural Competence and its Importance to the Workforce System***

Cultural competence is the ability of a person to effectively interact, work, and develop meaningful relationships with people of various cultural backgrounds. Cultural background can include the beliefs, customs, and behaviors of people from various groups. Gaining cultural competence is a lifelong process of increasing self-awareness, developing social skills and behaviors around diversity, and gaining the ability to advocate for others. It goes beyond tolerance, which implies that one is simply willing to overlook differences. Instead, it includes recognizing and respecting diversity through our words and actions in all contexts. Learning more about other cultures and being aware of current events is often key in learning about various cultural groups' points of view. When working with people from different cultural backgrounds, it can be useful to learn about their culture's practices, values, and beliefs. For example, learning about the languages spoken in their communities, child-rearing practices, or religious traditions can help us understand and interact with individuals and groups of various backgrounds.

San Joaquin County has a diverse population, including many new immigrants. Fortunately, WorkNet and most organizations that comprise the local workforce system have diverse staff who expose their colleagues to diverse cultures and help one another better understand other cultures, languages and communities. Still, more training on cultural competence will help all staff by putting the knowledge in context and using it to achieve better outcomes in providing services.

### ***Training for Staff on Working with Individuals Having Experienced Trauma***

The experience of trauma has a widespread impact on the lives of those served. Trauma can lead to or exacerbate mental illness, substance use, and physical health conditions. Even without fully realizing it, workforce system staff work every day with individuals that have experienced significant trauma. The impact of trauma is far reaching and affects every aspect of health. By implementing a trauma-informed approach to service delivery, staff can improve the effectiveness of services and the quality of participant outcomes.

#### ***Implementing Training***

Trauma-informed and trauma-focused training that is made available to system staff addresses:

- Safety: When someone is new to the center, orient the customer to critical locations. Conversations should be kept private by using private space. When completing intake, make certain that customers understand how to express concerns and complaints.
- Trustworthiness: Follow up on what is promised. Build Boundaries. Don't blur lines of professional relationships.
- Choice: Give customers choices. Plans must represent the customer.
- Collaboration: Help to create opportunities by working with the customer and allied partners programs.

The following trauma-related themes are addressed in training:

- Realize that trauma is real for the person experiencing it.
- Recognize the signs of trauma and exercise mindfulness in interactions with customers.
- Respond to the signs and explain the process of addressing it. Don't assume that customers understand.
- Resist making the customer tell the story repeatedly. It requires reliving the trauma.

### **C. Coordination of Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion Activities**

Rapid Response activities are coordinated with the local boards that are members of the Central Valley Industry Engagement Roundtable and through the Bay Area Rapid Response Roundtable. These groups respond to major business dislocation events, which affect San Joaquin County. Lay-off Aversion activities are provided by the



economic development arm of the San Joaquin County Employment and Economic Development Department (EEDD), which is also home to WorkNet and the WDB.

### ***Rapid Response Function***

When a Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN) notice is issued, WorkNet staff immediately contact the business to arrange deployment of services to affected workers. EDD representatives are a critical partner in this process. Orientations are scheduled with workers, which, generally, take place at the worksite. These events are used to provide workers with information on UI requirements and processes; labor market and workforce system information, including the availability of WIOA and partner services through the AJCCs; and the availability of retraining programs.

Often, following Rapid Response orientations, WorkNet will organize job fairs with businesses seeking workers with comparable job classifications and skills to those who were displaced. The primary objective is to coordinate job interviews and rehiring efforts to minimize unemployment.

When a Rapid Response activity takes place, WorkNet's Rapid Response Team gathers pertinent information using Dunn & Bradstreet (D&B) financial stress scores to facilitate the rapid reemployment of potentially displaced workers into other employment opportunities. This minimizes the impact of the displacement on affected workers, their families, and the communities in which they live.

### ***Lay-Off Aversion Activities***

Layoff aversion entails a comprehensive approach that makes use of on-going business engagement, networking, and a revolving loan fund, in addition to other workforce development system resources and strategies.

### ***Engagement with Local Businesses***

San Joaquin County's economic development team maintains ongoing engagement, partnership, and relationship-building activities with businesses, which helps companies understand the resources that are available to promote stability, fuel growth, and avert reductions in staff. Such engagement includes assessment of business needs, which helps to identify businesses in distress. Staff collaborate with business-focused organizations to assess risks to companies, propose strategies to address those risks, implement services, and measure impacts of services delivered. Staff or partners may conduct feasibility studies to determine if a company's operations could be sustained through a buyout or other means to avoid closure or workforce reductions. If worker dislocation does occur, these relationships enable rapid assistance to employers in managing reductions in force.

### ***Networking within The Business Community***

The networking capacity of county economic development staff is significantly enhanced through involvement with Business Team San Joaquin (BTSJ), which was established to support the retention, expansion, and growth of business throughout the county. BTSJ is a collaborative effort to support businesses and provide assistance to help them grow and prosper. It is made up of committed economic development professionals, service organizations, and business leaders who can provide assistance to companies needing support. BTSJ facilitates access to and delivery of services that promote business growth and development, as well as retention of local businesses and layoff aversion. Its membership includes, but is not limited to, chambers of commerce, municipal and county economic development staff, private economic development organizations; community service organizations; educational institutions; and business and industry associations.

### ***San Joaquin County Revolving Loan Fund***

San Joaquin County's Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) program was established to support job preservation and job creation by promoting business development, expansion, and retention. It is intended to stimulate employment and economic opportunities for small businesses. The majority of the RLF loan activity has been related to layoff aversion efforts, and results have included business growth and job creation.

### ***Emerging Strategies***

As WorkNet strives to work with economic development to avert layoffs, it remains open to new strategies and approaches. Promising practices include:

- Greater use of incumbent worker training models or other approaches to increase the skills of workers.
- Connecting companies to short-time compensation or other programs designed to prevent layoffs or to quickly reemploy dislocated workers; business loan programs for employee skill upgrading; and other federal, state and local resources address that other an array of business needs.

## **D. Services and Activities Available under WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs**

The San Joaquin County Workforce Development Board's One-Stop/AJCC system, which operates as San Joaquin County WorkNet, includes one comprehensive one-stop center and four affiliate centers. In addition, there are several WorkNet "entry points" at strategic partner locations throughout the county that provide access to the system through information and referrals.

### ***Comprehensive America's Job Center of California/WorkNet Center***

WorkNet's comprehensive AJCC in Stockton has earned both baseline and "Indicator Assessment" certification and has developed a structured continuous improvement plan. Co-located partner programs at the comprehensive center include: all WIOA Title I

programs; EDD's WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser, veterans' employment, YEOP, and Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker programs; the Older Americans Act Title V program; and the San Joaquin County HSA's CalWORKs programs. Other WIOA-mandated one-stop partners operating at the center on a part-time or by-appointment basis include, but are not limited to, Job Corps and DOR. The comprehensive center is also the home to the San Joaquin County Economic Development Center, the Economic Development Association, the San Joaquin County Revolving Loan Fund Board, the Northern California Asian Chamber of Commerce Small Business Development Center (SBDC), and Business Team San Joaquin, an association of 65 agencies dedicated to the delivery of services to business organizations to promote business development, expansion, and retention. Through the center, business partners have easy access to the workforce system partners and a variety of other resources, programs, and services.

### ***Affiliate AJCCs***

By connecting to the Comprehensive WorkNet Center, the four affiliate centers are able to deliver all services that are available at the main Stockton site. On an as-needed basis, the Comprehensive WorkNet Center is able to support the delivery of services through affiliate sites by deploying, performing, or otherwise making available: additional staff; workshops and customer orientation; career service workshops; intake and certification; employer outreach and job fairs; rapid response team activities; and business and employer services.

The Comprehensive Center also can support affiliate sites by assigning staff on a regular basis to perform the following program activities: regularly scheduled customer workshops; business outreach and developing OJT contracts and work experience opportunities; providing case management to participants; and conducting assessment and developing IEPs.

Customers of the affiliate sites can also access the services of the comprehensive AJCC through the website and teleconference sessions. Staff development training and WorkNet Center Partnership meetings are conducted online to enable access by Affiliate WorkNet Center staff.

The Lodi WorkNet Center is managed by San Joaquin County WDB staff, serves North San Joaquin County residents, and is in the process of being relocated.

The Manteca WorkNet Center is managed by the Manteca Adult School. Through this unique partnership, the Adult School refers job-ready students to the WIOA program for assistance with books and supplies and job placement. WIOA staff are also able to refer customers who are basic skills deficient or want to enroll in the Adult School's GED program.

The Delta College WorkNet Center is managed by San Joaquin Delta Community College. Partner services offered onsite include the full range of WorkNet services, and access to the college's CTE programs. The focus of this center is to assist students

wanting to begin vocational training provided by the college and to support students already enrolled in college, who need assistance that WorkNet can provide.

The Tracy WorkNet Center is managed by San Joaquin County WDB staff and serves South San Joaquin County residents.

The WorkNet system has implemented a variety of virtual services that include web-based orientation, career exploration, and access to partner services. Electronic forms and signatures are now commonly used. Expansion of virtual service delivery remains a priority for the WorkNet centers.

### ***Adult and Dislocated Worker Services***

Through the WorkNet Centers, the San Joaquin County WDB makes all WIOA Title I basic career services available to the public. These include:

- Orientation
- Job listings (CalJOBS, Independent Internet Job Search)
- Center services (telephones, copiers, fax machines, printers, computers for job search purposes)
- Labor Market Information (employment rates, projected wages, skill requirements)
- Information about education and training providers and performance (including approved educational institutions in our area that provide training for specific careers)
- Initial Assessment and Career Planning Tools
- Information and Referral to community agencies for other resources
- Information and assistance with financial aid, unemployment insurance and other partner program referrals and eligibility.
- Access to free training platforms is also available including Typing, Microsoft Application, and the Prologis training platform, which offers soft skills, and TDL (Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics) occupation training.
- Each co-located partner provides basic services to customers including unemployment claim assistance, veterans' services, employment/training referrals for individuals with disabilities, older workers, and at-risk youth.

For those who meet eligibility requirements and are need of additional support, individualized career services are available, such as:

- Comprehensive and specialized assessments of skill levels and service needs, which may include diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools; and in-depth interviews and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals;
- Development of an individual employment plan (IEP), to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve employment goals;
- Group and/or individual counseling;
- Career planning;

- Short-term prevocational services, including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal care skills, and professional conduct;
- Internships and work experiences that are linked to careers;
- Workforce preparation activities;
- Financial literacy services;
- Out-of-area job search assistance and relocation assistance; and
- Adult education and literacy activities.

### ***Training Services for Adults and Dislocated Workers***

For most WorkNet customers, the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for off-the-shelf, approved courses/programs is the most responsive and preferred method of training. Training services are provided in a manner that maximizes customer choice for both career goals and selection of eligible providers. The Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) provides information about schools, labor market information, and programs' alignment with industry. After assessment and consultation with a career counselor, customers seeking training services may select a training provider. Arrangement for the payment of such services is provided through ITAs.

Training contracts are typically used for OJT. Should there be a demand for customized training, entrepreneurial training, or sector/occupational cohort training, the County would properly procure these services.

### ***Priority of Service***

The San Joaquin County WDB has implemented a policy and procedures directive (PPD) which provides guidance for staff and establishes procedures regarding priority of service for recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient that are served by WIOA Title I Adult Program funds. The local directive follows guidelines expressed in State Workforce Services Directives WSD24-06 and WSD24-15. The PPD ensures that a minimum of 51% of all WIOA-enrolled adults meet one or more of the following categories for priority of service: receiving public assistance; other low-income; basic skills deficient; or meeting veterans' criteria. Current policies and procedures are available on the WorkNet website.

### ***Focus on Individuals with Barriers to Employment***

The vast majority of individuals served by San Joaquin County's WIOA Title I programs are individuals with one or more major barriers to employment. Through intensive assessment and one-on-one planning, services are customized to meet the unique needs of each participant. In addition, the WDB and WorkNet regularly pursue initiatives that are aimed at meeting the needs of various vulnerable populations. Examples include the following:

English Language Learners and Basic Skills Deficient Adults: Staff works closely with WIOA Title II partners to establish career paths for individuals who are English language learners or are basic skills deficient. Regular meetings are held by Delta Sierra Adult Education Alliance, which is comprised of local adult schools, the community college, and partner agencies, such as the WDB, which serve the same target groups. Through this collaborative, a transportation-distribution-logistics (TDL) program was developed. In-class instruction is provided by the adult schools in Manteca, Tracy, and Stockton. WIOA Title I staff is responsible for assisting with placement and, for those who were eligible for WIOA, OJT contracts are executed with businesses that could enhance learning via hands-on training. Through this collaborative, Prologis, a local business, reached out to the WDB asking to collaborate on the development of a platform that would provide training online, followed by hands-on training through an OJT with the company. Prologis secured funding, established the online training, and prepares new workers for businesses that are tenants in its warehousing facilities. This year, the collaborative will continue to work together to further career paths for TDL. The goal is to identify business needs, outline career paths reflecting these needs, delineate training content, and identify the organization(s) that would provide training.

Using WIOA Title I formula funds and various state discretionary and private foundation grants, WorkNet also provides specialized services for disconnected youth, justice involved individuals, farmworkers, and individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities.

## **E. Services and Activities Available under WIOA Title I Youth Program**

The San Joaquin County WDB's WIOA Title I Youth Program meets all federal and state requirements, including making required service elements available to all participants. The WDB works collaboratively with partner organizations throughout the county to integrate a broad range of youth-serving programs and initiatives into a comprehensive youth service strategy for San Joaquin County. This approach supplements funding available under the WIOA Youth Program. Together, the WDB, local educational agencies, community and faith-based organizations, law enforcement, local cities, businesses, and others ensure a robust set of workforce development services is accessible to youth and young adults throughout the county.

### ***Youth Program Services***

The WDB is committed to making activities available that enable young adults to be work-ready and prepared for their future. Services provided to WIOA Youth program participants help them gain access to opportunities for work-based learning, earn industry-recognized credentials, and enter employment in demand occupations. The programs help disconnected youth navigate between the educational and workforce systems. With the Youth Program primarily focused on serving out-of-school youth, WorkNet ensures that services are available at WorkNet centers which are widely recognized as providing assistance to job seekers.

San Joaquin County WDB's WIOA Youth Program provides all 14 mandatory WIOA Youth Program elements including the following:

- Tutoring, study skills training and instruction leading to secondary school completion or attainment of an equivalency credential
- Alternative education
- Paid work experience
- Occupational skills training
- Education offered concurrently with workforce preparation
- Leadership development opportunities
- Supportive services
- Adult mentoring
- Follow-up services
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling
- Financial literacy education
- Entrepreneurial skills training
- Services that provide labor market information
- Postsecondary preparation and transition activities

Program staff work in conjunction with representatives of local community organizations to provide numerous workforce development activities to WIOA-eligible youth and to increase participant employability and skill levels. An Individual Service Strategy is developed for each participant and serves as a roadmap for the services to be provided. Each youth receives one-on-one guidance and support from a Case Manager. Job Developers establish work sites, in both public agencies and private businesses, to provide eligible youth with paid work experience opportunities that promote their development of work readiness skills and familiarity with the world of work.

### ***Connecting Youth to the Network of AJCCs***

Youth are invited to utilize WorkNet resources for job search, career exploration, and other services that prepare them for jobs and careers. The AJCCs provide a variety of employment and training services for youth and young adults, such as:

- Orientation to the full range of workforce and training services available throughout the county;
- Employability skills workshops;
- Techniques for completing job applications;
- Strategies for job interview preparation;
- Instruction on developing an effective resume;
- Access to job listings;
- Support services to enable program participation and eliminate barriers to employment; and
- Career exploration resources

Additionally, the WorkNet Center in Stockton features dedicated space for youth and young adults, with services tailored to their unique needs and goals.

### ***Services for Youth with Disabilities***

WorkNet's WIOA Youth Program ensures that participants with disabilities have access to the same comprehensive range of services as all other youth participants. For those who are attending school, modifications and accommodations are provided as outlined in the student's Individual Education Plan. Youth with disabilities are often co-enrolled in complementary programs and services, such as WorkAbility, CaPROMISE, and the Students Training and Employment Program (STEP), which is funded by the State Department of Rehabilitation. STEP offers youth with disabilities job readiness training and work experience aligned with their career interests and goals. This STEP program is available at all WorkNet centers.

### ***Youth Workforce Initiatives and Programs***

The WDB functions as a convener of youth service agencies in San Joaquin County. By leveraging resources across a wide range of organizations, the system partners deliver a variety of high impact services. WorkNet also collaborates with adult schools to create pathways between CTE programs and graduating seniors interested in vocational training. Current collaborations include:

- Manteca Adult School, which offers training programs in Welding, Advanced Manufacturing, and Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics (TDL).
- Lodi Adult School, which provides programs that prepare students for entry-level positions in healthcare, including CNA, Medical Assistant, and Home Health Aide certifications.

Additionally, the WDB is working with Stockton Unified School District to provide graduating students with information on career pathways and CTE programs, helping to bridge the gap between education and workforce opportunities.

The WDB also collaborates with the San Joaquin County Office of Education (SJCOE) on two impactful programs: YouthBuild and Come Back Kids.

- The YouthBuild Program: YouthBuild helps youth earn a high school diploma through the Building Futures Academy while providing hands-on training in construction and other high-demand career pathways, equipping them with valuable skills for the workforce.
- The Come Back Kids Program offers young adults a flexible, online option to earn a high school diploma, accommodating their unique schedules and responsibilities.



Both programs focus on skill development, work readiness, and career exploration, empowering participants to achieve their educational and professional aspirations. These initiatives reflect the WDB's commitment to empowering youth with the skills and resources needed to succeed in their careers and contribute to the community.

The WDB also works closely with youth programs administered by partners, including the Youth Employment Opportunities Program (YEOP). The program is a collaboration of individuals and organizations dedicated to providing accurate, timely, and empowering information to youth in connection with job search and career development activities. The program is administered by EDD and includes activities and initiatives that support increased youth employability.

#### **F. Entity Responsible for Disbursal of Grant Funds and the Competitive Process Used to Award Contracts for WIOA Title I Activities**

San Joaquin County EEDD, the home agency for the Workforce Development Board, is the entity responsible for the disbursal of grant funds. The authority is documented, having been publicly approved by the San Joaquin County WDB and the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors as an action item on their respective agendas.

The San Joaquin County Purchasing Department manages all competitive procurements for the programs overseen by the WDB. The award of sub-grants and contracts occurs following the completion of a procurement process and approval of funding recommendations by the WDB and the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors. Competitive procurement of WIOA funds is conducted as needed to support workforce services operations.

#### **G. How the Local Board Fulfills the Duties of the AJCC Operator and/or the Career Services Provider or Selection of AJCC Operators and Career Services Providers**

The San Joaquin County WDB is in compliance with all federal and state guidance regarding the AJCC Operator (referred to by WIOA as the one-stop operator or "OSO") and career services provider functions.

##### ***Fulfilling the AJCC Operator Function***

One-Stop Operator services have been competitively procured, and a contract has been executed. A subregion (four local areas) of the SJVAC RPU collaborated on the procurement and one Local Board took responsibility for the process and for overseeing a master agreement with the selected contractor, Beaudette Consulting, Inc.

Three major roles and duties of the One-Stop Operator are to:

1. Facilitate collaboration and cooperation among local one-stop system partners within the AJCC and the local workforce development area;
2. Validate and ensure that partner organizations adhere to the requirements of the negotiated one-stop MOU regarding collaboration and providing infrastructure and operations contributions, as required by WIOA legislation; and
3. Act as a liaison between the WDB and the partners.

Specifically excluded from the OSO functions are the following responsibilities and tasks: convening system stakeholders to assist in the development of the local plan; preparing and submitting the local plan; oversight of its own work; managing or significantly participating in the competitive selection process for one-stop operators; selecting or terminating one-stop operator, career services, and youth providers; negotiating local performance accountability measures; and developing and submitting a budget for activities of the local board.

***WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Service Provider***

The San Joaquin County Workforce Development Board has received approval from the California Workforce Development Board and EDD to function as and fulfill the duties of the career services provider for the WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs. The WDB, through its WorkNet Centers, has been providing these services for decades. The workforce development knowledge, skills, and experience of the WorkNet team is unparalleled in the area.

## V. PROGRAM YEAR 2025-28 SYSTEM PRIORITIES

San Joaquin County WDB and WorkNet leadership recognize that the Local Plan does not focus exclusively on the WIOA Title I programs that it administers but describes the services of and relationships among a wide array of workforce development system partners and stakeholders. As such, WorkNet was committed to gathering input on workforce development priorities and strategies from a broad range of organizations and individuals. As described in Attachment I, two public input sessions were held to address key issues affecting the delivery of services to job seekers and businesses and ways in which the system partners can collaborate more effectively.

Several themes emerged during the community engagement process described above. The priorities summarized below capture key issues, ideas, and recommendations expressed during the community input sessions. These ten priority areas will be addressed by the WDB, WorkNet leadership, and partner representatives throughout the four-year period covered by this plan.

### A. **Customize Training and Services to Meet the Needs of Business**

Increasingly, business customers seeking workforce development services require customized support to meet the challenges of recruiting, screening, interviewing, onboarding, training, evaluating, and retaining skilled and productive workers. WorkNet and the workforce system partners should approach customization of services for businesses in much the same way as it is done for job seekers, with a unique service plan being developed that addresses key issues, challenges, and service needs.

### B. **Consult with Business on Workforce and Labor Market Issues**

Workforce system partners working with the business community often take a transactional approach to the delivery of services by providing them in direct response to specific requests from businesses. However, many companies could benefit from additional needs assessment, consultation, and advice regarding development of their workforce.

### C. **Teach Businesses to Be Trainers**

While WorkNet has many resources available to support work-based learning, businesses may be hesitant to take advantage of such programs due to their inexperience acting in the role of trainer. WorkNet should develop protocols to promote businesses' understanding of work-based learning models and develop resources that instruct companies on how to effectively train new and existing workers on the job.

### D. **Adopt Creative Approaches to Business Outreach**

Even after decades of supporting local businesses' hiring and training goals, many local enterprises remain unaware of these services. WorkNet and the workforce system partners should examine opportunities to communicate effectively with the business community. Such methods should leverage social media and web-based information in new ways, which could include strategies such as an ongoing series of "what's new for business" informational videos.

**E. Address Job Retention as a Business and Job Seeker Strategy**

Businesses are experiencing rapid turnover of workers at unprecedented levels. The cost of such turnover is significant, considering investments that businesses make to recruit, hire, orient, and train new workers. However, as workforce system professionals are essential in connecting workers to jobs, they are uniquely positioned to advise both job seekers and business representatives on the advantages of job retention and strategies to promote workers' longevity with companies that hire them.

**F. Prepare Job Candidates for Workplace Requirements**

With the disruption to business operations that occurred during the pandemic and fewer job opportunities generally available to high school age youth, many young workers require intensive support in preparing for the requirements and rigors of the workplace. The workforce system partners should update and revise strategies to familiarize new workers about behaviors, attitudes, and interpersonal skills required by employers. Additional preparation in terms of candidates' labor market research and participation in mock interviews is also needed.

**G. Focus on "Upskill" Training for Existing Workforce**

New technologies, increased competition, and a smaller pool of job candidates are all contributing to the businesses' needs to upskill their existing workforce. WorkNet and the system partners should expand their capacity to provide training to increase the skills of workers. In addition, education partners should identify opportunities to make training more widely available in non-traditional formats (e.g. online, open-ended, nights, weekends) for working individuals interested in acquiring new skills.

**H. Youth Programs Should Emphasize Business Communication Skills**

Many local employers find that younger workers have difficulty communicating in work environments. Such workers may face challenges in using appropriate language and terminology, communicating clearly, dealing with customers, or communicating in writing. WorkNet and partner services should include content that addresses the importance of effective communication and that builds job candidates' competency in workplace communication skills.

**I. System Partners Should Identify Opportunities to Create Short-Term Training and Stackable Credentials**

Many job seekers, including younger individuals, express that they are not interested in earning a degree or participating in lengthy training programs. Rather, they prefer shorter programs they will enable them to qualify for in-demand jobs and that would allow for future training to supplement their skills. The workforce system partners should make available short-term training programs that could be combined with follow-up training that produces stackable credentials.

**J. Focus on Creating Pathways to Good Jobs and Careers**

The workforce system's focus on placement of participants in jobs is appropriate. Most individuals seeking services do so based on their need to work and earn a living. However, all WorkNet and system partner services should be viewed as investments in job seekers. Therefore, all customers, even those who are simply looking for work, should be provided with services that prepare them for advancement along a career pathway.

**VI.**

**ATTACHMENTS**

The following Items are Included as part of the Local Plan.

Attachment 1: Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary

Attachment 2: Public Comments Received that Disagree with the Local Plan

Attachment 3: Signature Page

## Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary

To facilitate the engagement of stakeholders in planning for the local workforce development delivery system and in the development of the PY 2025-28 Local Plan, the San Joaquin County WDB hosted two community and stakeholder forums focused on topics affecting strategies and services across the system. These forums include:

1. Priorities for Developing the Local Workforce:

Questions/topics that were addressed include, but were not limited to:

- What services are most needed by individuals who are new to the workforce and those who are unemployed and looking to return to work?
- What are the training programs of most interest to local job seekers and how do these align with jobs available in the local labor market?
- Are there opportunities for local workforce, education, and community service agencies to work together to more effectively serve job seekers?
- In what ways do services need to be “modernized” to meet the evolving needs of workers and businesses?
- Other ideas about the development of the local workforce.

This forum was held in person at the WorkNet Center in Stockton on October 9, 2024.

2. Supporting Local Businesses’ Workforce Development Goals:

Questions/topics that were addressed include, but were not limited to:

- What support for hiring and training do businesses need most?
- How can WorkNet better prepare candidates for interviews and early success in the workplace?
- How can WorkNet and businesses work together to increase the retention of new employees?
- Are there jobs for which more or new skills training is needed?
- What assistance do businesses need to increase or update the skills of their current workforce?

This forum was held in person at the WorkNet Center in Stockton on November 18, 2024.

### Local Plan Stakeholder and Community Engagement Outreach

Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of Attendance	Comments
Emails sent with Save the Date information,	Board of Supervisors Business Community	Attendees below participated in 1-to-1	All the partners were engaged in the

Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of Attendance	Comments
<p>Reminder Emails, Flyers, and Reminders of Upcoming Events were shared at public meetings. Partner organizations also promoted the Local Plan forums with their participants and other organizations.</p>	<p>CalFresh/SNAP Providers                      Community Partnership for Families                      Chambers of Commerce                      Childcare Service Providers                      Community Based Organizations                      Community Leaders                      Department of Child Support Services                      Department of Rehabilitation                      Economic Development Associations                      Employment Development Department (EDD)                      English Language Learners Organizations                      Healthcare Organizations                      Justice Involved Organizations                      Labor Organizations                      Members of the Public                      Municipalities                      Organizations including Adult Schools, Community Colleges, State 4-Year Universities, Private Colleges                      Revolving Loan Fund Board                      San Joaquin Partnership</p>	<p>discussions with the WDB.                      Back 2 Work Butte County Office of Education                      CalWORKs                      City of Lathrop                      City of Tracy                      Community Partnership for Families                      Delta Sierra Adult Education Alliance                      Economic Development Association                      Employment Development Department (EDD)                      Workforce Services Branch                      Empowering Marginalized Asian Communities - EMAC                      Stockton                      Five Keys                      Groupsync 365                      Healthforce Partners                      Members of the Public                      San Joaquin Council of Governments                      San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors                      San Joaquin County Department of Child Support Services                      San Joaquin County Office of Education                      San Joaquin County Workforce Development Board                      San Joaquin Delta College                      San Joaquin Partnership                      Small Business Development Center                      State Department of Rehabilitation                      Stockton Adult School                      Stockton Symphony</p>	<p>planning process as referenced in Attachment 1 – Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary.</p>



Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of Attendance	Comments
		Tracy Chamber of Commerce	

Attachment 2

**PUBLIC COMMENTS RECEIVED THAT DISAGREE WITH THE LOCAL PLAN**

1.	<b>From:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Comment:</b>		

2.	<b>From:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Comment:</b>		

*(Placeholder – To be finalized at conclusion of public comment period)* No public comments were received during the 30-day public comment period for the PY 21-24 Local Plan.

**SIGNATURE PAGE**

The following signatures represent approval of the Local Plan by San Joaquin County Workforce Development Board and the Chief Elected Official for the San Joaquin County Local Workforce Area

For the **Workforce Development Board**

Diane Vigil, Chair	Date

For the **San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors**

Paul Canepa, Chair	Date